



## ST. MICHAEL'S SHORT TERM DISABILITY PROGRAM

The Short Term Disability (STD) program is intended to provide a degree of income protection for faculty and staff members who must be absent from their position as a result of illness or injury. The policy applies to all full-time faculty and staff. Eligible faculty and staff members will be granted up to fifteen (15) weeks sick leave with pay for absences due to illness or injury. The practice at St. Michael's College has been to allow 15 weeks sick leave for each illness or injury between the period of July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> each year. Employees are required to apply for Long Term Disability if a sick leave extends beyond 15 weeks.

The University partners with Homewood Health Inc. (HHI), an external health management company to assist the administration of benefits of the STD program. During a short term medical absence, a Case Manager at Homewood Health will work directly with the employee and their physician to ensure fair, consistent treatment for employees who are absent from work due to an illness or accident. Homewood Health retains confidential medical information but informs HR/Managers of the prognosis, anticipated return, plan for return if known and any accommodations that may be required.

### **PROCESS FOR APPLYING FOR SHORT TERM DISABILITY**

**Step 1:** Notify your manager and HR ([hr.stmikes@utoronto.ca](mailto:hr.stmikes@utoronto.ca)) if you are absent due to illness.

**Step 2:** If you continue to be away from work for more than five (5) days, your manager will notify HR and HR will send you the [Homewood Health Attending Physician Statement Form](#) to be completed by your physician and sent directly to Homewood Health. The Attending Physicians Statement Form provides all the relevant medical information needed regarding your absence and to support your Short Term Disability benefits. The Form also includes the Employee's Authorization for Release of Information that allows Homewood Health the authorization to communicate with your physician, treatment providers, and other healthcare service providers regarding your medical leave for the purposes of determining your eligibility for the STD program.

**Step 3:** Arrange for the Homewood Health Attending Physician Statement Form to be completed and returned directly to Homewood Health within 3 days to ensure it is processed on a timely basis. If the Form is not provided or is incomplete, your absence will not be supported.

The Attending Physicians Statement Form provides all the relevant medical information needed regarding your absence and to support your Short Term Disability benefits. The Form also includes the Employee's Authorization for Release of Information that allows Homewood Health the authorization to communicate with your physician, treatment providers, and other healthcare service providers regarding your medical leave for the purposes of determining your eligibility for the STD program.

**Step 4:** Employees are responsible for sending the Homewood Attending Physicians Statement Form directly to Homewood Health by fax at Homewood Health by fax at **1-888-429-1747** or email to: [\*\*disabilitymanagement@homewoodhealth.com\*\*](mailto:disabilitymanagement@homewoodhealth.com)



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### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Homewood Health Inc. Case Manager**

Responsibilities include:

1. Assess all information from medical providers, medical guidelines and functional telephone assessment(s) with the employee to determine if the employee has restrictions and/or limitations preventing them from carrying out the duties of their own job.
2. Provide HR and Managers recommendations (support or non-support of absence) on an initial and on-going basis.
3. Work with HR/Manager and the employee to fully understand the impact the medical condition has on the employee's ability to work.
4. Where indicated, contact the employee's treatment provider(s) to discuss appropriate treatment plans and Return To Work (RTW).
5. Contact the employee every two weeks, depending on the specifics of the case, and communicate pertinent updates to HR as they occur.
6. Prepare a RTW plan with all stakeholders.
7. Six to eight weeks before the end of the STD benefit, determine if an application for Long Term Disability (LTD) benefits is required. If so, notify employee and HR to begin LTD application process, and facilitate medical information transfer to LTD Provider.

#### **The Employee**

The employee is expected to take an active role in their recovery and return to work Responsibilities include:

1. Proactive communication which includes:
  - a. Notifying their manager immediately of absence due to illness or injury. Expected date of return to work should be given if known.
  - b. Maintaining contact with their manager during the absence, updating the manager as to the prognosis and expected return to work.
  - c. Maintaining contact with the HHI Case Manager, providing updates and information throughout case; returning Case Manager's calls promptly.
2. Active focus and participation in recovery and return to work, including treatment and modified work programs if appropriate.
3. Participate in the treatment plan developed in partnership with their treatment providers and the HHI Case Manager.
4. Accept responsibility for managing their own health, wellness and personal conditioning in consultation with professionals.

#### **Human Resources**

HR is typically the Key Contact with HHI and is responsible for monitoring the success of the Disability Management Program. They support and assist the Manager/Supervisor during an employee absence and with any Modified Return to Work program to ensure people-related actions and/or decisions are handled consistently and within policies.

#### **The Manager/Supervisor**

The Manager/Supervisor plays a key role in the Disability Management process. Maintaining communication with the employee while they are ill or injured ensures the employee continues to feel connected to the workplace, and helps promote an early RTW.