



Constituent Union HSPBA Enhanced Disability Management Program: Overview

The EDMP is a collaborative holistic program between the employer, employee and union. All regular employees must be referred to the program if they are:

- Off with a work-related illness/injury. The referral will be made on the first day of the illness/injury; or
- Off due to a non work-related illness/injury. The referral will be made after an absence of five consecutive shifts.

Participation in this program is required for all regular employees, unless there is a bona fide reason to decline or return to work is imminent. Participation is voluntary for all casual and regular employees who continue to work and self refer.

Services provided to casual and regular employees who self-refer and continue to work are considered on a case by case basis and are at the discretion of the Employer. All casual and regular employees who self-refer and continue to work (and who participate in a Case Management Plan) where services are being provided—are required to participate unless there is a bona fide reason to decline.

The Disability Management Professional, in consultation with the employee, determines if an employee is:

- A candidate for immediate enrollment in the program;
- Not an immediate candidate for the program; in which case, the employee's candidacy will be reviewed every 30 calendar days to determine suitability at a future date; or
- Unable to participate in the program or not a candidate for it due to the nature of the illness/injury.

Immediate Candidate for EDMP

Those employees who meet the criteria for EDMP and who require supports and services will be sent an enrollment package. EDMP services will be provided as required once informed consent has been received from the employee.

Not an Immediate Candidate for EDMP - Return to Work Imminent

Employees who meet the criteria for the EDMP program but are not immediate candidates include those for whom EDMP services are not required at this point in time. Employees who fall into this category are reviewed every 30 days as appropriate to determine suitability at a future date.



Employees who are “Return to Work Imminent” are those who will be returning to work within 30 calendar days from the date of disability. Employees who fall into this category include:

- Employees who will return to work without need for a GRTW or other Disability Management services;
- Employees who have an acute illness with an expected normal recovery, such as cold or flu; GI illness, norovirus;
- Employees who are participating in a GRTW type program (including Stay at Work, Modified Duties, etc.) in which the employee will be back to full duties within 30 days; and
- Employees who are unable to participate in the program or are not candidates for it due to the nature of their illness/injury.

An employee can be referred to EDMP services through a variety of avenues/methods and sources. They include but are not limited to self-referral or referral through ones’ union, a co-worker familiar with EDMP and its benefits, or a manager. (Such notification/input/referral may occur even without identification through the Payroll Report, or if the manager notices an employee’s struggles at work.) Other referrals can come from:

- Workplace Health Call Centre (WHCC);
- The provincial occupational incident reporting centre, in which case the WHCC notifies the Health Authority as per routing procedures established;
- Absence Report Line;
- Payroll Reports, which automatically identify employees on sick leave for more than five consecutive shifts (*these employees are required to participate in the EDMP program*);
- Attendance Enhancement / Management / Wellness Programs; and
- Other HR Programs.

Enrolment Notification Guidelines

If the Employee meets the eligibility criteria and chooses to participate in EDMP, then the Employee must be sent the EDMP Enrolment package.

The Enrolment package must include:

1. Confidentiality Policy
2. Authorization Form
3. Cover Letter to Employee
4. What Employees Need to Know

If additional medical information is required to determine return to work or other case management strategies, the following can be included in the enrolment package to the employee or can be sent separately at a later date, depending on need:

1. Letter to Physician (must be sent if OFA is sent)
2. Occupational Fitness Assessment (OFA) form



Enhanced Disability Management

If, or, when a participating EDMP employee is being referred to HBT, the employee must complete the EDMP HBT authorization. Employees are to complete all forms and return them to the Disability Management Professional (DMP) as soon as possible in order to ensure that timely case management can occur.

Names of all employees participating in the EDMP will be added to the Triage Report, which is provided to the EDMP representatives weekly. EDMP representatives will be notified of the names of HSPBA employees who refuse to participate in the program. Employees engaged in treatment or rehabilitation, who have normal expected recovery times, and require no services from the program will be monitored and reviewed.

If a labour relations issue impedes a successful return to work, the DMP will meet with the employee and the union representative to investigate and determine next steps. This conversation continues from the initial discussion and builds on the foundation of the relationship between the employee and the EDMP team. In the vast majority of cases, employees referred to the EDMP representative under the non-participation language will spend most of their time posing specific questions about the program.

The role of the EDMP representative is to provide the employee with enough information to make an informed decision. The goal of this conversation, for the EDMP rep, is to commit to answering all questions the employee may have. After the initial conversation, the EDMP rep may need to follow-up with the employee. The EDMP rep could answer some questions the employee may have by re-iterating the goals of EDMP.

Goals of the EDMP

- Provide early, appropriate and on-going support so that ill or injured employees maintain their connection with the workplace and return to work in a safe and timely manner;
- Provide support to employees who are struggling at work when participation in this program could reasonably prevent the employee from being off work;
- Provide appropriate, caring, professional case management of the ill/injured employee's medical, personal, workplace and vocational issues to facilitate a timely return to work;
- Promote a safe, accessible and healthy workplace;
- Encourage health promotion and employee wellness; and
- Reduce the cost of sick, long term disability (LTD) and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) leaves.



