



3 value-adding features for DI policies

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Published 5/25/2011

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For years, brokers have educated individuals on the necessity of having [disability income insurance](#) in their back pockets should — knock on wood — a disabling injury or illness require them to stop working. But it can be a tough sell because so many people have the mentality that nothing disabling will ever happen to them.

In today's economy, it often takes more than a simple explanation to convince people of the value of individual disability insurance. People want comprehensive policies that provide a steady stream of monthly income to help offset the financial strain associated with the loss of a paycheck and unanticipated expenses.

A disability and what constitutes a leave is no longer confined to just illness or injury. Demand for more comprehensive coverage and better benefits continue to grow as the client's needs and wants evolve.

Brokers can address this need by extending the conversation beyond education and really leveraging the features and benefits of a policy that is designed to meet individuals' unique needs.

Here are three features to consider as you look for the best fit for your clients' needs:

- **Extended coverage benefit to care for loved ones:** When a family member or loved one becomes ill, a person must often make a very tough decision: take a leave of absence from work and potentially lose income, or stay at home and meet these family obligations.

This time with a loved one, however, is invaluable. That's why giving people the opportunity to spend time with a sick family member during a critical time, without jeopardizing income, makes this benefit very appealing. And most importantly, it removes any financial worry, allowing the individual to solely concentrate on providing that care.

As a broker, it makes you an even more valuable resource for bringing the option to the table.

- **Partial disability provision:** A partial disability provision offers the support and flexibility individuals need while they are recovering from a disability, without penalizing them for working only as much as they're able.

Policies that include a partial disability provision often pay benefits for an extended period of time if a disabled insured has a loss of time, duties or income, regardless of the amount of income earned when returning to work.

- **Mental health coverage:** Mental disorders in their various forms — stress, depression, anxiety — are the most prevalent health problems among people today. This growing trend is not only directly affecting individuals, but the workplace as well.

In an effort to recognize these issues and improve individuals' health, many policies are beginning to offer coverage for disabilities due to a mental health condition. This allows a person sufficient time to recover and return to work in a healthier state-of-mind.

The caveat, however, is that these policies typically have limitations on the conditions they cover or other restrictions.

Look for a policy with no special limitation on coverage for a variety of mental health issues and disorders — instead of the typical two-year limitation — as well as an extended benefit period. This type of offering will be extremely beneficial to clients, especially those pre-exposed to stressful environments.

Knowledge and expertise are fantastic qualities in a broker. But what truly builds a strong relationship between a broker and his or her customers is going the extra mile to provide products that offer extra value, as well as options that can be customized to fit their unique needs.

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