



## SELECTING AN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROVIDER FOR INJURED WORKERS

Selecting an occupational health provider for injured workers is a crucial step in the workers' compensation claim process. Choosing the right provider ensures that your truly injured employees receive the right care at the right time and that potential cases of malingering or symptom magnification are identified. Moreover, there are nuances in workers' compensation claims that your chosen provider must be aware of that do not appear in non-workers' compensation treatment scenarios. For example, state laws vary widely in what information providers are allowed to share with employers. Additionally, workers compensation claims often get litigated, which makes cost management all the more important. Finally, each state uses its own impairment rating criteria, so your chosen provider must be proficient in operating under the state-mandated guidelines.

With all of that in mind, how can you be sure you're selecting the best occupational health provider to treat your injured employees? The following questions can help guide your decision-making process, and the medical experts at Cottingham & Butler are happy to consult and advise you along the way.

### QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about selecting an occupational health provider or about the insurance coverage options available in the marketplace, **please contact Cottingham & Butler.**

- **What best practice guidelines do they follow?**
  - Look for nationally recognized, evidence-based guidelines like the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Milliman Care Guidelines, and Official Disability Guidelines.
- **Do they have a designated "unit" within the office that is tasked with communicating to the employer and the insurance carrier?**
  - If not, a contact person must be identified to provide:
    - Work status information promptly via fax or email, and
    - Job descriptions for light duty work, if available.
- **Do they set realistic expectations for each injured worker's recovery time?**
- **Do their office hours accommodate your employees' shifts?**
- **Do they have access to imaging (Ultrasound, X-Ray, CT, MRI)?**
  - Do they own these machines or do they refer out?
  - If owned, do they have specific utilization quotas to meet?
- **What PPO network(s) do they participate in?**
- **Are the physicians Board Certified by the American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine?**
- **Are the nurses certified OHN or COHN-S by the American Board for Occupational Health Nurses?**
- **Do they provide DOT exams?**
- **Do they provide causation and impairment ratings?**
  - Are there additional costs associated with these requests?
- **Do their drug screenings happen onsite, or are they referred out to a lab?**
  - Is the lab in network?
  - What is the average cost of urinalysis drug screen?