Workers' Comp

Empowering Injured Employees to Return to Work through Vocational Case Management

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2 MIN READ

Vocational case management is a critical resource for injured or ill employees who cannot return to their original employer. These specialized services aim to equip individuals with the necessary work skills to compete successfully in the labor market, significantly reducing wage loss replacement exposure for payers and employers.

Vocational rehabilitation includes comprehensive services designed to facilitate return-to-work outcomes. Key components involve vocational assessments, transferable skills analyses (TSA), job goal development, labor market surveys (LMS), job-seeking skills training, job placement, expert testimony, and earning power assessments.

Qualified vocational rehabilitation case managers typically hold master's degrees in counseling or rehabilitation and certifications such as Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), Certified Disability Management Specialist (CDMS), and Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC). Their expertise enables tailored vocational rehabilitation plans, effective coordination between medical professionals, employers, attorneys, and injured workers, and compliance with jurisdictional regulations.

Vocational case management provides adjusters with critical insights into medical and vocational issues, enhances decision-making, and reduces overall claim costs. Early vocational intervention contributes to shorter claim durations, lower financial liabilities, and better outcomes for all stakeholders.

Adjusters should consider vocational rehabilitation referrals when physicians identify limited physical capacity for work, limited financial motivation to return to employment, inability to return to pre-injury employment, limited transferable skills, or when wage earning assessments are necessary for settlement purposes.

Through proactive and expert vocational case management, payers and employers can effectively bridge the gap between injury and successful reintegration into productive employment.

Referral Radar: Spotting the Need for Vocational Case Management

Vocational (VOC) case management can be a powerful tool to reduce wage loss replacement exposure. But how do I know if my claim could benefit from a VOC referral? Here are some common triggers that suggest that a VOC referral could help:

- Physician defined limited physical capacity for work
- Limited financial motivation to return to work
- Cannot return to work with pre-injury employer
- Limited work history and/or limited transferable skills
- Previously generated a high wage
- Employer or ill/injured employee relocation
- Primary language barrier
- Very young or advanced age
- Limited education
- Illiteracy
- Wage-earning capacity or labor market information needed for settlement purposes

Ready to reduce claim costs and improve return-to-work outcomes? Refer your claim for vocational case management today.



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