

# Health and Behavioral Assessment and Intervention Services

Using Health and Behavioral Assessment and Intervention Services (HBAI) services in returning injured workers back to work, back to life.

## Challenge

When a workplace injury occurs, cognitive, emotional, social and behavioral issues can create a barrier for healing the injury. Traditionally, the health-care environment wears handcuffs when treating these issues. It views injury recovery through a mental health treatment lens, or alternatively, from a purely physical perspective. This creates challenges to appropriate timely treatment, recovery and return to work.

## Solution

HBAI services provide the appropriate focus to address barriers resulting from cognitive, emotional, social and behavioral issues, when the physician of record determines that one or more of the barriers are negatively impacting a physical injury's healing. HBAI services **are not** for treating mental health issues. They focus on physical health problems and barriers impeding healing. Examples of barriers include:

- Catastrophic thinking.
- Inadequate coping skills.
- Fear of movement or re-injury.
- Perception of injustice.

## Next steps

The HBAI approach presents tools and services that physicians may use based on their clinical judgement to identify issues that are interfering with a physical injury's expected healing. The injured worker's physician of record (POR) can request HBAI assessment services when he or she determines:

- Injured worker is not progressing with his or her injury after an initial course of treatment.
- Healing appears delayed due to behavioral barriers.
- Injured worker has the capacity to understand and respond meaningfully during a face-to-face encounter.

In the past, when a physical injury's healing was not progressing as expected, the standard practice may have been to provide additional medication or diagnostic testing. Now with HBAI, the physician can request an evaluation assessment to validate the existence of a behavioral barrier. He or she can incorporate in the treatment regimen services to address validated negative impacting behaviors.

## Assessment

The POR can request approval from the managed care organization (MCO) via a *Recommendation for Additional Conditions for Industrial Injury or Occupational Disease (C-9)* for a Health Behavioral Assessment (HBA). The assessment identifies behavioral barriers that may negatively impact the injured worker's ability to progress in his or her recovery from an allowed physical condition.

## Intervention

Once the POR reviews the assessment, the POR may submit a C-9 to the MCO for approval of the recommended intervention services. Intervention services are coaching and/or counseling sessions to address those behavioral barriers identified as barriers to physical healing.