Strategic Lean Project Report



Pilot: Streamlining Pre-Authorization of the Initial Mental Health Evaluation

Agency: Labor & Industries

Partners and Customers: Mental Health providers, injured workers, claim managers

Project Impact

L&I reduced waste in the pre-authorization of the initial mental health evaluation for potential post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) sufferers in one Designated Service Area (DSA), resulting in a decrease of 25 days to preauthorize this critical evaluation, from well over 30 days to an average of five in the pilot. These are preliminary results.

Washingtonians in the pilot DSA who have suffered a traumatic on-the-job injury and may be in danger of developing PTSD are able to receive a mental health evaluation sooner.

Project Summary

Across the workers compensation claims program, we average about 5 days between the department's receipt of a request for department-level pre-authorization and the claim manager's (CM) or other appropriate staff's response when the provider uses an official pre-authorization request form. There's one notable exception to this: if the provider is requesting a mental health evaluation, we typically take well over 30 days. It is not uncommon for it to take several months to complete pre-authorization as we wait for workers and providers to respond.

The project goal is to eliminate waste in the process of granting pre-authorization for an initial mental health evaluation for possible PTSD sufferers. The pilot, running from 3/1/17- 11/30/17, allows us to test this new process. The pilot will also address unacceptable risks and unintended consequences, for example: whether or not the department will receive the prior medical records needed to adjudicate the claims.

The Pre-Authorization workgroup mapped the process of authorizing an initial mental health evaluation, identified areas of waste and delay, and designed a simplified process for potential PTSD claims that:

- 1. Involves the mental health evaluator in collecting the prior medical records, as they do for non-L&I patients;
- 2. Reminds the evaluator not to offer an opinion on causation without first reviewing the prior records; and;
- 3. Shifts the CM's required file review to a time when an actual decision is being made on the claim.

Project Results

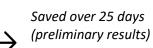


We will evaluate this 12 months after pilot end to allow time for providers to bill..





We will evaluate this several months past the pilot end, to allow providers time to complete evaluations and submit reports.





Decreased Time to pre-authorization of a mental health evaluation for possible PTSD sufferers **from** well over 30 days **to** an average of 5 days from receipt of the request for pilot-eligible injured workers.

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CMs and workers involved report initial satisfaction with the simplified process. Additional assessment of customer satisfaction will take place after the completion of the pilot.

In progress

Phone: 360-902-5052

Project Details

Date improvement project was initiated: 3/1/2017Project Contact: Cheryl D'Angelo-Email: dane235@lni.wa.govGaryReport reviewed and approved by: Randi Warick, Deputy Director

Reporting Period: January – June 2017