Workers' Comp

Specialty Solutions Spotlight: Managing Medical Device Warranties in Workers' Compensation

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3 MIN READ
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What can I do to better manage medical equipment warranties on workers' compensation claims?

Not all durable medical equipment (DME) referrals are completed at purchase. Some include warranties that need to be monitored and maintained, including items like wheelchairs, respiratory equipment, prosthetics and patient lifts.

Medical equipment warranties consider healthcare-specific factors and are dependent on device complexities involving multiple components. They cover defects, failures, repairs, replacement, and can include technical support and prorated refunds. All of which, if not managed, can drive up the cost of a workers' comp claim.

What's Required from Adjusters

As the originating approver for medical equipment purchases, adjusters are trusted with remembering the intricacies of the warranty process as well as whether they were assigned to the claim at the time the equipment was ordered. Maintaining these warranties includes:

- Verifying warranty coverage before approving replacements
- Ensuring warranties are utilized before authorizing repair payments
- Coordinating warranty-related issues
- Documenting device information in the claim file

Warranty Management

It’s one thing to have a warranty, and another to proactively manage it, especially as an adjuster handling multiple claims entailing countless equipment items. Warranty management programs remove this burden by providing visibility into equipment lifecycles, so adjusters don’t have to actively track them. These programs:

- Monitor warranty start and end dates, coverage details, and claim item information
- Coordinate between adjusters, case managers, service providers and manufacturers
- Facilitate repair and replacement or arrange temporary equipment

Special Warranty Care Considerations with Prosthetics

Warranty management is particularly crucial for prosthetics due to their customized nature and impact on patient mobility and quality of life. Often prostheses warranties are managed by the prosthetic/orthotic clinics that fabricate and fit these devices. These warranties can be complex, involving multiple components with tiered coverage including:

- Structural components
- Mechanical joints
- Electronic components
- Cosmetic coverings
- Socket fits

Why Warranties Matter for Workers' Comp Claims

In workers’ compensation warranties are essential for long-term equipment management. They reduce overall claim costs and equipment leakage. Documentation provides information for future decision-making regarding equipment, and warranties also support:

- Reduced downtime: Faster repair/replacement to prevent interruptions in care
- Minimize costs: Avoids unnecessary repurchases when items are under warranty
- Extend equipment life: Ensures proper maintenance and service
- Continuity of care: Injured employees are not waiting for essential equipment

Workers’ Compensation Challenges

Handling workers’ compensation claims with warrantied medical equipment can be difficult. Claims can remain open for decades, outlasting many warranties. Cases may transfer between multiple adjusters over time, complicating warranty tracking. Warranty information may not be consistently captured in older claims systems creating documentation gaps. These challenges make tracking equipment, patients and claims collectively pivotal for long term management.

Final Takeaway

Warranty management adds a layer of accountability that protects your injured employee’s equipment long after the initial order. Unlike other specialty providers Apricus goes beyond just coordinating your durable medical equipment needs. Referrals to Apricus also include warranty tracking at no additional charge for the life of a claim to ensure ongoing oversight, financial protection, and service continuity.

This information is meant to serve as a general overview, and any specific questions should be fully reviewed with a health care professional or specialty service provider.

To make a referral for DME or other specialty services, call 877.203.9899 or email apricus.referrals@enlyte.com .



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