

Meeting the Needs of Returning Veterans in the Workplace

By Edwin W. Quick MA, MBA, CDMS, CRC, CCM, GPHR
Chair, CDMS Commission

Traditionally, disability management has been used to facilitate early return to work for employees who are ill, injured, or have a disability. The practice has expanded tremendously in recent years, encompassing integrated disability management, wellness, prevention, and other workforce management programs. At the heart of it all, though, remains the dedication to evidence-based best practices to facilitate employment opportunities for individuals based on their abilities.

LARGE EMPLOYERS LAUNCH INITIATIVES

Disability management and related expertise are being called into action more than ever as several large employers launch initiatives to increase hiring of returning veterans and service members. Several leading U.S. companies have launched the "100,000 Jobs Mission," which has the stated goal of collectively hiring 100,000 transitioning service members and military veterans by 2020.

Hiring a returning service member or veteran may raise questions regarding how best to meet their needs to facilitate and assimilate them into competitive private employment, and also to address the perceived potential impact that medical and behavioral health issues could have on benefits programs in the future, including workers' compensation and short-term disability. According to reports, as many as 20 percent of veterans returning from active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan exhibit symptoms of having sustained traumatic brain injury, and nearly one-third of those returning from Iraq are estimated to have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or depression. Most important to understand is that both of these diagnoses and their related symptoms, if presented, are manageable, and supportive strategies can be leveraged to assure their success.

SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE

Veterans and service members are highly employable, and possess valuable skills and leadership qualities. To facilitate the transition of veterans and service members into the civilian workplace, employers need to make the most of their existing programs, including Employee Assistance Programs.

In addition, many employers sponsor Employee Networking Groups (ENGs, formerly known as diversity groups) that appeal to specific segments of the employee population, such as based on ethnicity or common interests or concerns. Veterans' ENGs provide workplace support for returning service members who find within these groups a community of individuals who have had similar experiences. Through this support, veterans may find it easier to transition into the workforce. These groups can also serve as resources to employees who work with veterans as peers, supervisors or managers, to understand how skills are transferable in the recruiting process, the military culture, and other areas with which they may be unfamiliar.



Edwin W. Quick, MA, MBA, CDMS, CRC, CCM, GPHR, is Chair of the CDMS Commission and executive director of disability management services for a Fortune 500 company.

For more information, see the 100,000 Jobs Mission web site at: <http://100000jobsmission.com/>

The initiative also has a presence on the US Veterans Pipeline web site at: <https://usveteranspipeline.com/>



Returning Veterans

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DISABILITY MANAGERS ACT AS LIAISONS

An important resource for veterans and service members with disabilities – as well as for aging workers and other segments of the labor pool with specific needs – is the disability management team. Disability managers possess the expertise to act as liaisons between employers and employees, which can make a measurable difference in achieving successful employment and stay-at-work goals.

As the 100,000 Jobs Mission states, “Our nation’s military and veterans represent the best this country has to offer and they bring meaningful skills to the workplace.” Through their best practices and expertise, disability managers are able to help meet the needs of veterans who deserve an opportunity for employment and possess the skills that make them valuable employees in the business world.

What are your hot topics?

In the CDMS education survey, many of you told us that you wanted to know more about Aging Workforce Issues, ADA/AA, Disability and the Multigenerational Workforce, FMLA, Veterans, and Health Reform. To accomplish our goal of becoming the go-to place online for disability management issues, we need your input. Please tell us more about your topmost issues and concerns. We invite you to participate on the **CDMS Discussion Forum**.

Enter your comments on the CDMS web site at: CDMS.org/discussionforums.php



Chris Moranda, MA, LSW, CDMS, CCM, is Chair-Elect of the CDMS Commission and manager of Associate Health and Wellness, Disability Services, for OhioHealth.

CDMS-USBLN® Collaboration: Showcasing the Employer Conversation

By **Chris Moranda** MA, LSW, CDMS, CCM
 Chair-Elect, CDMS Commission

When employers gather to talk about workforce management programs today, the topic of disability is typically a key component of the conversation. More than ever, with the aging of the workforce and a more diverse employee base, disability management practices are essential to helping people become and stay productive.

Disability management solutions were among the featured topics at the annual conference sponsored by the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®), which consists of more than sixty Business Leadership Network affiliates across North America, representing more than 5,000 employers. Earlier this year, the CDMS Commission signed a memorandum of understanding to establish an alliance with USBLN®.

Several large employers participated at this year’s conference, including such marquee names as Walgreens, Lowe’s, Procter & Gamble, and Home Depot, just to name a few. At the conference sessions, these major companies discussed their best practices in workforce and disability management. For example, one approach is to incorporate disability management into diversity and inclusion programs, which supports hiring people with disabilities and promoting opportunities for employees who become disabled. These positive, proactive objectives further a culture of acceptance to help employees to contribute based on their abilities, regardless of any disabilities or other limiting factors.