Developing a Case Management Plan

The Disability Management Professional (DMP) will develop a Case Management Plan (CMP) for all employees participating in the program. It is a holistic plan that provides a point-in-time summary of milestones and expected outcomes with the goal of facilitating a timely and safe return to work. The CMP will include claim status, limitations, restrictions and barriers to return to work efficiently.

Hierarchy of Return to Work Options

1. Return to own job
2. Return to own job with modifications
3. Return to alternate vacant job that is posted, with or without modifications
4. Return to alternate job that is not posted, with or without modifications
5. Return to alternate job with retraining, with or without modifications
6. Finding other alternate work that could accommodate employee
7. Exercising seniority

In the case of a straight forward CMP, the union representative will be notified of the need for a GRTW and may discuss the plan with the employee. If a GRTW takes place, the union rep will attempt to participate either in person or via teleconference. The union representative will be copied on the final plan, which will include the employee contact information.

A Straightforward Case Management Plan

1. Anticipates a RTW in a previously held position that may or may not include a GRTW;
2. Has a GRTW duration of less than six weeks;
3. Has clearance from the appropriate medical professional;
4. Has seen no change in the employee's FTE;
5. Has not identified any workplace or HR/LR issues that would impede a RTW;
6. Has not had concerns raised by the employee requiring intervention by a union representative when the GRTW is determined; and
7. Has been signed off by the employee (informed consent, i.e. an expression of agreement by the employee, is sufficient).



Complex Case Management Plan

In the case of a complex CMP, the union representative, the employee and the DMP will meet to develop and/or revise the CMP. (The union representative does not provide medical case management.) In the event that more than one medical professional is involved, they will be consulted on their expertise. They may be a part of the planning and implementation stage.

The CMP will document what is required for clearance prior to a return to work.

A Complex CMP is one that does not meet the straightforward definition and may include one or more of the following elements:

1. Has a GRTW duration of more than six weeks;
2. Requires a temporary accommodation/transitional work for an illness/injury with a lengthy recovery time;
3. Has identified the need for vocational training;
4. Has a component of workplace and/or HR/LR issues;
5. Has issues related to a claim for LTD, ICBC, or WSBC benefits;
6. Involves a report to a professional association; or
7. Requires permanent accommodation.

At any point during the employee's recovery, the plan can change from straightforward to complex. Some reasons that this plan may need to switch accordingly:

- Workplace issues have been identified;
- Employee has concerns and has requested additional union involvement (i.e. a break in the collective agreement); and
- Employee is unable to return to his or her previously held position upon completion of the GRTW.

If the employee is concerned about confidentiality, it might help to outline some highlights of the policy, such as:

Confidentiality is a guiding principle in the Collective Agreement and a corner stone of the EDMP. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the EDMP contains the following provisions with respect to confidentiality and privacy.

Employees must provide:

- Sufficient personal information, including medical information, to allow the EDMP to be delivered effectively; and



- The personal information requested must be relevant and necessary with regard to return to work. Generally, more personal information will be required as the Case Management Plan (“CMP”) becomes more complex.

Personal information is collected under the EDMP for the purposes of:

- Determining eligibility for the program;
- Identifying and addressing barriers, restrictions or limitations to staying at or returning to work;
- Providing services to facilitate staying at work or the earliest possible return to work;
- Planning and facilitating recovery at work;
- Planning and facilitating return to work, either in an employee’s own job or in an alternate job;
- Determining eligibility for and paying benefits; or
- Permitting collaboration among the parties and third-party benefit providers regarding these purposes.

Personal information can also be collected for other purposes permitted or required by law, such as personal information that is collected anonymously for statistical reporting that may be permitted or required by law. When collected personal information is to be used or disclosed for a purpose not previously identified, the new purpose must be identified. Unless the new purpose is permitted or required by law, consent is required before the data can be used or disclosed for that purpose.

Your Return To Work

The EDMP understands that returning to work healthy is important. It is thus important to emphasize the following:

- When you are returning to work, the team will address any barriers, restrictions and limitations as described by your rehab team (G.P. specialist, etc.);
- During your return, every attempt will be made for you to return as supernumerary. You will be expected to follow your GRTW, and not take on tasks you are not ready for;
- EDMP is about understanding an employee’s barriers, limitations or restrictions to returning to work. The purpose is to work with you and develop an action plan that addresses your return to work in a safe and efficient manner.



Your Treatment Plan

Participating in the development of your treatment plan will assist in your recovery from injury and/or illness. The purpose of the treatment plan is to ensure support around your medical issue so that you may return to the workplace in a timely manner. Throughout your recovery, you may be working with several treating practitioners, i.e. your family physician, physiotherapist, chiropractor, social worker, counselor, and/or specialist. It is important to ask enough questions so that you understand what is going on, and the options associated with recommended treatments.

