

School: Stakeholders
Course: The Injured Worker, the Primary Stakeholder
Faculty: Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson, Founder, Craig's Table
Dr. Tyrone Spears, Division Chief, City of Los Angeles

Summary

In the presentation "The Injured Worker, the Primary Stakeholder," Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson of Craig's Table in Australia, moderated by Dr. Tyrone Spears, emphasizes the critical role of the injured worker in the workers' compensation system. The session highlights the importance of understanding the injured worker's experiences, effective communication, and the role of social determinants of health in the recovery process.

Introduction to the Injured Worker's Perspective

Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson, drawing from her own experience as an injured worker and advocate, shares insights into the challenges faced by injured workers. She underscores the confusion and lack of support often encountered by workers navigating the workers' compensation system. From her perspective, the system frequently fails to provide clear guidance, leaving workers feeling lost and overwhelmed.

Effective Communication

A key theme in the presentation is the importance of clear and empathetic communication. Rosemary recounts her initial interactions with the workers' compensation system, where she was told to "stay home and get better" without any further explanation. This lack of information led to confusion and fear. Effective communication, according to Rosemary, involves not only providing clear instructions but also listening to and understanding the injured worker's concerns. Dr. Spears reinforces this point by emphasizing the need for claims personnel to ask open-ended questions and genuinely listen to the injured worker's responses.

Social Determinants of Health

The discussion also delves into the impact of social determinants of health on the recovery process. Financial instability, lack of social support, and access to healthcare are significant factors that can influence an injured worker's recovery. Rosemary explains how financial pressures can exacerbate the stress and challenges faced by injured workers, affecting their overall well-being and recovery outcomes. Addressing these social determinants involves creating supportive plans and collaborating with community resources to ensure a holistic approach to the worker's recovery.

Engaging Injured Workers

Encouraging injured workers to be active participants in their recovery process is another crucial aspect discussed. Active participation can lead to better outcomes and a more positive experience for the worker. Strategies for engaging workers include providing educational materials, access to support services, and fostering a collaborative relationship where the worker feels involved and empowered.

Best Practices for Claims Personnel

The presentation concludes with best practices for claims personnel. Understanding the injured worker's journey and personalizing interactions can significantly improve the support provided. Building trust and rapport through regular check-ins and consistent updates helps in maintaining a supportive relationship. Rosemary suggests simple yet impactful practices, such as including a photo in emails to humanize interactions and removing claim numbers to make the process feel less dehumanizing.

Conclusion

In summary, the presentation highlights the importance of viewing the injured worker as the primary stakeholder in the workers' compensation system. By focusing on effective communication, understanding social determinants of health, encouraging active participation, and implementing supportive practices, stakeholders can enhance the recovery experience and outcomes for injured workers. Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson's insights provide valuable guidance for claims personnel and others involved in supporting injured workers, emphasizing the need for empathy, clarity, and collaboration.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the experiences and challenges faced by injured workers within the workers' compensation system.
2. Explore the importance of effective communication and empathy in supporting injured workers.
3. Analyze the role of social determinants of health in the recovery process of injured workers.
4. Identify strategies for engaging injured workers as active participants in their recovery and claims process.
5. Develop best practices for claims personnel to enhance the support and outcomes for injured workers.

Primary Takeaways

1. *Challenges Faced by Injured Workers:* Injured workers often feel lost and unsupported within the workers' compensation system, highlighting the need for clear guidance and communication.

2. *Effective Communication*: Clear and empathetic communication from claims personnel can significantly impact the injured worker's experience and recovery process.
3. *Social Determinants of Health*: Factors such as financial stability, social support, and access to healthcare play a crucial role in the recovery outcomes of injured workers.
4. *Active Participation*: Encouraging injured workers to be active participants in their recovery can lead to better outcomes and a more positive experience.
5. *Best Practices for Claims Personnel*: Claims personnel should focus on understanding the injured worker's perspective, providing clear information, and fostering a supportive relationship.

Course Outline

- 1) Introduction to the Injured Worker as the Primary Stakeholder
 - a) Importance of understanding the injured worker's perspective
 - b) Overview of challenges faced by injured workers
- 2) Effective Communication with Injured Workers
 - a) Importance of clear and empathetic communication
 - i) Initial interactions and their impact
 - ii) Continuous communication throughout the recovery process
 - b) Strategies for improving communication
 - i) Active listening
 - ii) Providing clear and concise information
- 3) Role of Social Determinants of Health
 - a) Identifying negative social determinants
 - i) Financial instability
 - ii) Lack of social support
 - b) Addressing social determinants
 - i) Creating supportive plans
 - ii) Collaborating with community resources
- 4) Engaging Injured Workers in the Recovery Process
 - a) Importance of active participation
 - i) Benefits of worker involvement
 - ii) Strategies for encouraging engagement
 - b) Providing tools and resources
 - i) Educational materials
 - ii) Access to support services

- 5) Best Practices for Claims Personnel
 - a) Understanding the injured worker's journey
 - i) Personalizing interactions
 - ii) Building trust and rapport
 - b) Implementing supportive practices
 - i) Regular check-ins
 - ii) Providing consistent updates

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