An Integrated Occupational Health Program

The definition - the ability of a worker to function at an optimum level of well-being at a worksite as reflected in terms of productivity, work attendance, disability compensation claims, and employment longevity. Mosby's Medical Dictionary, 8th edition. © 2009, Elsevier.

Christina Ross, PhD, writes from the National Institutes of Health that, “Unless and until medicine embraces the paradigm of the patient as a mental, physical and spiritual being, the medical industry is destined to be stuck in an infinite quandary.” She goes on to conclude that the health care of an individual must include, at the very least, an awareness of the cultural and social issues individuals face and the implications for their health outcomes.

The factors impacting the mental, physical and spiritual dimensions of the driver’s health are interlinked. In an effort to improve the whole-person health and wellness of professional truck drivers, Transport For Christ is working collaboratively with healthcare providers and trucking industry stakeholders to provide the necessary integrated healthcare model.
Value for the Professional Driver:

- Personal Relationships with Medical Providers and Counselors Who Care About Them and Understand Their Work Environment
- Ready Access to Professionals and Resources To Improve or Maintain Health
- Save Time – Convenient Access to Health and Counseling Services While On The Road
- Coordinated Care Among the Providers They Need and Medical Management for Their Chronic and Acute Conditions – Their Advocates in Navigating the Service Delivery System
- Family Involvement in Their Care as Desired and Needed

Value for Drivers’ Employers:

- Lower cost readily accessible healthcare coverage
- A Driver Workforce that is
  - Healthier
  - More Reliable
  - More Productive
- Greater Influence in Managing Healthcare Costs and Outcomes
- Greater Driver Loyalty / Less Turnover
- Greater Influence in Managing Risk Associated with Driver Safety

Why?

There are no organizations in the U.S. that are providing integrated primary care and wellness, behavioral health, and spiritual counseling services specifically for professional truck drivers.

Roadside chapels provide spiritual counseling worship services. Most roadside medical clinics primarily provide DOT examinations, urgent care, or a combination of both. Urgent care clinics, clinics in retail stores (‘minute clinics”), chiropractors, family physicians, specialty exercise device companies and others provide some of the services professional drivers need, but none provide the integrated mix of services designed to meet the whole-person needs of professional drivers where they spend most of their time – on the road.

There are nearly 7 million professional truck drivers in the United States. Approximately 3.5 million are CDL-licensed drivers. Due to an unhealthy lifestyle and lack of good nutritional options while traveling, truck drivers are categorically one of the unhealthiest populations in our country, and poor health is a key contributor to trucking safety. One person is injured or killed in a truck accident every 16 minutes. The United States DOT estimates that over 500,000 truck accidents occur every year with 8 out of 10 causes related to driver mental wellness.

Statistics from the National Institute of Health show that more than 50 percent of truck drivers are obese, compared to the national rate of 26.7 percent. Compared to the general population, the prevalence of diabetes is 50 percent higher and 87 percent of truck drivers have hypertension or pre-hypertension, compared to the national average of 58.3 percent. These health issues place a toll on families, impose a financial burden on employers and have created regulatory challenges for the federal government because they effect safety issues on our roads.
The most important aspect of these statistics is that these conditions are preventable through modifying risk factors. For example, among the general adult population, 21 percent smoke, and 49 percent exercise regularly, while 54 percent of commercial drivers smoke cigarettes and only 8 percent exercise. With the proper lifestyle choices, these drivers can reduce their disease risk and increase their life expectancy and quality of life.

Only 30 percent of drivers self-report that they have a primary care physician, which is largely due to the transient nature of the job and psycho-social issues regarding drivers’ health. With little access to primary care, healthy food, opportunity to exercise, and a compromised overall social wellbeing on the road, drivers encounter tremendous barriers to change, and demonstrate a tremendous health education gap as it relates to nutrition, exercise and healthy habits. Studies have shown that more than 70 percent of the 3.5 million CDL-licensed professional truck drivers in the United States have one or more of the following serious health problems, and that they occur in truck drivers at a significantly higher rate than the total U.S. population.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Asthma &amp; Allergy</th>
<th>Chronic Idiopathic Urticaria</th>
<th>Congestive Heart Failure</th>
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<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>Sleep Apnea</td>
<td>Hepatitis C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Dry Eye</td>
<td>Obesity</td>
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<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>Psoriasis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cancers (prostrate, breast, skin, lymphoma, lung and colorectal)</td>
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Truck drivers also lack the same access to healthcare services that most Americans enjoy, because drivers work irregular hours, spend long-durations away from home, and they are unable to navigate side streets and parking lots in their trucks to get to a clinic, pharmacy or hospital. Compounding the problem is the fact that more than one-third of truck drivers do not have health insurance.

The unfortunate result of these circumstances is that drivers are often unable to get treatment in the early stages of disease, allowing the condition to progress to a much more severe state. Minor illnesses become severe, leading to hospitalization and disability. The driver then may lose his/her commercial driver’s license and become unable to work, creating a downward spiral that leads to extreme financial hardship.

