

# FIRST SOURCE

BY FIRST REHABILITATION RESOURCES, INC.

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Editor: Sarah Gervasi

## FRR Offers 24/7 On-Call Availability AND Conducts Urgent Hospital Visits

In our world of Workers' Compensation Case Management, the 'unexpected' is to be expected! Incidents occur, and our Nurse Case Managers are often called upon to quickly assess, go and offer support, to mitigate these tenuous situations. A comprehensive post contact/visit update is provided, including all medical records obtained. A Nurse Case Manager's early involvement, in an incident resulting in severe injury and/or an incident of unclear intensity, demonstrates an Employer-Insured's concern for their Employee, provides immediate family support, brings clarity to the situation for all case-involved parties, and enhances early and appropriate medical treatment.

Requests of this nature have become quite commonplace for FRR, as we pride ourselves in our immediate and seamless Nurse assignment, and overall responsiveness to the needs of the claim. Many of our Nurse Case Managers have established direct contact with personnel at the various Hospitals in our service territory, and have a keen understanding of the Facility's inner workings ... both promoting access and accurate case assessment, while determining appropriate case management activities. While direct contact may be made with our Corporate Office during traditional business hours, contact information is, also, always available on our website ([www.1strehab.com](http://www.1strehab.com)) and main voicemail (888-252-0368) for evening and weekend needs; with immediate response time.



## Workers' Comp Outperforms Nation in Reducing Opioid Prescribing

Excerpts taken from 'Workers comp outperforms nation in reducing opioid prescribing', Louise Esola, *Business Insurance*, July 12, 2017.

The Workers' Compensation Industry is leading the charge in the war on opioids and prescription drugs. Through the use of alternative therapies and Pain Management programs, this industry is seeing real results, and setting the example for the rest of healthcare. An examination of opioid prescribing in workers' compensation when compared to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data show that entities in charge of treating injured workers are doing a better job at reducing the prescribing of powerful painkillers.

Nationwide, the average days' supply per opioid prescription increased 33% from 13 days in 2006 to almost 18 days in 2015, according to research released by the CDC in July, while the amount of opioids prescribed per capita in 2015 was approximately three times as high as in 1999. Meanwhile, nearly half of the states included in a study of opioid prescribing in workers' compensation cases have seen reductions in the frequency and strength of powerful pain medications given to injured workers, according to a study released in June by the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Workers' Compensation Research Institute.

'Year over year we (in workers comp) are decreasing,' said Nikki Wilson, Omaha, Nebraska-based pharmacy product director, whose company released its own 2016 Drug Trends Series report in June, finding that opioid prescribing is down. Specifically, they found an 8.5% drop in opioid utilization and a 9.9% decline in cost per claim, according to the latest batch of pharmacy data that compared 2015 prescription figures.

Ms. Wilson, whose company oversees prescribing for injured workers via claims management programs and other interventions, said there's a clear incentive for the workers comp industry. 'Because opioids for us and for everyone in workers' comp are the most prescribed ... that makes us pay attention,' she said. 'Part of the motivator is paying for the drugs.' Because of claims management programs and workers comp formularies that call for utilization reviews of drugs, those who prescribe under workers' comp are 'jumping through more hoops' than those who prescribe under group health, Ms. Wilson said.

The CDC, meanwhile, has acknowledged that providers overall need to further reduce the amount and strength of prescriptions. 'The amount of opioids prescribed in the U.S. is still too high, with too many opioid prescriptions for too many days at too high a dosage,' said Anne Schuchat, M.D., acting director of the CDC, in a press statement. 'Healthcare providers have an important role in offering safer and more effective pain management while reducing risks of opioid addiction and overdose.'

The CDC is working on using what it now understands to spur change, wrote Dr. Debbie Dowell, one of the authors of the CDC's report, in an email. In 2016, for example, the CDC released guidelines for opioid prescribing.

'We have overestimated the benefits of opioids for chronic pain and underestimated their risks,' she wrote. 'Increased opioid use for chronic pain increases amounts of opioids prescribed because prescriptions are written for more types of problems, because prescriptions are written for longer time periods when they are used for types of pain that persist, and because dosages tend to increase gradually when opioids are used long term. We now know that for most people with chronic pain, other treatments are safer and more effective over the long term. ... Clinical practice changes often take years even in the face of new evidence about benefits and risks.'

For questions about decreasing opioid use in your claims, please contact our Pain Management Certified Nurse Case Managers: Bonnie Painter, BSN, RN-BC, CCM located in DE/MD, [BPainter@1stRehab.com](mailto:BPainter@1stRehab.com), and Gaye Baker, BSN, RN-BC, CCM, located in NC, [GBaker@1stRehab.com](mailto:GBaker@1stRehab.com).



