



Medical Provider Network Bulletin

Beginning Monday, January 31, CompWest Insurance Company will mail notification packets to each of our policyholders. The packets will contain the formal notice to employees of the introduction of a Medical Provider Network (MPN) to your Workers' Compensation program.

In 2004 the Legislature added Section 4616 to the Labor Code. This section allows employers, or Workers' Compensation insurance carriers, to enter into contracts with networks of physicians to provide medical treatment for work related injuries. The proposed Medical Provider Network must be approved by the Division of Workers' Compensation of the State of California. Once approved, an employer, or carrier, can select a physician from the network to treat an employee's work related injury from the outset of the case to its conclusion. Until now, an injured worker could choose any physician he or she wished to treat an injury once thirty days had elapsed from the report of the injury. There was also no limit on the number of times an employee could select a new treating physician.

The only exceptions to those required to treat with a physician in the Medical Provider Network would be for those employees who have notified the employer, in writing, prior to their injury of their wish to be treated by their personal physician for any on-the-job injury. Please see the paragraph about Physician Pre-designation in the blue Facts About Workers' Compensation pamphlet which was provided with your Claim Reporting kit.

CompWest Insurance Company firmly believes this change in the manner in which treating physicians are determined represents a positive step in our efforts to manage the cost of Workers' Compensation claims. Now we can insure that your employees receive the prompt, quality medical treatment necessary to allow them to recover from their injuries, and return to work as soon as practicable.

The only requirement of employers prior to instituting a Medical Provider Network, is that all employees be formally notified of this change, and that all new hires and re-hires be also formally notified of the requirement that they receive medical treatment for work related injuries within the MPN. The notifications, in English and Spanish, will be mailed to you next week for copying and distribution to your current employees, as well as to be incorporated into your "new hire" processing.

Please begin thinking of how you will conduct this notification process to insure that all employees are notified as required by the law. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Bill Van Kuran (714-641-9512) or Janina Lopez (714)-641-9511 in our Claims Department for further information.