



Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) Demonstration Project

Research has shown that individuals with non-occupational illnesses or injuries are at high risk of becoming unemployed. To see whether providing intensive return-to-work coordination hastens their recovery and improves their chances of remaining employed, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services applied for and received a RETAIN grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. Under Phase 2 of the project, Ohio will expand its successful Phase 1 model, which was piloted in Northeast Ohio, into other regions of the state.

Who will receive services?

18- to 65-year-old workers in the following counties who have non-occupational illnesses or injuries that impact their ability to work or perform their jobs:

- Northeast region: Columbiana, Mahoning, and Trumbull Counties
- Northwest region: Lucas County
- Southwest region: Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren Counties

What services will be provided?

When they seek treatment at a Mercy Health facility, eligible individuals will be given the opportunity to participate. If they agree, they will be assigned either to a care coordination group or to a comparison group for research purposes. Those in the care coordination group will be assigned to a health services coordinator, who will communicate with their employer, health care provider, and insurer to facilitate a return to work. The coordinator also may refer the individual to OhioMeansJobs center partners for additional assistance. In addition, a nurse hotline will be available to all participants.

When will this demonstration project take place?

Enrollment in the study will occur from January 2022 through March 2024.

How will the project be evaluated?

A third-party evaluator will use rigorous methodology to identify program outcomes. In addition, throughout the project, a RETAIN Roundtable comprised of medical, industry, and government stakeholders will identify and share best practices. The project's leadership team includes representatives from the Governor's Executive Workforce Board, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, Ohio Department of Health, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Bon Secours Mercy Health, and Workforce Development Boards 9, 12, 13, 17, and 18. Additional key partners include Ohio Department of Medicaid and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Where can I get more information?

Please email RETAIN@jfs.ohio.gov.

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