



Early intervention program for return to work to be implemented in Nurses Bargaining Association

February 1, 2007

As provided under the Nurses Bargaining Association collective agreement, an Early Intervention Program (EIP) is to be implemented effective February 12, 2007. The purpose of the EIP is to facilitate pro-active, appropriate and customized programs to assist workers who are off work due to injury or illness to successfully return to work.

How does it work?

A full-time worker who has been ill or injured and off work for five consecutive scheduled working days, or a part-time worker who has been ill or injured and off work for 14 calendar days, will be contacted at home by an EIP coordinator.

The EIP coordinator will determine if the worker is eligible for the program and describe how it can help facilitate a successful return to work. An information package that includes a letter of introduction and an assessment form to be completed by the worker and her doctor will be sent to the worker. The assessment will provide information about the workers illness or injury and an estimate of when she is expected to return to work.

An EIP medical case manager, who is an occupational health nurse, will then help the worker develop a customized early intervention plan, ensure the worker receives all necessary medical care and work with the worker and her employer to implement the return to work. Union and employer representatives will also work with individual cases as needed.

Why an Early Intervention Program?

The benefits of the EIP can be realized by the employer and employee, and may:

- Prevent feelings of loneliness and abandonment that affect the ill/injured employees recovery;
- Assist the ill/injured employee to obtain appropriate health/rehabilitation services;
- Help avoid a "run-around" for the ill/injured employee from one health care professional to another;
- Assist the ill/injured employee and her/his family in re-establishing a sense of control;
- Increase the likelihood of a successful rehabilitation outcome.

For ill/injured employees, obtaining timely medical treatment, following medical recommendations of the treating physician or health care professional and, if appropriate, participating in an early return-to-work plan are vital in improving her/his quality of life and a successful return to pre-disability health.

Who oversees the EIP?

A joint steering committee, comprised of five representatives of the Nurses Bargaining Association and five representatives from the Health Employers Association of B.C., helped develop the program which is co-managed with the Health Care Benefit Trust. An EIP working group, consisting of employer and union representatives, will report to the steering committee.

Will my privacy be protected?

The information you provide to the Early Intervention Plan coordinator is covered by the B.C. Personal Information Protection Act. Additionally, the medical case manager is an Occupational Health Nurse/RN and is bound by the professional standards expected of the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia and the Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics.

How can I get more information?

HSA members who require further information about the Early Intervention Program for members covered by

the Nurses Bargaining Association collective agreement, contact Alison Hietanen at the HSA office at alison@hsabc.org

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