



January 6, 2006

~CSRMA ALERT~

Medical Provider Network (MPN) Information Update

CSRMA is pleased to announce the creation of the CSRMA Medical Provider Network (MPN) in accordance with the Workers' Compensation reform effort passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Schwarzenegger last April. These reforms govern the medical treatment component of the workers' compensation system and are designed to improve the treatment process for injured workers by governing the creation and operations of Medical Provider Networks.

WHAT IS AN MPN?

A Medical Provider Network (MPN) is an entity or group of providers, set up by an insurer, self-insured employer or Joint Powers Authority (JPA) and approved by the administrative director of the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC), to treat workers who are injured on the job. Each MPN must include a mix of doctors who specialize in treating work-related injuries and doctors with general areas of medical expertise and they are required to meet certain access standards to care for common occupational injuries and work-related illnesses. Further, the regulations require MPN's to follow all medical treatment guidelines established by DWC and must allow employees a choice of provider(s) in the network after the first visit. MPN's also must offer an opportunity for second and third opinions if the injured worker disagrees with the diagnosis or treatment offered by the treating physician.

The regulations provide safeguards for workers injured prior to the establishment of approved MPN's by allowing them to continue to receive treatment from their existing doctor(s) if the worker is scheduled for surgery, or the worker's condition is acute, serious and chronic, or terminal.

HOW THIS IMPACTS CSRMA MEMBERS

CSRMA has worked with Bragg and Associates and Interplan to create the CSRMA MPN. All CSRMA Workers' Compensation Program members will have access to the MPN, but members are not required to participate in the MPN. There is no additional cost to members to participate in this important cost-savings and claims management program. **The effective start date of the CSRMA MPN is March 1, 2006.**

CSRMA is providing this information well in advance of the March 1, 2006 rollout date in order to give members ample time to ask questions and take the steps necessary to participate.

HOW DOES MY AGENCY PARTICIPATE?

Step 1: Provide all employees with a copy of the attached Initial Written Employee Notification Re: Medical Provider Network in accordance with Title 8, California Code of Regulations, section 9767.12 and a copy of The Facts About Workers Compensation brochure **30-days prior to notifying Bragg and Associates that you wish to participate in the MPN.**

For example, if your Agency wishes to begin participation on March 1, 2006 when the program officially starts, you must provide all employees with a copy of the attached letter no later than **January 30, 2006.**

NOTE: CSRMA **STRONGLY** encourages your Agency to have employees sign and date an acknowledgement of receipt for the Initial Written Employee Notification Re: Medical Provider Network and The Facts About Workers Compensation brochure. The brochure informs employees of their legal right to pre-designate a personal treating physician outside the MPN in accordance with California law.

CSRMA has enclosed five copies of the brochure for your use. Additional copies can be obtained by contacting:

- A. Eileen Gould with Bragg and Associates at: eileen.gould@gbbragg.com or at 916.960.0955
- B. California Workers' Compensation Institute at www.cwci.org or at 510.251.9470

Step 2: Notify Nancy Hutton at Bragg and Associates when your Agency is ready to begin utilizing the MPN. Nancy Hutton can be reached at nancy.hutton@gbbragg.com or (916) 960-0979-Direct phone

Step 3: Include the attached Initial Written Employee Notification Re: Medical Provider Network letter in your Agency's New Employee Packet and provide to all future hires.

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION

- CSRMA will be providing a seminar on the *What, Why and How* of the CSRMA MPN on January 18, 2006 at the CSRMA/CASA Risk Management Seminar in Palm Springs at the January CASA.

To register, please go to: http://csrma.org/registration/risk_management_0601.asp

- CSRMA will also be providing three seminars in March 2006 on the following topics:
 - The Revised CSRMA Workers' Compensation Claims Management Program – *How to Effectively Manage Your Workers' Compensation Claims*
 - The CSRMA Medical Provider Network – *What, Why and How*
- Contact *David Patzer, CSRMA Risk Control Advisor* at 707.373.9709 or at losscontrol@sbcglobal.net