

Cowan Helps Hospital Stem Costs: *An Integrated Approach to Absence Management*

Three years ago, Winchester District Memorial Hospital (WDMH) in Winchester, Ontario, was facing a large absenteeism issue. Sick days per employee were in the double digits, and as is common with many hospitals, it was facing budgetary restraints.

In 2006, the absenteeism issue came to a head. WDMH realized they could no longer manage the issue internally and partnered with Cowan for Short Term Disability (STD) adjudication and Long Term Disability (LTD) administration services.

The two had already forged a strong relationship, starting in 2001 with consulting services. Over the years, the relationship expanded to include early intervention services, third-party administration of claims, and the purchase of Cowan's "out of country" coverage for its travelling employees.

With the addition of Cowan's sick leave adjudication services for its absenteeism issue, **WDMH was able to reduce average sick time usage to 7.3 days per employee from a staggering 27.1 days per employee.** According to the Ontario Hospital Association's Survey from 2006-2007, the WDMH went from the lower percentile to the top third percentile, following less than two years of implementation – in other words, their absenteeism rates dropped significantly.

WDMH not only saw their sick days reduced – they have saved approximately \$330,000 by reducing sick days per employee in the two years since they implemented Cowan's integrated service approach. This is especially astounding when one realizes it is a relatively small hospital, with approximately 122 employees. The added benefit of dealing with one provider means that you only have to make one phone call regardless of your question, and answers are communicated in real time.

You don't need to manage a hospital to realize the savings and additional benefits from an integrated approach. Nine times out of 10, you will receive more personal and customized service from a provider who is already providing a service or product to you and your employees. You can also bet that the client service team will have a better understanding of your needs and will be able to anticipate your future needs in these ever changing times.

If you would like more information on further services offered, please contact your Cowan consultant or the author of this article, Susan Novo, Manager of Health and Disability Services at Cowan, at 1-888-509-7797 ext. 274; susan.novo@cowangroup.ca

By the Numbers

Size of hospital:

- 122 Employees

Original sick days per employee:

- 27.1

Current sick days per employee:

- 7.3

Money saved through reduced sick days:

- \$330,000