

Introduction to UPMC WorkPartners

UPMC WorkPartners is a free-standing Pennsylvania corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of UPMC, and part of the UPMC Insurance Services Division. As UPMC's product line for self-insured and commercially insured workers' compensation and employer-directed services such as short-term disability, ADA, and FML management, WorkPartners is committed to serving the needs of area employers. The depth of expertise, extent of service capabilities, and level of integrated services offered by WorkPartners are unmatched in the area.

WorkPartners is headquartered in the City of Pittsburgh. WorkPartners' integrated offering of disability management, assistance, and health management programs makes it the area's most comprehensive health and workforce productivity services organization.

The WorkPartners Claims Management component has been providing TPA services for more than 12 years. We are a member of the Pennsylvania Self-Insurers' Association (PSIA), Industry for Workers' Compensation Reform (IWCR), Pennsylvania Claims Association, Pittsburgh Claims Association, Risk Insurance Managers Association, American Society of Safety Engineers, Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC), and the Western Pennsylvania Safety Council.

The WorkPartners Approach

The WorkPartners medical management philosophy involves workers' compensation staff, nurse case managers, vocational and safety experts, and occupational medical directors working together as a team to develop a strategy for claims management that utilizes each individual's area of expertise at the right time to achieve the best possible outcome.

WorkPartners' philosophy recommends that physicians assess physical capabilities each time they evaluate an injured employee. This allows the employee to engage in a safe level of activity for all work-life activities and provides a framework for an employer to evaluate if a safe but early return-to-work is possible.

WorkPartners' staff members serve as a resource for treating physicians by utilizing standardized disability guidelines (as defined by *The Medical Disability Advisor*) and proactively providing all relevant information necessary to make the most appropriate decisions regarding clinical care and return-to-work. Our staff ensures that specialty referrals, rehabilitation, or ancillary testing occurs quickly and that feedback is both timely and complete. Our staff provides a clear communication path from the employer to the treating provider when possible job modifications or personnel issues exist that may affect the patient's ability to recover; our staff also provides clarification if optimal disability durations are exceeded. Additionally they communicate with the employee to

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ensure that treatment recommendations are understood and followed, and to identify and resolve any concerns that may arise before the concerns can negatively impact clinical outcomes.

Claims Management Staff – Our current workers’ compensation team consists of nearly 40 claims professionals, including claims technicians, workers’ compensation specialists, nurse case managers, safety specialists, and vocational managers. Our claims management staff are among the most experienced workers’ compensation professionals in the area, with an average of 15 years of disability and claims management experience. The claims staff meets regularly to review case law or legislation that may affect the management of our accounts and has been instrumental in setting case law.

Nurse Case Management Staff – WorkPartners' nurse case managers are an integral part of our claims team and serve as consultants to the claims staff on the more problematic and significant claims. These claims include, but are not limited to:

- Claims involving lost time
- Claims involving medical restrictions greater than 30 days
- Claims with medical triggers that include specialist or high-level diagnostic referral
- Claims with complicated diagnoses, such as latex allergy, fibromyalgia, complex regional pain syndrome, and HIV- or hepatitis-positive conversion

WorkPartners nurse case managers have extensive experience in the fields of workers' compensation and disability management. All are Certified Case Managers (CCMs) or are actively working toward certification; many have advanced degrees (baccalaureate through doctoral) or are pursuing such. WorkPartners Nurse Case Managers work in close conjunction with our claims staff to assist in determining medical claim compensability and provide ongoing staff education.

Occupational Medical Directors – WorkPartners is pleased to offer clients the ability to interact with our occupational medical directors, who hold over 30 years of combined occupational experience. All of our medical directors have treated injured employees in clinical settings, hold board specialty certifications as well as advanced degrees, are considered subject matter experts in disability management, and are frequently invited to speak at regional and national conferences.

As a part of WorkPartners, our medical directors understand that the treatment of a work-related injury differs from the traditional medical model in that the goal, in addition to restoring wellness, is to restore or maintain the ability to continue gainful employment. The goal of “return-to-work” requires an enhanced level of knowledge and involvement

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on the part of the treating physician. Our medical directors provide an outreach program to enhance treating physicians' understanding of this concept. The program includes mentoring, education, and leadership to drive better outcomes in disability management and return-to-work programs.

WorkPartners medical directors are experienced with the unique employee health coordination challenges specific to health care employers. They are often requested to serve as consultants to our current client's infectious disease programs and have been instrumental in assisting claims and nurse case management staff to better manage events and exposures involving large groups of employees.

Additional day-to-day responsibilities include escalated case review, peer-to-peer consultation, and ongoing staff education with regard to cutting-edge technology and/or unusual medical conditions.

Vocational Management – Our Vocational Case Management Service assists in placing the injured employee within the return-to-work process in either a modified or regular-duty position. Our philosophy is that safe return-to-work is best pursued early in the case. Our vocational experts hold advanced degrees and certifications such as masters in Rehab Counseling, Certified Rehab Counselor (CRC), and Certified Disability Management Specialist (CRDM).

Safety Expertise – WorkPartners' safety philosophy is based on the fact that the most effective way to ensure employees' safety and to control occupational injury costs is to prevent accidents from occurring. Our safety experts hold advanced degrees and certifications such as masters in Safety Science, Certified Safety Professional (CSP), and Associate Risk Management (ARM), a risk management certification offered by the Insurance Institute of America. These professionals concentrate their efforts on workplace safety and are an invaluable resource to the Claims Department, performing ergonomic evaluations when requested and monitoring compliance with state and federal mandates.

Fraud/Special Investigation Unit (SIU) – WorkPartners evaluates each claim for potential fraud. Red flags serve to initiate additional investigation, including activity checks or surveillance. The staff adheres to strict guidelines when fraud is suspected and will coordinate with our internal SIU, legal counsel, and local and state agencies.