CDMS PURSUES TOP PRIORITY

By participating in the USBLN® conference, the CDMS Commission pursued one of its top priorities: spreading the word about the importance of certification. At the conference, employer representatives were keenly interested in learning more about the Associate Disability Management Specialist (ADMS) designation and the Certified Disability Management Specialist (CDMS®) certification. In particular, there was great interest among HR and diversity professionals in pursuing these credentials to elevate themselves in the field of workforce management and to showcase their skills in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities.

In addition, these professionals recognized that the CDMS’s Core Knowledge Curriculum (see article, page 3) would help them broaden their understanding and general learning around workforce programs, including integrated disability management, return to work initiatives, and wellness and prevention. In addition, the Core Knowledge Curriculum provides a pathway for attaining the ADMS designation.

As the experience at the USBLN® conference illustrated, the employer conversation is increasingly important in the world of disability management, particularly as large firms drive integration of programs spanning disability, health, wellness, and other workforce initiatives.

Going forward, the CDMS Commission looks forward to exploring our collaboration with USBLN® as a means to share best practices on both sides: the employer community and the disability management practitioner.

“This is just one more way that the Commission is creating new products to meet practitioners’ increased need for education resources.”

– Dr. Mary Jesko



Dr. Mary Jesko, EdD, MS, CDMS, CCM, CLCP, CRC, is Core Knowledge Officer on the Executive Committee of the CDMS Commission. She is also principal of Jesko & Associates/Medical Management Nurse Consultants.

Core Knowledge Curriculum CDMS to Launch Webinar Series in Early 2012

By Dr. Mary Jesko EdD, MS, CDMS, CCM, CLCP, CRC
Core Knowledge Officer, CDMS Commission

Since its rollout earlier in 2011, the CDMS Core Knowledge Curriculum has received an enthusiastic response from practitioners, employers, educators, and thought leaders in disability management. Now, the Commission is expanding its online educational offerings with a series of webinar-based learning modules that complement the curriculum. The webinars will be launched starting early in first quarter 2012.

“HOT TOPICS” IDENTIFIED IN SURVEY

The webinars were developed based on feedback gathered from employers, CDMS certificants, and ADMS designees regarding what they saw as educational needs and areas of interest in the field. The “hot topics” identified in the survey include:

- Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA)
- Integrated Disability Management
- Aging Workforce
- Ethics

Content for these webinars has been developed in conjunction with leading consultants in workforce practices and experts in online learning. Webinars will be hosted by CDMS Commissioners who are experts in the featured subject matter.

KEY OBJECTIVES: COST AND VALUE

In developing the webinars, the Commission sought to meet two objectives. The first is for cost-effective training in a virtual classroom environment, with programs that represent excellent content at a good value, while also avoiding travel costs. The second is to provide in-depth insight in specific subject areas that have been identified by practitioners.

The cost is \$65 for each webinar, or \$195 for a bundle of three with the ethics session included free of charge. Affordability was

identified as a key consideration to make the sessions available to the widest range of people possible.

WEBINARS CARRY CEUs FOR RENEWAL

The Commission believes the webinars will be helpful to those who are pursuing the ADMS designation or preparing for the CDMS certification examination. In addition, the webinars carry continuing education units (CEUs), which are required of all certificants to renew their credentials. The webinar on ethics is expected to be particularly popular among certificants who must attain CEUs in that topic.

The webinars are highly complementary to the CDMS Core Knowledge Curriculum,

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which is organized into an introductory module and four domain modules: disability management and work disruption case management; workplace intervention for disability prevention; program development, management, and evaluation; and employment leaves and benefits administration.

Each of the four curriculum modules carries 8 CEUs, for a total of 32 CEUs for those who participate in the full learning program. By earning a passing score on questions at the end of each module, practitioners can achieve the ADMS designation.

From the Core Knowledge Curriculum to the new webinars, the CDMS Commission is demonstrating its commitment to professional education and development. As a thought leader in the field, the Commission is in a unique position to ascertain and meet the needs of practitioners, from those pursuing credentials to certified professionals who want to stay abreast of the latest trends and best practices.

Results in from CDMS Education Survey

In August, the CDMS Commission surveyed employers and a broad spectrum of professionals who are practicing or are responsible for disability management programs and services. A record number of 594 participants filled us in on preferred methods of training and content tracks. Special thanks to these current and past certificants who won either an iPad2, a Visa® gift card, a Core Knowledge Curriculum (CKC) module, or the full CKC for their participation: Todd Martin, Lynette Beavers, Katie Leneker, Elizabeth Bennett, and Nancy Andersen. Thanks to all participants for feedback that will drive further development of our online learning program, the Core Knowledge Curriculum, and related training tools.



CDMS Commission Chair Edwin W. Quick presents Quality Leadership Award plaque to Carolyn Smith of General Electric Co. at the USBLN® conference.

2011 Quality Leadership Award Presented to General Electric Co.

General Electric Co. was chosen as the recipient of the 2011 Quality Leadership Award in recognition of its long-standing commitment to disability management and its innovation in health and productivity initiatives.

