



Company Profile

Review Med seeks ways to help businesses manage worker's compensation and contain costs

CAN COMPANIES AFFORD WORKER'S COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR EMPLOYEES?

The two words strike fear into the hearts of business owners and managers: workers' compensation. With medical costs spiraling out of control, businesses and their insurance carriers are struggling to manage expenses. Just as importantly, they need to get injured employees healthy and back on the job – fast.

In Texas, some insurance carriers have folded while others have stopped offering workers' compensation insurance. This is the predictable result of an environment which sees carriers on average paying out \$1.38 for every dollar they receive in premiums, according to a study by the Texas Association of Business. Those carriers still selling workers' compensation insurance have been forced to charge escalating premiums, pushing a significant number of businesses to go without coverage.

Enter Review Med L. P., a medical cost-containment firm based in Dallas. In business since 1997, Review Med has evolved to offer complete cost-containment services that significantly lower medical bills for employers, third-party administrators and insurance companies. The company accomplishes these financial goals while focusing on the health of injured workers to ensure they receive the high-quality care needed to get them back on the job.

“The alternative is high claims costs and rising insurance premiums. What many employers don't realize is that their insurance premiums are based on a three-year claims history. So a single year of high workers' compensation claims will raise their health care costs significantly for three years,” said Carol Lonidier, chief executive officer for Review Med.

Starting with a second opinion

In the late 1990s, a group of Dallas physical medicine and rehabilitation physicians noticed an interesting trend. More and more, they were being asked to perform peer reviews. These reviews are used by insurance companies and employers to ensure that a doctor's recommended course of treatment is reasonable and effective.

“When it came to workers' compensation, there was an increasing demand for specialists to render opinions on other doctors' treatment of patients,” Lonidier said. “But the requests were not

just for any doctor. The requests were specifically for highly qualified physicians who were board-certified specialists.” Thus, Review Med was born.

Lonidier and her team created a detailed process for evaluating and credentialing physicians to find the best-qualified doctors available across a number of specialties. The firm insisted that peer review physicians have a current medical practice.

“Immediately, the company was a major player in the fields of physician review and physician preauthorization,” Lonidier said. “The high quality of the doctors on our panel placed Review Med head and shoulders above the competition.”

Saving thousands with bill audits

After Review Med had been in business for a couple of years, the company’s clients began asking for more services, specifically medical bill audits.

“Our clients really liked the way we provided services to them -personal, confidential, and proactive,” said Shelly Bordonaro, Review Med president. “So they wanted to expand the services they purchased from us, rather than using another provider for medical bill audits.”

Medical bill audits provide both companies and insurance carriers an opportunity to significantly reduce the amounts they pay to pharmacies, hospitals and doctors. Review Med began offering medical bill auditing services in 2000.

Within the last year, the company saw additional opportunities for medical bill auditing services targeting companies with supplier diversity programs. As a result, a new sister company – a certified woman-owned business called Review Med Audit — was formed. Review Med Audit finds and eliminates duplicate charges, ensures that all line items are fair and reasonable, and determines whether bills are accurate and complete.

“Being a certified woman-owned business opens up new opportunities for us to serve public companies and those with government-driven mandates as a historically underutilized business,” said Bordonaro.

Taking care of patients to keep down costs

Building on its personal service, Review Med again discovered a business opportunity: high-quality case management.

“Many of our clients used large national firms for their case management needs, but they grew tired of receiving impersonal, inadequate and inconsistent service,” said Bordonaro. “In 2001, we launched our case management department to address their concerns.”

Today, Review Med provides medical and vocational case management as well as “return to work” services for its clients. Case managers deal directly with injured workers and the doctors

treating them, as well as insurance companies and hospitals. Case managers handle referrals, consultations, visits to the hospital, follow-up care and monitoring of medical procedures for injured workers.

This year, Review Med has its eyes on national expansion as it continues to offer full medical cost-containment services.

“We know we can compete nationally, based on what’s being delivered by our competitors,” Lonidier said. “There are so many companies saying they do what we do, but they’ve lost sight of what’s really important. They’ve forgotten that we’re helping injured people, as well as employers and intermediaries,” said Lonidier. “As long as we can continue to be a company that helps cut costs, while also being genuinely helpful, we’ll continue our pursuit to grow and service our customers. The minute we can’t do both, we’ll all find something different to do.

“It really gets back to this: being able to focus our efforts and attention on our customer service and making sure that carriers and injured workers get the high-quality, customized care they should expect. One of our goals is to help make a major difference in injured workers’ lives. As a result, they are happier and get back on the job sooner. That equates to reduced costs for insurance companies and the employer, who also receives a happier, more productive and loyal employee. What could be better than that?”

For More Information

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