

Back sprain as a result of manual handling at work

On 30 August 2011, a 40 year old employee working as a warehouse operative injured his back performing a lifting activity at work. The injured employee's pre-injury duties were very manual in nature and required frequent turning, twisting and lifting.



Rehabilitation

- The injured party (IP) was referred to QBE's early intervention pre-claim rehabilitation service on 13 September, some 14 days after the accident. The IP was not referred earlier as he did not make his employers aware of the injury until some 10 days after the accident.
- The injured employee was non-English speaking and an interpreter was required to obtain consent and allow the IP to participate in the rehabilitation process.
- As part of the initial assessment the case manager determined the IP was sustaining his heavy manual pre-injury role but was experiencing high levels of pain. The case manager also established the IP was sustaining their return to work against the advice of their GP, who was concerned of the risk of sustaining further injury.

Key facts

Total cost of rehabilitation

[£570 Rehabilitation service provider (Inclusive of translator fees) / £406 Physiotherapy costs]

£976

The rehabilitation provider helped the IP safely maintain his work through liaison with his employer. This meant a modification of his current duties to ensure they were safe and did not jeopardise his recovery until such time he could return to his pre-injury role.

The rehabilitation provider expedited the IP's return to his pre-injury duties by engaging timely private therapy services where there were NHS delays in provision.



The employer benefitted from the rehabilitation provider's input as they were unaware the IP was continuing to work against medical advice, which could have resulted in greater injury and a significant work injury related absence. The return to work planning of the IP prompted the employer to review the ergonomics of the job role and subsequently made changes potentially preventing further injuries of this nature.

The case manager

- The case manager completed the initial telephone assessment with an interpreter to assess the IP's rehabilitation needs and provide recommendations to assist his recovery and safely sustain his duties at work.
- Following the assessment the case manager liaised with the employer to highlight that the IP was continuing his pre-injury duties against medical advice and was increasing the risk of further injury. The employer was unaware the IP was continuing work against the advice of his GP.
- The employer was able to offer lighter duties and the IP was able to sustain his pre-injury hours. The IP was very happy with this outcome as it meant he did not suffer any loss in pay which was very important to him.
- The case manager established there was a extensive waiting list for NHS physiotherapy services so a referral was made for private physiotherapy. A physiotherapist was sourced within half a mile of his home and the IP received 10 sessions.

- Through continued liaison with the employer, physiotherapy was delivered in conjunction with ergonomic and manual handling training to minimise the risk of further injury due to poor manual handling techniques.

Results

- The IP successfully maintained his RTW on lighter duties until January 2012 where he was able to return to his pre-injury duties after he returned to pre-injury function.
- A formal claim has not been received for this accident.
- In addition to the manual handling training and advice the IP received, the employer also ergonomically reviewed the job role. As a result, permanent changes were implemented to ergonomically improve the duties of the role, helping to prevent further injury.

Further information

If you would like any further information or advice on our rehabilitation service please contact the QBE Rehabilitation Team on +44 (0)20 7105 4000.

For more information on QBE visit:

www.QBEurope.com/rehabilitation or contact your broker.

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