

Behavioral health services: The best solution for mental stress claims

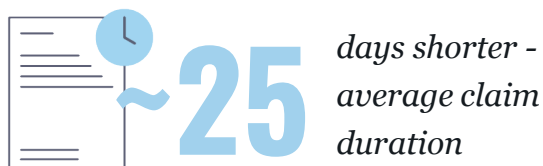


OPPORTUNITY

A metropolitan transit authority client noticed their volume of workers' compensation mental stress claims was increasing due to a rise in traumatic on-the-job incidents, many of which had a primary diagnosis of a psychological condition. Seeing an opportunity for a tailored solution to address the increased volume, Sedgwick approached the client about leveraging our behavioral health solutions.

SOLUTION

Our behavioral health specialists quickly reach out to injured workers and connect them to our network of mental health treatment providers, monitoring their treatment progress. All the while, our behavioral health specialists keep injured workers engaged in their treatment by offering ongoing support, motivation and encouragement through discussions surrounding self-care and recovery goals with a focus on returning to work.



SEDGWICK'S FLEXIBLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDE THE BEST TREATMENT AND COST OVERSIGHT TO DRIVE BETTER OUTCOMES FOR EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS.

RESULTS

Using Sedgwick's unique behavioral health solution not only saved the client money, but decreased their average claim duration by 25 days, average incurred medical expenditures by 41% and temporary total disability days for mental stress claims by 14%. With early expert intervention, Sedgwick is able to identify the right solution for every employee and provide the emotional support and clinical care they deserve throughout treatment and their return to work.

↓ **41%**

DECREASE

in average medical incurred



↓ **14%**

DECREASE

in temporary total disability days



DEDICATED

experts to quickly facilitate care and provide support

DETAILS

The key to Sedgwick's approach is early intervention and close follow-up with injured workers filing mental stress claims. Within the first 48 hours a mental stress claim is reported, we assign a behavioral health specialist to collaborate with the claims examiner/adjuster and determine whether the psychological condition is compensable. If the claim is compensable, our behavioral health specialist contacts the injured worker and coordinates an appropriate in-network referral to a treatment provider with trauma expertise who will further evaluate the condition or begin treatment.

During the initial call with the injured worker, our behavioral health specialist establishes treatment expectations and provides education on self-care strategies related to better sleep and stress management. This early intervention provides the injured worker with some immediate relief and sets the worker up for success in their treatment.

Our behavioral health specialist stays in touch with the injured worker throughout their recovery, assessing any potential psychosocial barriers to progress. If a barrier is identified, our specialist provides continual telephonic support between mental health treatment sessions to maintain forward momentum in the worker's recovery and return-to-work efforts. This ongoing support keeps the injured worker engaged in their recovery and also provides them opportunities to ask questions and get information about their claim while feeling emotionally supported during the process. As the worker's condition improves with treatment, the behavioral health specialist addresses return-to-work planning with them and their treatment provider.

Because returning to work after a period of disability from workplace psychological trauma is different than returning to work after a physical injury, our network providers and behavioral health specialists are specifically trained to address any negotiations for full- or modified-duty accommodations as they arise.

THROUGH EARLY INTERVENTION AND EXPERT ATTENTION, SEDGWICK IS ABLE TO DECREASE THE OVERALL COST OF CLAIMS WHILE INCREASING THE LEVEL OF CARE.



CASE EXAMPLE

Katie is a 40-year-old bus operator who witnessed a gang-related shooting on her route that resulted in two deaths and multiple bystander injuries. Several bullets hit her bus, but fortunately neither Katie nor her passengers were physically injured. This incident led to Katie filing her third mental stress claim in four years. Within two days of her reporting the claim, a behavioral health specialist reached out to Katie to offer support and assistance with a referral to a trauma therapist in her area. During that initial call, the behavioral health specialist also gave Katie some tips and suggestions on self-care to address sleep difficulties she had been reporting since the incident.

During Katie's treatment, the behavioral health specialist addressed return-to-work planning with her treatment provider and reminded him of the possibility for temporary, modified-duty accommodations. The behavioral health specialist called Katie several times throughout her recovery process to check in, provide ongoing encouragement and answer questions. After seven weeks of outpatient treatment, Katie was able to return to work with some temporary accommodations to her work schedule and route. The behavioral health specialist continued to follow up with Katie through her release to full duty to ensure her transition back to work was successful.