



NEWS RELEASE

Board of Supervisors

December 20, 2016

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County secures assistance for December 2 survivors



The County has reached an agreement with IW Care Connection Inc. to provide enhanced nurse case management and system navigation services to County employees injured during the December 2, 2015 terrorist attack at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino.

“Nothing is more important to the County than the care and recovery of those affected by the December 2, 2015 terrorist attack,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos. “We hope this agreement will address the needs of County employees who have experienced delays in getting the help they need and deserve.”

Working closely with those County employees who have had difficulty with the state workers’ compensation system, it became clear to the County that the primary issue has been healthcare providers not submitting sufficient documentation describing proposed treatments in a complete and timely manner. When providers submitted the correct state-mandated paperwork, the County has secured the necessary approvals in no more than two days, far short than the five days allowed by state law.

IW Care Connection has been charged with providing personnel who:

- Are familiar with the workers’ compensation system.
- Know how to work with treating physicians, pharmacies and other service providers, and the workers’ compensation program, including Utilization Review doctors and Independent Medical Review doctors, to prevent unnecessary interruptions in care.
- Will keep recovering employees informed about what’s happening, why it’s happening, and what their options are.
- Provide employees with personalized service to ensure needed paperwork is processed in a timely manner, allowing them to receive the care they need with minimal delay.
- Proactively identify potential milestones and/or impediments in cases and assist employees in preparing for them. For instance, IW Care Connection staff will know when prescriptions are due for refills and will ensure everything is done to ensure the refill is approved in a timely manner or that employees are prepared to cope with a decision not to refill, reduce dosage, or change medications.

The nurse case managers the County has been using since the incident have dealt with ensuring and coordinating the medical aspects of employee cases. IW Care Connection staff will focus on the administrative aspects of employee cases, using their knowledge of the worker’s compensation system to proactively

coordinate and communicate with medical providers, Utilization Review physicians, workers' compensation adjusters and employees.

The County has constantly adjusted to the unique circumstances created by this tragedy. The agreement with IW Care Connection is the County's newest effort to address the evolving needs of its employees.

The Board of Supervisors on Nov. 28 authorized the hiring of a firm to expedite the workers' compensation process for County employees and on Dec. 6 allocated \$100,000 toward the effort. The County interviewed three firms and selected and negotiated an agreement with IW Care Connection.