RETURN TO WORK ISSUES FOR THE PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

L. BRUCE HENSLEY, DO
MEDICAL DIRECTOR
OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE
ST VINCENT CHARITY MEDICAL CENTER
Objectives

- When can patient resume previous job
- What are the physical requirements
- What medications could be an issue
- What are the essential functions of the job
Who Cares?

- OSHA
- Labor Rules
- ADA
- Patient Safety
- Coworker Safety
- Vendor Contracts
- BWC
- Unions
CASE 1

- 55 y.o. truck driver has been off work for acute bronchitis.
  - PMH: HTN and DM
  - MEDS: Metformin, Actos, Amoxil and Robitussin with Codeine
Discussion

- Physical Ability/Requirements
- Cognitive Ability
- CDL vs Noncommercial Vehicle
Return to Work Issues

- Desire to return to work
- Company policy issues
- Family issues
- Financial issues
- Work related vs non work related
- Regulatory requirements
- Impact of Medications
Desire to Return to Work

- Most people want to work
- Use objective information – functional ability
Company Policy

- Policy states return within a certain time frame or lose job
Individual is a primary care giver to a family member
Child care issues
FMLA
Financial Issues

- Primary income
- Only income
- Provides the insurance
Work Related vs Non-work Related

- Create a work related injury from non-work related injury
- Exacerbation or aggravation of a preexisting condition
Regulatory Requirements

- FMCSA
- FAA
- RAILROAD
- PIPELINE
- COAST GUARD
- MARITIME
Impact of Medications

- The most controversial problem in return to work
  - Cognitive impairment
  - How do you measure?
  - How do you monitor?
  - Always a case by case situation
  - ACOEM position
Contact Information

- Bruce.Hensley@cantonmercy.org
- 330-966-8098
- 330-605-8903