

# Role of a Nurse Case Manager

Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI) employs registered nurse case managers (NCM) to assist in managing medical care. An out-of-state NCM may also be contracted to assist an injured employee who treats or has moved out of North Dakota.

## What does the NCM do?

- Complete the initial contact to gather information
- Assist in understanding the nurse case management process
- Maintain contact with the injured employee, health care provider, employer, vocational case manager (if assigned), and claims adjuster
- Attend medical appointments as needed (private time is allowed)
- Answer questions on medical care and return-to-work process
- Coordinate treatment recommendations and monitor recovery
- Obtain and review functional capabilities
- Provide healthy lifestyle education

## What does the NCM not do?

- Provide hands-on medical care
- Diagnose medical condition
- Provide transportation
- Prescribe medication

## How does the NCM assist with return to work?

- Works with the injured employee, health care provider, and employer to develop a safe return-to-work plan
- Provides job description to the health care provider
- Obtains functional capabilities from the health care provider
- Coordinate return to work

## How are functional capabilities determined?

A health care provider may complete the following:

- Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE),
- Workability assessment, or
- Neuropsychological exam

These are used to determine the safe level of activity both on and off the job.

## What are the responsibilities of the injured employee?

- Maintain contact with the NCM
- Provide the NCM with medical updates
- Attend all scheduled appointments
- Participate in treatment recommendations
- Maintain contact with the employer
- Follow functional capabilities on and off the job
- Notify the NCM of return-to-work date

## Terms you may hear during the return-to-work process

**Functional capabilities** are your physical abilities determined by a medical provider.

**Transitional work** is temporary and allows you to remain safely in the workplace in a modified or alternate position.

**Modified work** is your regular job modified to match your functional capabilities.

**Alternate work** is different job duties assigned if you are unable to perform your regular job duties.

**Maximum Medical Improvement (MMI)** is the point when medical recovery has stabilized and no further improvement is expected.

**Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE)** is a test given by a physical or occupational therapist to determine the safe level of physical activity both on and off the job.

**Workability** is a modified assessment by a physical or occupational therapist that measures current functional capabilities during recovery.

**Work Conditioning Program** is a strengthening program to improve function and endurance.

**Work Hardening Program** uses real or simulated work activities to improve physical function with the goal of returning to your regular job.