



Best Practices Help to Manage Disability-Related Absence

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Employers can manage disability-related absences better by establishing early disability reporting practices and disability duration guidelines, according to an April 2012 white paper from the Standard Insurance Co., [*The Future of Absence and Disability Management, Part 2: Continuing the Conversation*](#). The white paper is a companion piece to [*The Future of Absence and Disability Management*](#), published in December 2011, and continues to explore major trends in managing absence and disability by highlighting two practices that are highly rated but underused by employers.

The white paper asserted that an on-site consultant can result in positive health and productivity outcomes by deploying the following practices:

- **Early disability reporting.** This involves reporting an employee's absence or disability claim as soon as possible. Early disability reporting can work with a transitional return-to-work (RTW) program to help shorten the duration of an absence or disability.
- **Disability duration guidelines.** These help predict the duration of a disability and serve as a standardized method of assessing the effectiveness of an RTW program.

“Ideally, those practices that employers find to be the most effective in meeting their intended goals should be the most widely used,” said Michael Klachefsky, national practice leader, workplace possibilities, for The Standard and author of both white papers. “Based on a revealing employer survey conducted by the Integrated Benefits Institute, this is not the case. It is important that employers recognize this discrepancy and seek a solution to managing absences and disabilities that integrates such highly rated practices as early disability reporting and disability duration guidelines.”

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