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Virtual Connections: Utilizing Technology to Build and Deepen Relationships with Injured Workers

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As the telemedicine industry continues to boom we're seeing more and more new forms of telehealth emerge in the marketplace. Variations including tele-rehab, remote patient monitoring and even "avatar-like" nurses being utilized by hospital systems and providers. In this new world of telehealth we need to constantly be looking for innovative modes by which triage and telephonic case managers can connect with the individuals they serve and engage them on their road to recovery. At Coventry we are piloting two new types of Virtual Connections designed to support our clinical staff in the establishment of trust and engagement with injured workers – Virtual Triage and Video-Telephonic Case Management. Virtual Triage gives triage nurses the opportunity to connect via secure video and enhances their ability to accurately assess the extent of the injury and provide the most appropriate recommendation for the level of care needed. This technology allows nurses to target:
Virtual Conn 2 Video-Telephonic Case Management allows the telephonic case manager and individual to connect via video conference allowing the nurse to more closely mirror a face-to-face visit and quickly establish the element of trust and rapport with the injured or ill person. Utilizing the video connection allows the telephonic nurse to:

- Pick up on non-verbal cues such as body language, which is essential in engaging with patients
- Appeal to younger generation or anyone comfortable using video technology to communicate
- View the injured body part and the healing process

As with all new technology, some people will be hesitant to take part so participation in both programs is completely voluntary. We also don't expect adoption to occur overnight. Like telemedicine, it takes time for people to get accustomed to a new idea and embrace it. The goal of the pilot is not necessarily to see a high adoption rate, but to test the technology, usability and likability of this communication solution.

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