Some helpful tips:

- Discuss the various options of continuing to work in a modified capacity during your recovery;
- Gather information about activities that you should or should not be doing to assist with recovery;
- Advise your practitioner that your employer requires documentation that outlines your functional limitations and any restrictions/barriers you may have when initially returning to work;
- Inform your practitioner of your job duties and possible modifications to your work that would assist and support you in an early safe return to work;
- If your DMP provides you with a medical form for your treating practitioner to complete, make sure that all areas have enough information for the DMP to assist in developing a case management plan for you;
- Attend all scheduled appointments;
- Make sure your treatment provider receives updates on the progression of activities associated with the tasks of daily living;
- Be willing to fully participate in treatment sessions;
- Ask questions about the treatment being provided, and make sure you understand the progression of treatment;
- If treatment is not progressing as expected, inquire about additional or alternative treatment modalities and options;
- Communicate with your DMP or union rep with any questions, concerns, etc.;
- Provide updates to your DMP on an ongoing basis to ensure the development of an appropriate Case Management Plan;
- Share medical documentation with your DMP to facilitate an early safe return to work plan when appropriate, including: nature of the illness/injury, functional limitations and/or restrictions and prognosis for return to work; and
- Identify any barriers that may interfere with your ability to return to work. These could include medical, personal, workplace or vocational barriers. Have the discussion with your DMP or EDMP representative, and they will work with you on your plan.



Developing Your Plan

In developing your treatment and GRTW plans, the EDMP will address your current functional status, medical limitations and restrictions, and the prognosis/duration of your illness or injury. It will also provide recommendations for your progression and symptom management.

Gradual Return to Work

The GRTW is an individualized plan put into practice once the employee is able to return to the work site. The GRTW plan, which is discussed with the employee and the EDMP union rep prior to the return to work, is individually customized and identifies the job duties, type, and length of shift for the employee over a period of time. The goal is for the employee to work his or her way up to full pre-EDMP hours. Some facts about GRTW:

- The GRTW plan is communicated with the stakeholders (individual, health care provider, manager/designate, insurer and union);
- The plan is flexible and based on objective medical information that meets the needs of the employee;
- The plan does NOT include any shifts on statutory holidays;
- The employee and/or manager/designate is aware of who to call and what to do if things are not progressing; and
- The employee is monitored for 30 days after the GRTW. If all goes well, the EDMP file will be closed.

Some questions the DMP/Union can assist in addressing prior to your return to work:

- Review the plan: are you following it, and taking breaks?
- Do you require more treatment?
- Do you need onsite job coaching?
- Do you need a review of the process of how to ask for help?
- Do you need a review of the discussion regarding how to discuss/not discuss your disability?
- Do you need time for education on further disability prevention?
- The plan includes micro-breaks for symptom management. Do you understand the purpose of these breaks and, if so, when will you take them?
- Have you ensured that your plan does not overlap with pre-planned vacation time?
- Have you been mindful in considering any “extra issues” that may crop up?



Offering Modified Duties

Work accommodations can assist employees in the recovery process while also ensuring their continued productivity at work. Offering opportunities to work despite disability is also a legal requirement under human rights legislation.

Managers can assist by identifying opportunities to recover at work that are meaningful, productive, and respectful of the employee's skills, classification and abilities.

Identifying Appropriate Modified Duties

Consider the kinds of work that may be available as modified duties. For example, depending on the nature of your illness/injury, you might consider work that can be less physically demanding as well as work that can be less cognitively demanding. The work can be tasks that are part of the regular job description ("other related duties") or those that are short-term projects that can be paced.

Physically Less Demanding Work

Lighter tasks generally are those that require less weight bearing (standing or walking) and involve lifting, pushing, pulling or carrying force or weight of less than 20 pounds.

Moderate tasks are those that require lifting, pushing, pulling, or carrying of weights and forces between 20 and 50 pounds. Patient transfers for moderately independent patients/residents or clients fall within this level.

Cognitively Less Demanding Work

Employees on the GRTW plan can still be productive in the workplace while performing tasks that are:

- Self paced and structured;
- Located in a quiet environment with fewer distractions;
- Routine in nature;
- Less likely to expose one to confrontational situations and interpersonal conflict; and
- Likely to require less concentration, attention to detail or performance pressure.

Other Related Duties, Project Work

Think of activities that may not be part of the regular work routine but are still part of the job duties. These may be quality assurance or safety tasks such as reviewing safe work procedures, inventory or chart audits. Also consider necessary projects for which the employee is qualified that are meaningful, productive and value added. These may include activities associated with new work initiatives or research opportunities, i.e. setting up a learning module for new practice directives, or file audits.



Some Final Thoughts

- EDMP is a collaborative program jointly developed by your union and employer;
- Once you are enrolled in EDMP, costs associated with gathering medical documentation will be covered; and
- The program is required for all employees that meet the eligibility criteria. Those that continue to refuse to participate will be referred to the HR/LR process.

Glossary of Terms

CMP: Case Management Plan

DMP: Disability Management Professional

EDMP: Enhanced Disability Management Program

GRTW: Graduated Return To Work

HBT: Health Benefit Trust

HR: Human Resources

HSPBA: Health Sciences Professional Bargaining Association

LTD: Long Term Disability

OFA Form: Occupational Fitness Assessment Form

WCB: Workers' Compensation Board

WHCC: Workplace Health Call Centre