



## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **National Workers' Compensation and Disability Conference® Still Growing After 20+ Years**

*The 21st annual event provided an in-depth look into the workers' compensation industry's top obstacles and delivered strategies professionals can apply to protect employees while battling the opioid crisis and other challenges.*

**Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. – Wednesday, November 14, 2012** — More than 4,500 workers' compensation and disability management industry professionals from all 50 states gathered for the 21st annual **National Workers' Compensation and Disability Conference® & Expo (NWDC)** in Las Vegas. Professionals came together to exchange innovative ideas, identify best solutions and design effective strategies. The continuing effects of the economic downturn, chronic pain, psychosocial issues, return-to-work and technology were among the topics explored.

The 2½-day **National Workers' Compensation and Disability Conference®** held November 7 - 9, 2012, continues to be a must-attend event. Attracting not only employers, the event drew more than 40 large Third Party Administrators, 80 carriers and numerous risk managers, claims managers and human resources personnel.

"The conference caters to industry professionals from all segments, which was clearly reflected in the expanded program," said Nancy Grover, Conference Program Director. "The lively, informative and often times entertaining breakout sessions and panels dissected large problems and provided precise answers for attendees."

The more than 3 dozen sessions across four tracks on better claims management, health and medical management, solving legal/regulatory issues, and opioid solutions received positive feedback from attendees, along with the solid speaker line-up and new legal partnerships.

"This year's partnership with LexisNexis brought an additional level of legal content not before included," according to a recent blog post by Robert Wilson, President and CEO of [workerscompensation.com](http://workerscompensation.com). "The LexisNexis panels brought a fresh perspective to an already strong agenda."

From the Opening General Session to the final breakouts on the last day, it was apparent to attendees that the program focus has grown tremendously.

The Opening General Session, *Intriguing Insights: Leaders Debate Solutions to Industry's Top Challenges*, featured five of the industry's most respected thought leaders.

- Dr. Jennifer Christian, Founder and Lead Maze-Masters Guide, Maze-Masters Program; President, Webility Corporation
- Jill Dulich, Senior Director, Marriott Claims Services
- Maureen Gallagher, Managing Director, Neace Lukens
- John Leonard, President and CEO, Maine Employers' Mutual Insurance Company
- Dave North, CEO, Sedgwick

The panel, moderated by Mark Walls, Vice President of Claims at Safety National, debated and shared solutions to specific obstacles facing professionals. Topics discussed included medical cost containment, technology, recruiting the next generation for the changing workforce and much more. At the closing of the session, Mark Walls summed up five keys crucial to improving the system:

"Get back to the basics as an industry. Simplify the processes, get focused on the people, embrace

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technology and attract the next generation to build the future workers' compensation workforce.”

With the workers' comp spotlight shining on the opioid crisis, an entire track entitled *Opioid Solutions* was dedicated to stopping the epidemic. Attendees were equipped with strategies for winning the opioid battle in sessions that analyzed data, examined the role of Pharmacy Benefit Managers, described the closed formulary model and more.

Additionally, attendees received expert advice from prominent researchers and doctors including Dr. Gary Franklin, Medical Director at the Washington Department of Labor and Industries and Dr. Sanford Silverman, Physician's Assistant and Director of Comprehensive Pain Medicine plus a founding partner of Lorsand Continuing Medical Education, LLC.

“Dr. Franklin and Dr. Silverman gave a great overview of the problems inherent in using opioids to treat and they talked about solutions, although they didn't always agree on specifics,” said Joe Paduda in a recent blog post on his website, [Managed Care Matters](#). “It was refreshing, and a much needed change from the usual report on “here's-how-bad-it-is.”

Between sessions, attendees explored the largest Expo in the **NWCDC** history. The high-energy, vendor-packed Expo Hall offered many networking opportunities, including receptions and socials. Plus, the hall housed more than 270 exhibitors including: Xerox, MTI America, Align Networks, MSC Care Management, and HealthSystems, offering a variety of innovative solutions and services.

Next year's **NWCDC** will remain in Las Vegas, but at a new venue. The 22nd annual event will take place November 20 – 22, 2013 at Mandalay Bay. More details will be released next spring.

From now until next November, the conference continues virtually on LinkedIn, where the [National Workers' Compensation and Disability Conference® LinkedIn group](#) – a sub group of *Work Comp Analysis* group – maintains extremely active and lively virtual conversation. Additionally, the conference can be followed on twitter by searching the hashtag #NWCDCConf and following the [@WCCConf](#) twitter handle.

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