**DMEC and Sedgwick Release *“Long COVID: Assessing and Managing Workforce Impact”***

***White Paper Offers Practical Guidance for Employer Accommodations & Policies***

SAN DIEGO, Calif. and MEMPHIS, Tenn. – January 18, 2023 - The [Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC)](http://dmec.org/), a national nonprofit association focused on education for absence and disability professionals, and [Sedgwick](https://www.sedgwick.com/), a leading global provider of technology-enabled risk, benefits, and integrated business solutions, today announced the release of *“*[*Long COVID: Assessing and Managing Workforce Impact*](http://dmec.org/2023/01/18/long-covid-assessing-and-managing-workforce-impact/)*.”* This first-of-its-kind white paper is the product of months of information gathering and analysis by leading disability, clinical, research, insurance, government, and other workplace experts. It also includes the results of a [2022 DMEC Pulse Survey](http://dmec.org/2023/01/18/2022-dmec-long-covid-pulse-survey-results/) on current employer practices to accommodate and assist employees with long COVID.

“This is the first comprehensive examination of how organizations are accommodating employees with long COVID,” said Bryon Bass, senior vice president, workforce absence and disability practice leader at Sedgwick. “The white paper outlines what employers can do to improve results for employees and their organizations and how to better prepare for viruses, mental and behavioral health challenges, and other developments that require effective employee accommodations.”

COVID-19 has claimed the lives of millions of people, disrupted economic activity, and imposed large financial costs on governments, employers, and other organizations. While the COVID-19 pandemic may be over, the endemic phase has just begun. This includes the millions of employees who have or will have long COVID, the difficult-to-diagnose and often debilitating illness that induces long-term symptoms and impedes work and productivity.

The conclusions of experts form Walmart, Johns Hopkins University, The Hartford, and other leading organizations convened by DMEC and Sedgwick are sobering. Long COVID is costly to employers and employees. For example, Nomi Health who recently analyzed 20 million claims filed for COVID-19, long COVID, and diabetes found a 421% increase in in-patient hospital spending within the first six months following an initial COVID-19 diagnosis. There is also no question that long COVID cuts deeply into employee productivity.The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that one in four adults with long COVID reported significant limitations on day-to-day activities.

Employers’ efforts to accommodate employees with long COVID have revealed significant shortcomings in programs and processes used to accommodate all manner of disability and impaired work situations, including those caused by influenza and other viruses and mental and behavioral health challenges. According to the latest [DMEC Pulse Survey](http://dmec.org/2023/01/18/2022-dmec-long-covid-pulse-survey-results/), only 10% of respondents have an existing program to assist employees with long COVID. Most employers lack formal, best practice stay-at-work and return-to-work programs.

[*Long COVID: Assessing and Managing Workforce Impact*](http://dmec.org/2023/01/18/long-covid-assessing-and-managing-workforce-impact/)includes lists of accommodations employers should consider as they help those with long COVID return to work and stay at work. The white paper recommends flexibility, creativity, and the need to educate managers about long COVID symptoms and accommodations.

“For many organizations, developing programs to accommodate employees with long COVID will be a first step to a more holistic approach to accommodating those with other illnesses and disabilities, including mental health challenges,” said Terri L. Rhodes, CEO of DMEC. “COVID-19 and long COVID have encouraged employers to think creatively about how to manage absence and disability and keep their employees working safely and productively.”

**About DMEC**The Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC) is a non-profit organization that provides educational resources to employers in the areas of disability, absence, health, and productivity. The primary goal of DMEC is to assist employers in developing cost-saving programs, encouraging responsive market products, and returning employees to productive employment. Visit [www.dmec.org](http://dmec.org/) for more information about educational publications and events.

**About Sedgwick**Sedgwick is a leading global provider of technology-enabled risk, benefits and integrated business solutions. The company provides a broad range of resources tailored to clients’ specific needs in casualty, property, marine, benefits, brand protection and other lines. At Sedgwick, caring counts; through the dedication and expertise of nearly 30,000 colleagues across 80 countries, the company takes care of people and organizations by mitigating and reducing risks and losses, promoting health and productivity, protecting brand reputations, and containing costs that can impact performance. Sedgwick’s majority shareholder is The Carlyle Group; Stone Point Capital LLC, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ), Onex and other management investors are minority shareholders. For more, see [sedgwick.com](https://www.sedgwick.com).

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