The heavy workload: demands of trucking weigh heavily in the development of:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Burnout</th>
<th>Anxiety</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Sleep Disorders</th>
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<td>Marital Issues</td>
<td>Family Issues</td>
<td>Sexual Addictions</td>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
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Stress and depression: adversely affect health outcomes such as:

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<th>Hypertension</th>
<th>Stroke</th>
<th>Myocardial Infarction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wound Healing</td>
<td>Cellular Lifespan/Aging</td>
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Religious involvement has been shown to be associated with lower:

- Stress-related Conditions: Cardiovascular Disease
- Post-surgery Complications: Stroke Rate
- Blood Pressure: Metabolic Problems, e.g., Diabetes
- Immune and Endocrine Issues: Cancer Risk
- HIV/AIDS Infection

Religious involvement is also a contributor to greater marital and family stability, greater reliability in the workplace, greater job satisfaction, more productive employees, and less job turnover.

**How?**

TWC centers will offer medical, behavioral and spiritual health services through collaborative, contractual relationships with existing provider organizations and networks – some regional and others national in geographic reach – that comprise the Professional Drivers Health Network (PDHN).

When drivers enter a TWC facility, the process of determining the type and priority of services and treatments based on their needs and severity of their conditions (triage) will be led by an advanced practice nurse working in tandem with the TFC Chaplain. Some services will be delivered by providers on site in the Center. Others will be delivered by providers via phone or video conference (telemedicine) supported by highly specialized technologies. Additional follow-up services will be provided by medical and behavioral health specialists with whom PDHN will have service agreements. Drivers who require urgent or emergency services will require transport to appropriate facilities with which PDHN will have service agreements.
At TWC Wellness and Care Centers professional drivers are able to receive health and wellness education, triage, medical, behavioral and spiritual health services in one strategically-designed facility. Follow-up services provided by PHDN medical and behavioral health specialists are provided outside the TWC centers. Care coordination and Case Management are provided within the PHDN network.

Medical Services, Screenings and Physicals, Health Education and Wellness Services will be provided via contractual relationships with PDHN by primary care physicians, advanced practice nurses and medical assistants. The providers will be affiliated with:

- Regional or national healthcare provider networks (including Direct Primary Care networks).
- Hospitals and healthcare systems.
- Independent practice associations.
- Primary care medical practices or multi-specialty group practice.
- Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers.

Behavioral Health Services will be provided by the licensed TFC Chaplains and by behavioral health specialists, behavioral health organizations and networks, as well as counselors specially trained to work with professional drivers and their unique needs.

Case Management and Health Coaching Services will be provided by companies that specialize in these services. PDHN will contract with companies that employ nurse case managers and health coaches who have earned professional certifications from best-in-class training organizations.

Spiritual Health Services will be provided by TFC Chaplains dedicated to reaching, supporting and encouraging truck drivers.

TWC and PDHN collaborate to deliver a **driver-centered model** of engagement and service (Patient Centered Medical Home). The professional driver and his or her family members are at the heart of everything we do:

- Fully-Integrated Medical / Behavioral / Spiritual Health & Wellness
- Pre-employment Services and DOT CDL Physical Exams
- Care for both Acute and Chronic Conditions
- Ongoing Relationship with a Personal Physician, Team of Other Providers, and a Chaplain
- Driver/Provider Partnership with Shared Decision Making
- Culturally Sensitive Care for Professional Drivers’ Specific Needs
- Ancillary Diagnostic, Therapeutic, Support & Counseling Services are Available from Regional Network Providers
- Care Coordination for All Drivers & Case Management for Those Who Need It

Services and Information are Accessible:

- TWCS are in Travel Plazas & Distribution Centers Located on Major Truck Routes
- Scheduled Advance & Same-Day Appointments as well as Walk-In Visits
- Access to Providers & Information After Office Hours
- On-line & Telephone Visits + Access to On-Line Patient Portal
- Health Insurance Contracts, Direct Primary Contracts, & Charity Care as Needed
Integrated care for body, mind and spirit:
• Behavioral and Spiritual Health Services Coordinated by TWC Onsite Chaplain who acts as the TWC Center Director and holds Behavioral Health & Chaplaincy Certifications
• TWC Chaplain and Medical Providers Collaborate on Driver Assessment, Triage and Care
• Counseling, by definition, is spiritual in the broadest sense and always considers the driver’s religious (or non-religious) perspective.
• TWC Chaplain Provides Spiritual Guidance for Less Acute Needs as well as Non-Denominational Religious Services.

Services are High Quality and Continuously Improving:
• Evidence-Based Best Practices
• Medication Management
• Clinical & Functional Outcomes Analysis
• Driver & Family Satisfaction Feedback
• Employer and Insurer Satisfaction Feedback

Transitions in Care are Coordinated with Regional Community-Based Resources:
• Leverage Automated Technologies (EMR, HIE, E-Prescribing, Remote Devices)
• Proactive Risk-Stratified Case Management for Complex & Chronic Conditions
• Peer Support Programs for Drivers & Families
• Referrals to Counseling Providers in the Network, in Driver’s Home Towns, or to TWC Chaplains in Other Locations Along the Driver’s Route
Trucker Wellness Centers (pictured above) are free-standing facilities that feature separate, private areas for medical (Area 1) and counseling services (Area 3). The medical services area is design based on the Ideal Micro-Practice concept.