

Manager/Supervisor Risk Management

#40– 3/27/12

A twice weekly e-mail training for YCPARMIA members

TOPIC: WORKERS' COMPENSATION – CONTROLLING MEDICAL TREATMENT

If this was Work Comp 101 then controlling medical treatment would be a big subject, but since we are taking a more limited look at WC by filtering it through YCPARMIA's practices, we can easily cover this in one page where we briefly describe YCPARMIA's MPN.

Traditionally the employer could control the choice of medical provider for the first 30 days, and after that the injured worker was free to "doctor shop." The 2004 reforms allowed employers to create Medical Provider Networks (MPN), and require the employee to treat within that network for the life of the claim. The MPN is registered with the State and must adhere to its standards and regulations.

YCPARMIA formed its MPN in 2005. There are over 120 medical providers included in the network covering over two dozen specialties. The majority of doctors were treating our employees before the MPN was formed, and on an annual basis (December) the list is reviewed and updated as needed. Our treaters are concentrated in Yolo and Sacramento counties.

It should be noted that:

- YCPARMIA has no financial agreements with any of these providers;
- YCPARMIA does not keep statistics on who is being used by our injured workers;
- YCPARMIA does not track how much is being billed by any provider.

Our only interests are in medical results and patient satisfaction. We want doctors that get good results from their treatments and surgeries, and we want our injured workers to have a high level of satisfaction and comfort with their doctor. To monitor this, our Workers' Comp Nurse routinely contacts our injured workers to get their feedback. Our nurse also reviews medical reports with an eye toward the ongoing quality of care and the injured worker's progress towards permanent and stationary status.

Written notice of the network is sent to the injured worker by our network administrator (Professional Dynamics Inc., or PDI) within one day of submitting a claim form. The notice informs the employee that they have the right to be treated by a MPN physician of their choice, and directs them to the list of medical providers. The employee can change treaters or seek a second opinion as long as they stay within the MPN. The great majority of injured workers are initially seen by one of the four occupational clinics included in the network. These clinics are staffed with physicians that specialize in occupational medicine, and most of YCPARMIA's injured workers conclude their treatment with the same doctor that they initially see. If a worker needs help in choosing a doctor they should contact the YCPARMIA nurse.

The only way around the MPN is for an employee to pre-designate their personal physician.

Next topic: Workers' Compensation – Pre-designation