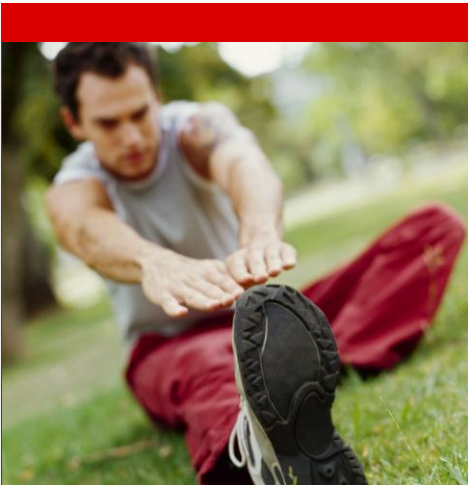




# JOB READY SERVICES

## YOUR STAMP OF APPROVAL FOR WORKPLACE FITNESS

May 2013 Issue



## WHAT IS A FIT FOR DUTY EXAM? IT DEPENDS ON WHO YOU ASK!

“We know an employee is having problems doing their job, and we send them for a Fit for Duty test but the physician sends them back to regular duty. ***There is nothing we can do but wait until they get hurt.***”

I heard this same concern several times while attending the recent Statewide Safety Conference. Each time they sent the worker to a physician for a FFD.... Wait a minute!!! There’s the problem. They were sent to a physician when they were observed having a work-related functional deficit: difficulty climbing, lifting, working at floor level, etc – and the physician did exactly what they were asked to do...medically evaluate the employee for their fitness to be on the job. Therefore, since they did not find a medical reason for the deficit, the employee was sent back to work. **Having a medical condition and having a functional deficit are two entirely different problems.**

For those of you who want to STOP the INSANITY – doing the same old things and expecting a different outcome - I am offering an **alternate means of determining Fitness for Duty** that will allow an employer to correctly intervene when a work related deficit is identified to reduce the risk of injury.

The points below are just part of the information you will receive during our next Lunch & Learn on **June 20, 2013: Reducing Work Disability: RTW and SAW Programs**. Traditionally, the focus has been on the existing injured worker, but the same scenario is just as important for an existing uninjured worker if you want to prevent that next claim instead of responding to the inevitable injury later.

The topics to be discussed will include:

- The employer’s rights under EEOC/ADA
- The components of a legally defensible FFD testing program
- The interactive dialog process
- Reasonable suspicion and reasonable accommodation processes (not at the same time)
- SAW/RTW opportunities
- Best case scenario outcomes
- ROI

### ***Our Services:***

- Functional Capacity Evaluations
- Work Conditioning
- Job Analyses
- Fit for Duty Testing
- Employment Testing

Who should attend? We all should come to the table as we are the stakeholders and beneficiaries of a safe workforce. Employers, Safety Mangers, Risk Managers, HR professionals, OHNs, Doctors, Insurance professionals and any others who deal with injuries in the workplace will benefit.

Those who should not attend: Those who have thrown up their hands and given up on trying to work in a system where they are not willing to use the tools they have been given to reduce injuries and protect our workers and their jobs.

We hope to see YOU there!

*-Submitted by Debra Lord, PT and President of Job Ready Services*

## **JUNE LUNCH & LEARN**

**Thursday, June 20, 2013**

**Topic: Reducing Work Disability: RTW and SAW Programs**

**Time:** 12:00pm - 1:00pm at the Job Ready office

**Cost:** \$10.00

**Credits Approved:** CCM (1 hour); Dept of Insurance (General Insurance – 1 hour)

**Speaker:** Debra Lord, PT, President of Job Ready Services

To Register: <http://www.jobreadyservices.net/index.php/education/lunch-and-learns-seminars/>

## **REMEMBER WORK CONDITIONING!**

Are you utilizing work conditioning? If your injured worker's medical treatment seems to be at a standstill, consider work conditioning to bridge the gap between treatment and return to work. Do you have an invalid FCE and don't know what to do with it? Consider work conditioning as a way to determine sustainability, to allow the worker to show their best effort,

and to improve their ability to return to work. Work conditioning will allow them to gain confidence and reduce fear of re-injury as well as educate them on how to manage and reduce inevitable "flare ups" at work. As a **DAILY** program, work conditioning should focus on the **work-related deficits** and how to reduce or eliminate those deficits to return to work safely. Getting an injured worker back to work even one day sooner will pay for the cost of the whole program. The average time out of work after an injury in NC is **25 weeks!!!** Remember that studies have shown that there is a **50% chance of an injured worker returning to work after only 6 weeks of being out!**

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**Job Ready Services**

In other news, we recently had a patient overcome some unorthodox obstacles faced with a work-related injury. Mrs. J faced one of the worst case scenarios, with regards to work-related injuries, but epitomized sheer resilience with her comeback. She suffered a severe shoulder strain from attempting to transfer a patient from their wheelchair to the bed. After months of physical therapy, Mrs. J was still not able to fulfill the fitness requirements of her RN position. Her doctor ordered her to attend work conditioning at Job Ready and after just 4 weeks of functional training and job specific training with the utmost rigor, she was finally cleared to go back to work! Mrs. J was 5-6 months pregnant while she was attending work conditioning, which shows that there are no variables too extraneous for our team! When asked about her work conditioning experience, she said, "[I] really enjoyed the interaction and job specific activities to prepare me to get back to the working field; would recommend to others to engage in if they were injured on the job."