Rehabilitation is a critical part of disability management. Manulife’s model enhances the quality of intervention and the outcome of each case, ensuring each member has access to the appropriate rehabilitation intervention without delay. Our return to work and rehabilitation services are designed to ensure a safe, efficient return to work for members as soon as they are able, whether for regular duties within their own job, or in some type of modified work.

**Why use these services?**
Helping a member get back to work as soon as possible after an illness or injury is in everyone’s best interest. As a normal routine promotes health, return to work can speed up the member’s recovery process and improve his or her morale. It also saves the employer the cost of an extended disability claim and the lost productivity that goes along with it.

**How do our national rehabilitation services work?**
Rehabilitation Services help identify disabled members’ level of function (ability) and opportunities for return to work. These services can be part of a Short Term Disability (STD), Absence Management or Long Term Disability (LTD) program.
Our absence assessment and claims management processes evaluate each case for return to work or rehabilitation potential from the onset. Once a member is identified as a candidate for return to work or rehabilitation, a Rehabilitation Specialist identifies the specific needs of the case and proceeds with the appropriate rehabilitation services.

You can speak with your Manulife disability representative to ask for rehabilitation assistance if you believe one of your disabled members could benefit from Rehabilitation Services help, and we have not yet involved them.

**Who are our rehabilitation specialists?**

Located across Canada, our Rehabilitation Specialists are an integral part of the disability team. They work directly with disabled members, employers and/or health care providers to support the members’ recovery and return to work. We have three groups of Rehabilitation Specialists, each focused on an area of expertise and bringing a specific set of skills.

**Areas of expertise and specialized skills**

**1. Return to Work Facilitation** - The Return to Work Specialist engages in a short-term intervention (usually completed within one meeting), working directly with the member and employer to facilitate return to work for a member who has been absent from the workplace.

The case manager prepares the member for Return to Work Facilitation and provides any necessary follow-up after the intervention. This type of rehabilitation can be used when a member requires either:

- Accommodation of functional impairments through modified duties or reduced hours of work before resuming regular duties on a normal, pre-disability work schedule.\(^1\)

- Mediation of workplace conflict, performance or other non-medical issues\(^2\) in order to successfully return to work. This aspect of Return to Work Facilitation can be delivered in a couple types of cases:
  - It is delivered as a vital part of our Absence Management programs in which we’re identifying and resolving return to work barriers without needing to adjudicate against a definition of disability.
  - It can also be delivered as part of STD or LTD claims management when there is a combination of medical and non-medical barriers interfering with the member’s return to work.
  - In accordance with contractual requirements, we would decline STD or LTD claims when they are related to these types of situations and have no medical evidence to support a disability.

Our Return to Work Specialists are trained in mediation, negotiation and/or conflict resolution and the ability to problem solve and generate alternative solutions. They are also trained in accommodation techniques and legislation.

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\(^1\) Functional impairments are restrictions or limitations in the member’s ability to perform certain activities, for example, if a person employed by a grocery store to stock shelves cannot raise his left arm above his head, he would be functionally impaired and so unable to use his left hand to place grocery items on the top shelves of the store. His employer may then accommodate this impairment or limitation by not requiring the member to stock heavier items that require two hands to lift over his head to the higher shelves.

\(^2\) Non-medical barriers are factors that have no medical basis, but contribute to an employee's absence and could hinder return to work, such as interpersonal conflicts with colleagues or supervisor, social issues like child or elder care or training gaps that have not been addressed and are creating a stressful work environment because the employee is not working efficiently or productively.
2. Functional Rehabilitation - The Functional Rehabilitation Specialist engages in a longer-term intervention requiring a series of meetings with the member, employer and relevant health care providers to identify and then resolve functional impairments in order to enable the member’s return to work with the pre-disability employer.

The Functional Rehabilitation Specialist may incorporate any or all of the following measures in order to expedite safe, efficient return to work as early as medically possible:

- Assess medical information to determine cognitive or physical function.
- Determine return to work barriers.
- Evaluate worksite ergonomics (e.g., workstation set-up, production sequencing).
- Facilitate treatment, identifying treatment options and facilitating referrals to health care providers when appropriate to confirm medical impairment, to promote recovery of health, to improve function.
- Develop, implement and monitor return to work programs.

Our Functional Rehabilitation Specialists have health care backgrounds such as nursing, kinesiology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work and psychology.

3. Vocational Rehabilitation - This type of rehabilitation supports a disabled member who is unable to return to a pre-disability job or another job with the original employer.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist:

- Works with the disabled member to identify potential job opportunities appropriate to the member’s functional capacity, education, training and experience.
- Has access to labour market statistics, demographics and a sophisticated database to assess vocational potential, which allows us to determine alternative job options best suited to the member’s situation.
- Has access to a network of specialized vocational evaluation resources to test members’ aptitudes, personality, etc.
- Provides services such as resume preparation, job search training and volunteer program placement to prepare the member for labour market re-entry.

Our Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists have degrees in human resources, education, or specialized vocational certification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rehabilitation Service</th>
<th>Deals With</th>
<th>Primary Function / Length of Involvement</th>
<th>Primary Skills</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return to Work Facilitation</td>
<td>Member Employer</td>
<td>Facilitate return to work at own job, in complex workplace situations</td>
<td>Negotiation, Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One meeting – approximately 4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Functional Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Member Employer, Health Care Provider</td>
<td>Identify and build on functional capacity, to facilitate return to work with pre-disability employer</td>
<td>Health Care Background, Problem Solving, Communication</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Approximately 4-6 months (any necessary follow-up is done by the case manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Resume preparation, job search training – Approximately 1-3 months</td>
<td>Analysis, Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Retraining, vocational assessments, volunteer programs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Approximately 8-12 months</td>
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If you would like further information, please contact your Manulife representative or visit www.manulife.ca