For the past ten years, the CDMS Commission has presented the award to an organization that demonstrates best practices in disability and absence management. This year, GE, which operates in more than 100 countries and employs more than 300,000 people worldwide, is being honored for its contribution to the disability management field, and its commitment to helping its employees lead healthier and more productive lives.

For many years, GE has championed integrated disability management from both a workforce health and productivity perspective, with programs directed and managed by Certified Disability Management Specialists and other certified professionals. Among GE's numerous programs is HealthAhead, a global effort to motivate employees and their dependents to achieve the best possible health outcomes.

"HealthAhead is an integral part of the company's 'Healthymagination' program and an extension of our philosophy of disability management to help employees become healthier, more productive, and engaged in all aspects of their lives," said Marybeth Stevens-Carhidi, MS, CCM, CDMS, Leader of Health Administration for GE's US Employee Services, Healthcare Benefits Delivery. "As a global initiative, we believe HealthAhead will result in stronger individuals and a stronger GE."

Central to HealthAhead is a unique effort to measure and certify GE worksites on the basis of critical elements including: site leadership and wellness teams, education and prevention, nutrition, physical activity, tobacco cessation, stress management, health-related absences, and an assessment of health risk.

More than 300 GE worksites around the world are expected to be certified in 2011, an increase from 87 sites globally in 2010. All GE sites with at least 100 employees (about 500 locations globally) are required to be certified by 2012, and all are actively working toward this goal. These 500 sites reach at least 80 percent of GE employees and their dependents.

Although the program addresses corporate-wide health priorities, such as cessation of tobacco use, a key component is autonomy on the local level. "We believe that while good health should be promoted, driven, and invested in company-wide, it needs to be delivered locally to be effective," Stevens-Carhidi said. "The health issues that our employees face vary greatly from site to site and business to business. Peers, managers, and the site where employees work impact our employees' ability to get healthy and to maintain a healthy lifestyle."

Through HealthAhead, GE continues to demonstrate its commitment to inspiring employees to embrace a healthier lifestyle, while giving them the tools and resources they need to achieve wellness goals. The CDMS Commission salutes GE for its long-standing leadership in integrated disability management, absence management, and health and productivity. The company has demonstrated that wellness and preventing disability are critical to good stewardship of human capital.

2012 Exam Schedule

Application Packet Deadlines

February 1, 2012
May 1, 2012
October 1, 2012

Exam Windows

February 3-11, 2012
June 1-9, 2012
September 7-15, 2012
February 2-9, 2013

CDMS Commissioners 2011 – 2012



CHAIR

Edwin Quick MA, MBA, CDMS, CRC, CCM, GPHR
Executive Director,
Disability Management Services
Fortune 500 Company
Chicago, IL



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Christine Moranda LSW, CDMS, CCM
Manager, Disability Services
OhioHealth, Associate Health & Wellness
Columbus, OH



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Recruitment Consultant, Human Resources
Mid-Columbia Medical Center
The Dalles, OR



TREASURER

Judith Parker M.Ed., CDMS, ABVE-D, CLCP
Vocational Counselor/ Case Manager
OSC Vocational Systems, Inc.
Bothell, WA



CORE KNOWLEDGE OFFICER

Mary Jesko Ed.D., M.S., CDMS, CCM, CRC, CLCP
Principal/Medical & Disability Case Manager
Medical Management Nurse Consultants
Jesko & Associates, Inc.
San Diego & Los Angeles, CA



PAST-CHAIR

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Principal
Integrated Impact Management
Hendersonville, NC



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Traverse City, MI



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Disability Manager/Vocational Expert
John Czarick
Schuylkill Haven, PA



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Clinical Services Delivery Manager
General Electric Energy
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Rehabilitation Specialist
CIGNA Group Insurance
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Alicia Heine CDMS, CRC, CCM
Director of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
– Return to Work Solutions Team
Aetna
Hartford, CT



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President
Achieve Consulting Team, Inc.
Olympia, WA



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Director – Claim Vendor Management
CNA Insurance
Brea, CA



MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Stan Scioscia M.Ed., CRC, CDMS, CPDM
Account Manager, Group Life & Disability
Aetna
San Francisco, CA



PUBLIC MEMBER

Michael W. Thompson CSP
Global HSE Advisor
BP Upstream
Information Technology & Services
Houston, TX

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The CDMS Commission invites you to forward this issue of CDMSource to anyone who is interested in disability management.

How to reach us:

The CDMS Commission welcomes your feedback and encourages you to contact us with your ideas. We prefer to receive letters via e-mail without attachments at: info@CDMS.org

CDMS Commission

1699 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 300
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4957

847.944.1335 MAIN
847.944.1346 FAX
www.CDMS.org



The CDMS Commission is the only independent and nationally accredited organization that certifies disability management specialists. Through sound testing backed by scientific research, continuing education, and a strict code of ethics, the Commission validates the core knowledge and competency of these experts.