

November 3, 2021

OPERS contracts with Commonwealth Medicine for disability services

COLUMBUS, Ohio, and SHREWSBURY, Mass. — Commonwealth Medicine (CWM) and the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) are pleased to announce a three-year agreement in which CWM will provide rehabilitative and review services for OPERS disability recipients.

CWM will work closely with participants in the OPERS Rehabilitative Services Program, which helps OPERS disability recipients return to wellness. Participants partner with a clinical nurse case manager to map out a recovery plan and receive vocational assistance to help with their self-directed job search.

OPERS created the program in 2014 for its state-and-local members.

“By actively participating in the Rehabilitative Services Program and complying with their case management and treatment plans, disability recipients can extend the leave of absence from their last public employer to five years, from three years,” said Jeremy Polley, OPERS’ Assistant Director of Benefits Distribution. “Also, their continued eligibility for a disability benefit is evaluated based on their last public employment position, not any position, for an additional two years while they remain active in the program.”

Clinical nurse case managers support disabled individuals by conducting clinical assessments, creating personalized case management plans, and providing ongoing coaching and support. Case management teams have facilitated the transition of thousands of individuals from hospitals and nursing facilities and provided appropriate services to address their disability, rehabilitation, quality of life, community living, and employment goals. CWM clinical nurse case managers, case managers, and certified vocational rehabilitative counselors have supported more than 5,000 individuals with disabling conditions and complex medical needs since 1999.

The CWM team is known across the country for its clinical and operational expertise and personalized attention to its clients and their members.

“We have been working with OPERS for several months to ensure a smooth transition for OPERS members,” said Commonwealth Medicine’s Executive Vice Chancellor Lisa M. Colombo, DNP, MHA, RN. “I am confident OPERS members will benefit greatly from our experience and our commitment to our mission to empower our partners to transform lives through our innovative health care solutions.”

About Commonwealth Medicine

Commonwealth Medicine is the consulting and operations division of the UMass Chan Medical School. It draws on the academic knowledge and public health service expertise of Massachusetts’ only public medical school to provide comprehensive, innovative health care and policy solutions. Commonwealth Medicine is guided by a mission to empower its partners – state and out-of-state agencies and health care organizations – to transform lives by optimizing the effectiveness of health care initiatives that assist communities across the country.

About OPERS

With pension and health care investment assets of \$119.2 billion as of June 30, 2021, the [Ohio Public Employees Retirement System](#) is the largest state pension fund in Ohio and the 11th-largest state pension fund in the United States.

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