INJURED WORKERS: RETURNING TO WORK AND OPIOID DEPENDENCY

Occupational Health Internship Program
Summer 2013

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Project Director

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Montana Department of Labor & Industry
Employment Relations Division
Giorvanni Merilis
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FIRST DAY AT WORK!
Project Background

- RTW much longer in Montana
  - 112 days vs. 88 days (U.S.)
- 2011 Legislature – New SAW/RTW program
- Opioid dependency of injured workers
  - Affects ability to SAW/RTW
  - Costs to system
Objectives

- Gain first-hand experience with Montana workers’ compensation
- Inform injured workers on the dangers of opioid dependency
- Survey injured workers about the SAW/RTW program & returning to work
Gaining Familiarity

- Visited physical therapy clinics
- Observed workplace safety inspections
- Attended various workers’ compensation trainings and meetings
Site Visits

- John Fiore, PT
- Lindsey Flint, DPT, CSCS, Certified Pilates Instructor
- Conducted preliminary interviews for the SAW/RTW survey
- Provided SAW/RTW postcards

Sapphire Physical Therapy

Injured Worker Interview
Site Visits

- Dr. Gary Lusin, PT, MS, LAT, CSCS, Owner
- Functional Capacity Evaluations
- Spoke with injured workers

Advanced Performance & Rehabilitation Services

View from FCE window
Site Visits

- Safety & Health Bureau workplace inspections
- Grain mill and log home construction company

Elizabeth & Electrical Room Inspection

Giorvanni in Personal Protective Equipment
Performed research on Opioid dependency
Identified and met with other partners
Designed and printed brochure
  - 5,000 copies
Distribution
  - SafetyFests
  - Mail to employers, providers & workers upon request
  - Website
Give-Back Product

Every 19 minutes someone dies of prescription drug overdose in America.
-CNN "Deadly Dose" Documentary

More Americans die of prescription drug overdose than on the highways each year.
-US Centers of Disease Control

Opioid Dependency - Is Not Addiction
Opioids may naturally cause physical dependency (tolerance & withdrawal)

Tolerance
Higher and higher doses of opioids are required over time in order to achieve the same effect.

Withdrawal
Negative physical and mental side effects occur after extended use of a drug is reduced abruptly or stopped.

If You See Signs or Symptoms of Overdose Call 911 and/or Contact:
Rocky Mountain Poison Center
1 (800) 222-1222
www.mppdc.org

If You See Signs or Symptoms of Dependency or Addiction Contact:
The doctor who prescribes your opioid medication

Department of Health & Human Services
Chemical Dependency Bureau
(406) 444-3964
www.dphhs.mt.gov
or directly to
www.dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/chemical dependencieservices/index.shtml

Assistance with Return to Work:
Stay at Work/Return to Work Program
(406) 444-1752
Email: sawrtrwquest@mt.gov

Montana Department of Labor and Industry
(406) 444-6543
Email: diquestions@mt.gov
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624-1728

Your Health Matters
Learn About Opioid Dependency

Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY Employment Relations Division
SAW/RTW Program Evaluation

- Became familiar with SAW/RTW program
- Designed survey and survey script
- Administered survey
  - 830 calls
  - 283 people spoken to
  - 190 surveys completed
- Analysis and recommendations
The Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) and workers’ compensation insurers help Montana workers stay at work or return to work quickly after a work-related injury. Staying at work or returning to work reduces the impact of workplace injuries on workers, their families, their employers and their communities. To find out more, contact your workers’ compensation insurer or DLI by visiting http://erd.dli.mt.gov, by phone 406-444-1752 or by email at sawrtwrquest@mt.gov.
Survey - Recommendations

- Expand & improve SAW/RTW outreach
- Provide information about workers’ compensation to injured workers
- Improve communication between all parties
- Synchronize terminology about RTW
- Require accurate employee contact information
- Refine future survey
Intern Reflections

- Challenges & Successes
  - Transportation / Cell service
  - Expanding project scope
  - Brochure
  - Survey calls
  - Site Visits
Great program
Positive and valuable experience
Valuable work products
  • OPIOID educational and self-assessment brochure for workers
  • Insight into the SAW/RTW program and ideas for improvement
We believe the interns received experience valuable to them, that was focused on occupational health & safety / return to work
Questions
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