# The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Job Seekers

*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey's 2004 bestselling book, still resonates today. The step-by-step approach to solving personal and professional challenges is, indeed, highly effective. Our FRR Vocational Case Managers also strive to educate their job seeking-Clients to embrace change and to take advantage of new opportunities. This is how it might look for a Job Seeker - how do these habits translate for you, personally and professionally?

## 1. They take initiative

Finding employment is not a passive activity; it takes hard work and persistence.

## 2. They focus on goals

Setting short and long-term goals is important; the 'end in mind' may look different from next month's to next year's goal.

## 3. They set priorities

A Job Seeker doesn't apply to each and every single job, they prioritize and strategize.

## 4. They look for the win-win situation

Finding a job is a huge accomplishment, a 'win' for the Job Seeker. And the Employer also benefits with a new contributor/producer.

## 5. They communicate

Communication is critical. They are comfortable expressing skills and benefits to the Employer, and also voicing needs, wants and concerns. This can be tricky; FRR Vocational Counselors help to polish these essential communication habits.

## 6. They synergize

They utilize all resources to ensure success: their FRR Case Manager, online sites for research, networking with friends and family, consultation with their Claims Representative and Attorney, etc.

## 7. They reflect on and seek to repair their deficiencies

They recognize, reduce or eliminate barriers to goal-achievement.

## Easy Mediterranean Orange and Pomegranate Salad



### **Ingredients:**

- 1 Cup thinly sliced red onion
- 25 fresh mint leaves, chopped
- 6 Navel oranges, peeled, sliced into rounds
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of sweet paprika
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- Seeds of 1 pomegranate

### **For the Dressing:**

- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 1 1/2 tsp orange blossom water (optional)

### **Instructions:**

Make the dressing. In a small bowl, mix together dressing ingredients. Set aside.

Place the sliced onions in a bowl of ice cold water. Set aside for 5-10 minutes before removing from the water and drying completely.

Prepare a serving platter. Sprinkle half of the chopped mint leaves on the platter, then arrange orange slices and onions on top. Sprinkle a pinch of salt, sweet paprika, and cinnamon. Spread the pomegranate seeds on top.

Drizzle or spoon the dressing over the platter, sprinkle with remaining mint leaves, and let sit for 5 minutes before serving.

## Employee Spotlight: Carol Hanzlik, BS, BSN, RN

Carol joined FRR in the Spring of 2017 with the unique role of Nurse Case Manager and Account Manager with the Business Development Team. The combination of her extensive background of nursing experience and tenacious personality make her a great addition to the FRR Team.

Carol has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree from the Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing, graduating Summa Cum Laude, as well as a Bachelor of Science in Business Degree with a Specialization in Insurance/Risk Management from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Prior to joining FRR, Carol worked in the Medical-Surgical Unit at Southside Regional Medical Center in Petersburg, VA. Following that position, she was a Charge Nurse and Preceptor at Southside Regional Medical Center in Petersburg where she was a multi-year recipient of the Daisy Award, recognizing nurses for excellent patient care. In addition to her nursing work, Carol was also on the Applied Research Council and Professional Practice Committee.

Carol has been married to her 'better half' for six years and they have twin 3 year old boys. She has an adventurous spirit; she loves to travel, meet new people, and achieved the highest honor of Girl Scouts, the Gold Award. She loves Virginia wines and the Dave Matthews Band.

Carol's Case Management territory includes Richmond, Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Tidewater and Williamsburg, VA. In her marketing role, she can also be found in Southern/Western Virginia and North Carolina.

## Protecting an Aging Workforce

Excerpts from 'How to Protect Older Workers from Injuries on the Job', Maria Ines Zamudio, August 2, 2017, *Insurance Journal*

The U.S. government estimates that by 2024, older workers will account for a quarter of the labor market. Hiring an older worker comes with its risks and its rewards. Older workers often come to the job with more years of experience, and with higher skillsets, needing less training. With their experience comes knowledge of workplace dangers, and a smaller likelihood of accidents. They tend to be more cautious and have lower rates of absenteeism.

For all those benefits, it is also known that when an older worker does get injured, the cost will likely be higher due to the existence of comorbidities, and age making healing slower.

The National Institute for Safety and Health released a list of accommodations employers can consider to create a safe and more conducive work environment for older employees:

- Flexibility of schedule, locations and tasks while on the job
- Making sure work environments are not strictly sedentary
- Managing noise, slip, trip and other physical hazards
- Make the work environment ergonomically friendly
- Encourage teamwork to problem solve
- Promote healthy lifestyles and self-care in the workplace

*Please contact us to deliver our 'Aging Workforce' Presentation as a Lunch & Learn to your Team at your facility, [SGervasi@1stRehab.com](mailto:SGervasi@1stRehab.com)*

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