Workers' Comp

Introducing Networks 2.0: Part Four

June 29, 2020
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How Network 2.0 looks today

The benefits that workers' comp networks bring to employees, employers, and providers are clear. What's most interesting is how networks are evolving to meet the needs of employers and patients. These next-generation networks often are tighter, specialty-focused, smaller — right-sized — networks that benefits providers by grouping together the best of the best. Many such networks pull together smaller groups of providers with specific expertise who can best help injured workers. And, of course, specialty networks focus on narrow areas to let clinicians do more of what drives them and what they're best at doing. These newer networks present providers with opportunities to keep up with their peers who are utilizing new treatment regiments with emerging technologies such as telemedicine and remote patient monitoring. Workers' compensation networks today are also doing more to support providers than some of their predecessors. In essence, a strong network means providers have someone blocking and tackling on a range of issues so clinicians can focus on injured workers. These include:

- Aiding providers with education and interaction on policies, procedures, and efficiency
- Assisting providers' office staff with quick-reference guides and inquiry support
- Offering providers streamlined utilization review programs and scheduling services
- Sharing insights into state and federal regulations

Amid all the changes in health care — and all the challenges that remain — there are bright spots. One of them is the new form of networks. In Networks 2.0, we see constructive partnerships between providers and payers in service of injured workers. This allows networks to promote both efficacy and efficiency. They allow the best providers, with the support of payers, to deploy top clinical skills to help injured workers return to work. This paper is based on articles originally published by WorkCompWire on October 29, 2019 and November 5, 2019.

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