

OPTIMIZED OUTCOME SOLUTIONS

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The Cost of Doing Nothing by Harvey Warren

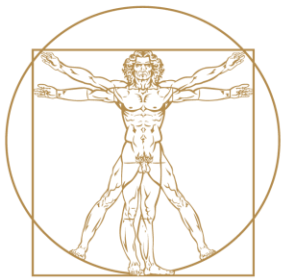
February 15, 2022 – “Patient education? Great idea! But who pays for that?” Employers - you do, whether you provide the education or not. That answer usually causes some silence and blinking until I say, “But the cost of patient education is so much less than the cost of failed recoveries as a result of doing nothing.” You’re already paying a high price for failed recoveries when you consider that no expense is being spared on the provision of medical care for injured workers. The workers’ compensation industry has been agonizing for decades over the high cost of failed recoveries. Baffled as to why and frustrated that there seems to be no solution. We believe that patient failure rates are higher than they need or ought to be because of a lack of patient education. The patient is the wildcard in the recovery process.

The simple fact is that “injured workers want to get better they just don’t know how.” That thought was the creative spark that ignited the development of the patient education program at Optimized Outcome Solutions, LLC. We engage and educate injured workers in their own recovery. Another question we are often asked is, “What are your credentials to educate patients in any recovery process?” The program was developed by patients who have experienced the same or similar medical issues as the injured worker, in consultation with physicians and other healthcare providers. Until recently we had no foundation, other than the book “The Optimized Patient,” to prove the idea that patients encouraging and supporting other patients is a viable patient education model. Now, the CDC has a “self-management” program on YouTube for chronic illness.

Akin to our approach, the CDC offers a collection of videos of peer group patients talking about how they overcame or managed a very difficult health issue. Completely separate and apart from the CDC program, we produced a book, videos, audio files and a nutrition plan to help injured workers “get better faster and stay better longer.” Our shared patient experience taught us that there are “four pillars” to preparing for surgery and/or recovery from a workplace injury - mindset, activity, rest and nutrition. In today’s workers’ compensation world, injured workers receive little or no information about their role in these four critical areas.

Mindset is of particular importance as the source of “the will to get well” and the foundation of a commitment to a full recovery. Our 16-week patient education model begins with engaging and motivating the worker with positive messages recorded just for Optimized Outcome Solutions by well-known personalities like NBA Hall of Famer, Bill Walton, MMA Fighter, Nathan ‘Rock’ Quarry, Blair Singer and Joseph McClendon III. Addressing the often negative and depressing mindset that comes with being away from work and struggling with a painful injury is often nowhere to be found in workers’ compensation care. Our peer model connects injured workers with people who have been where they are and made it to the other side of recovery.

Activity is commonly understood to mean getting some sort of movement to the injured area, as in physical therapy. The greater value of activity is enhanced blood flow bringing oxygenated blood to aid wound healing. Movement is a little different than activity, the importance of getting off the couch and moving around not just when you are visiting the doctor or physical therapist. Our recovery guides work to keep injured workers motivated and working on the activity assigned by their physician or physical therapist.



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Rest is an interesting need that would seem to be at odds with activity. But the kind of rest that is healing rest has to do with quality sleep, not binge-watching television and dozing. Too often rest is a byproduct or side effect of pain relief medication. The improper use and management of pain relief meds often results in a recovering patient who is anesthetized, not just made comfortable. All of the surgery patients who contributed to the Optimized Patient Book had excellent recoveries and all of them worked with their physician to back away from their pain meds as quickly as was bearable. They all noted the difference between being able to get comfortable and achieve quality rest compared to being doped into unconsciousness.

Nutrition is often the ignored bastard child of surgical prep and injury recovery. There is more and more emerging evidence of the important role proper nutrition plays in injury and surgery recovery. As we were writing our nutrition plan with the guidance of a PhD, RDN, we became aware of work being done at Duke University that, independent of our efforts, underlined the critical nature of nutrition in the perioperative experience.

Motivational videos on Monday, audio files of “The Optimized Patient” book on Wednesdays and meal plans with nutrition guidance on Fridays, together, with weekly personal calls from a trained Recovery Guide, are all part of what we believe constitutes an effective patient education program. Injured workers, insurers and employers now have access to a tested program that tells your employee that “you are not alone, and we care about your outcome.”

The cost of doing nothing is depriving the injured worker of valuable information to help them take charge of their recovery and to experience the feeling that their employer cares about them and will provide all the resources necessary to get them back to good health and back on the job. With your help and commitment, we can move the difficult experience of a worker injury to a new level of care that takes into account the reality that the patient wants to get better faster and stay better longer --- they just don’t know how.

Harvey Warren has enjoyed many careers from screenwriter to film producer to financial services professional. As author of the Optimized Patient book and survivor of three spine surgeries, he writes about the problem that “patients want to get better, they just don’t know how.” Optimized Outcome Solutions translates his book into a service providing real-time guidance on how to “get better faster and stay better longer.”

About Optimized Outcome Solutions

For decades patients have been disengaged from their own recovery primarily due to a lack of information and education. Optimized Outcome Solutions re-engages program participants in their recovery and provides them with the education and interaction they need to help them achieve an optimized outcome. Optimized Outcome Solutions is currently working with injured workers in Texas and is expanding to other areas. Visit www.optimizedoutcome.com for more information.