

Early Intervention Program for the Community Health Sector

New program will help injured workers successfully return to work

A new joint program has been negotiated to assist ill or injured workers to return to work. The Early Intervention Program (EIP) for the Community Health Sector is a pro-active, customized return to work program.

The new program is called EIP (the Community Health, Early Intervention Program) which involves employers, employees, unions and the Healthcare Benefit Trust (HBT) all working together in a proactive, customized return to work program for workers who are ill or injured.

Starting on February 12, 2007, if you've been off work for six scheduled shifts or ten calendar days due to an illness or injury, you should expect to be telephoned at your home by an EIP Program coordinator. This program also allows an employee to self-refer to the EIP.

After contacting you, the EIP coordinator will determine if you are eligible for the program and then describe how it can help facilitate your successful return to work. You'll then be mailed an information package that includes a letter of introduction and an assessment form to be completed by you and your doctor. The assessment is confidential and will provide information about your illness or injury and an estimate of when you are expected to return to work. Please see the privacy section of this notice.

Your EIP case manager, who is an occupational health nurse, will then help you develop a customized early intervention plan, ensure you receive all necessary medical care

and work with you, your physician and your employer to accommodate your return to work.

This plan, and the details of the application were negotiated between the Community Bargaining Association (CBA) and the HEABC. The employers agree with this plan and its application. In the next few weeks we will be providing the details of this plan and its application in membership meetings and the same information will be available on our website. If your experience is different than described in this bulletin, or if you encounter difficulties with the process, please contact the CBA Benefits Officer at BCGEU Headquarters (604) 291-9611 or toll free 1-800-663-1674.

A joint steering committee comprised of Community Bargaining Association (CBA) reps and Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) reps helped develop the program, which they co-manage with HBT. An EIP working group, consisting of employer and union reps will report to the steering committee.

EIP PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- to initiate early contact with the ill/injured employee
- to identify and provide appropriate case management of the ill/injured employee's health issues

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- to facilitate the rehabilitation of ill/injured employees while expediting a safe and timely return to work through an early return to work plan
- to convey the message that employees are valued
- to accomodate a timely and appropriate return to work

WHO IS AFFECTED

The EIP is included in the new CBA collective agreement. Everyone covered for benefits under the new CBA is eligible to participate in EIP. All unionized health sectors have EIP as well.

WHO WILL BE CONTACTED?

Your employer will refer your name to EIP if you are an employee who has been ill or injured for six scheduled shifts or 10 calendar days.

WILL MY PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?

Yes. The information you provide to the EIP coordinator is covered by the *BC Personal Information Protection Act*. In accordance with the EIP policies, all information regarding your diagnosis and your treatment will remain with the HBT and will not be disclosed to your employer.

Additionally, the Medical Case Manager is an Occupational Health Nurse/RN, and is bound by the professional standards expected of the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia and the Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics.