Workplace Wellness and Recovery May Improve Productivity and Insure Business Survival

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A recent article titled Fuse Workplace Wellness Programs With Recovery, by Lisa Firestone, helps employers in this economy by explaining that maximum efficiency and productivity is essential for continued growth and even survival. Firestone is president and founder of Managed Care Advisors Inc., a woman-owned, employee benefits and disability management consulting and full service workers’ compensation case management company.

Firestone writes that more and more employers are engaging in worksite wellness programs that lower health care costs. “In fact, according to American Journal of Health Promotion every $1 invested in a corporate wellness program returns $4 in reduced health care costs and $5 in reduced absenteeism over a period of three to five years,” she writes. [WCx]

The complete article, which can be found here, indicates by targeting and improving employee population health risk factors, worksite wellness programs reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, reduce injuries and improve employee morale and loyalty. Though most wellness initiatives have been focused on reducing risk factors in a working population with the goal of lowering costs and improving productivity, Firestone writes “leaving out those employees who may very well be at greatest risk for long-term disability and significant and ongoing health care expenditures - workers' compensation claimants. I am in no way downplaying the importance of prevention, or the advantages of a population-based worksite wellness program, in fact, quite the opposite. What I am suggesting is that there is great benefit to be gained for organizations that broaden the scope and focus of their wellness programs to include individuals recovering from work injuries or illnesses.”

Firestone includes these other points in her article:
1. Why not target the recovery period after a work-related injury as an opportune time to introduce or maintain wellness
activities?
2. It is essential that the wellness program adapt with the employee and provide programming and support to meet the employee.
3. If your health insurance and work comp programs are handled separately try to get the two departments work together to institute a wellness program.
4. There are significant resources and information readily available to assist in the implementation and management of effective wellness initiatives.

*Firestone as been* involved in the health care industry for more than 30 years gaining recognition for her expertise in the areas of employee benefit program development, evaluation, and strategic planning. She can be reached at lfirestone@managedcareadvisors.com.

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