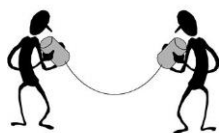


Return-to-work Support

Continual support for employees returning from disability or sick leave is crucial to their success. Read below for tips on how your workplace can effectively support employees after they return from leave.

1. Stay connected with open communication



Communication is the key. Both informal and formal means of communication are vital to a strong support system for return-to-work employees. Implementing formal check-in's to discuss employees progress will help determine adjustments to be made to work schedule or task load. Connecting informally such as occasionally asking how the employee is doing, demonstrates their well-being is a priority.

Open communication should remain intact even after the initial return. Be active with follow-up. Just because an employee has not expressed a need for assistance does not mean they don't need help.

Be aware of social isolation, poor work performance or negativity as they may be signs the employee is having trouble coping.

2. Keep the employee up-to-date on workplace changes



Over the course of leave, workplace changes may have taken place that the returning employee needs to be informed of.

Always introduce the employee to new hires, explain any updates in policies, technology or updates on projects.

Ensuring employees are kept abreast of changes as different situations arise helps reduce anxiety and stress levels during and after transition.

3. Allow for flexibility



Remember that modification requirements may change. Occasional evaluation of working conditions is necessary. Following-up with work load and scheduling will help highlight any additional changes to be made.

Also remember to follow-up with the entire team. As other employees may have taken on additional workload during the course of transition, it is important to inquire how the team is managing as a whole.

4. Refer employees to external support systems



Becoming aware of additional support networks for your employees can provide them with further means of care.

The OASSIS EAP Provider Ceridian offers numerous resources on health topics as well as one-on-one support. For more information on Ceridian's services visit www.lifeworks.com or call 1-877-207-8833.

OASSIS also offers Wellness Services, where employees can access health and wellness resources in regards to mental and physical health. For a full list of services visit www.oassisplan.com/wellness_services.

5. Commit to health and safety in the workplace



Adopting a healthy workplace environment that supports physical and mental health is a sure way to prevent future workplace related injuries. Fostering a workplace wellness program can encourage employees to become and stay healthy which will aid in recovery and prevention.

Providing support for stress-management, work-life balance and healthy habits such as nutrition and physical activity is a great way to promote a healthy workplace and reduce risk of employee illness and injury.

If your workplace is interested in implementing a wellness program, contact the OASSIS Wellness Consultant at wellness@oassisplan.com or 1-888-233-5580 ext. 310.

Sources: *Managing an Employee's Successful Return to Work Following Leave.* Ceridian Corporation (2006)., *Seven 'Principles' for Successful Return to Work.* Institute for Work & Health (2014).