



Absence and disability management study highlights necessity for early reporting, integration

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April 12, 2012

Brokers play a key role in helping plan sponsors establish a healthier workplace, but one main problem still affects employers today — dealing with the lack of resources that are available to improve employee health and productivity at the workplace, according to a [white paper](#) from The Standard.

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"The Future of Absence and Disability Management, Part 2: Continuing the Conversation" identifies two other major problems employers struggle with concerning employee absence and productivity:

- 1) Managing different types of plan participants absence and disability
- 2) Establishing a return-to-work program following short-term disability leave

Michael Klachefsky, the author of the white paper and national practice leader for Workplace Possibilities for The Standard, says brokers continue to be an important piece of the benefits puzzle — particularly when it comes to promoting early disability reporting.

"Early intervention can help shorten the duration of a disability. Early intervention in short-term disability does not occur as often as it should and early disability reporting is a prerequisite for early invention," he says.

Brokers and consultants play a key role in helping plan sponsors integrate early disability reporting and disability duration guidelines into return-to-work programs, he adds.

"[They] should carefully consider carriers that use these two practices on a regular and demonstrable basis, because the consistent application of these practices can help shorten the duration of absence and disability," says Klachefsky.

"It is crucial that employers and their benefits brokers and/or consultants understand the positive impacts early disability reporting and disability duration guidelines can have, if executed proactively, in reducing sick day/disability absences, medical/pharmacy costs and health-related lost productivity," the paper concludes.

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