



Job Ready Services

Job Ready Services, LLC

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What to Do With an Invalid FCE

The Physician has released the injured worker to return to work “within the guidelines of the FCE”, but the results of the FCE are “invalid.” What now?

You have not wasted your time or money on the FCE. The FCE has told you the LEAST the injured worker can do with a high probability he/she can do more. There are several options on what to do with an invalid FCE:

- **Consider work conditioning.** You may see this as a frequent recommendation for an invalid FCE. The reason is the FCE is a mere snapshot of that person’s capabilities. A work conditioning program allows the FCE to be expanded so that the worker’s true abilities can be observed and documented over a period of time. If the worker does not show signs of improvement after 10 visits, then the IW should be discharged at that time and even more documentation of non-compliance has been obtained. Beware of physical therapy programs that say they do work conditioning, but what they really do is more P.T. There are no RTW goals in physical therapy.
 - **Repeat parts of the FCE.** Have the IW repeat parts of the FCE and to give maximum effort. There have been cases when an IW was ordered by the IC to repeat the FCE due to overwhelming evidence of lack of effort.
 - **Rate and Release.** Consider asking the physician to rate and release the IW based on the *objective evidence* of their abilities. If the FCE is invalid, then there is no objective evidence of their physical abilities and therefore, they have no restrictions. Or, obtain an IME or 2nd opinion, providing the results of the FCE to the MD.
 - **Job Site Work Hardening.** If the employer is willing to assist the IW to return to work on a graduated basis, a program of work hardening onsite will assist the IW to return to work by gradually increasing strength and endurance on the job.
 - **Obtain an ADA Job Description.** Do you have an ADA compliant job description which details the physical demands of the job? If not, this would greatly enhance the IW’s return to work by providing good information to the PT and MD about what is required on the job and whether the IW’s abilities match the job requirements.
- Learn more about the FCE.** You can also learn more about the FCE and its components, how to read and understand a report, what to do with an invalid one and what the recommendations mean. Job Ready offers an educational presentation entitled, “The ABC’s of FCE’s” and it has been approved for CEU’s for both adjusters and case managers. Just contact us and we will be glad to coordinate a presentation at your office or ours!



Out of all FCE’s done at Job Ready, 42% were invalid. 4 of those invalid FCE’s participated in work conditioning: 2 RTW reg. duty; 1 RTW modified duty & 1 was discharged due to lack of effort.

If everyone were to participate in an FCE, most would be valid. However, because those who are expected to do poorly are usually the ones who are referred for FCE’s, it sometimes appears that the majority are invalid. Also, most patients want to make sure that all of their problems get documented and may have a tendency to exaggerate their physical deficits. Work conditioning is a good way to determine whether those deficits are true or exaggerated. The FCE is a useful tool for obtaining objective information about physical abilities, even if it is invalid.

News and Upcoming Events

New Staff Member: **Julie Dubas, OTR/L**

Join us in welcoming Julie as our newest staff member. She is originally from the big state of Texas and is married with a 2 year old son. She is a certified Worksteps Evaluator and we are glad to have her on staff.

Did You Know that OSHA defines the following tasks as “physically demanding”?:
4 hours at a computer terminal
Lifting 25 lbs below knee height
Lifting 75 lbs (one time)

Upcoming Events

Don’t miss Lindee Greer from Worksteps—Featured Speaker at the NCIC conference on October 11 at Sheraton RTP. “The Disabling of NC Workers—A Positive Solution”

November 29, 2007:
12:00pm-3:00pm
Job Ready office

3 Presentations approved by DOI, CCM & CRC

Look for more information coming soon or contact:
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Next Lunch & Learn:
Thursday, December 13, 2007
Look for more information coming soon!!! Mark your calendar!