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The Illinois Department of Insurance announced the approval of three Workers' Compensation Preferred Provider Program (PPP) Administrators: Coventry, Corvel and HFN. This follows the recent amendment to the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act which allows employers the right to set up networks of "company doctors" and force injured workers to treat with the company network or give up their right to see a second doctor of their own choosing.

At this time, no employer has been approved to implement a PPP, however, no doubt this will be coming soon. An employer will be able to hire one of these companies to administer their PPP using medical providers within the established network. If an employer-sponsored PPP is approved, employees must be notified about it on a special form created by the Workers' Compensation Commission. Even if the employer has an approved PPP, the injured employee retains the right to opt out of that program at any time and seek treatment from ONE doctor of their choice and any other medical provider in that doctor's chain of referral.

As these Administrators were just approved on 01/03/2012, it is too early to judge the quality of the medical providers in the programs. At Ridge & Associates, we will research extensively to determine if the networks meet the requirements of the Act and fight to protect the rights of workers injured in Illinois.

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