Unum, DMEC announce forums on FMLA, return to work, and absence management strategies

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CHATTANOOGA, Tenn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Unum (NYSE:UNM) is once again teaming up with the Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC) to offer a series of online educational forums on disability and absence management.

“This forum continues to be very popular, offering a great resource for some of the hottest topics that employers and industry professionals must deal with every day,” said Marcia Carruthers, chief executive officer for DMEC. “Given the convenient and virtual format, it is an easy and cost-effective way to meet ongoing educational needs.”

DMEC is the only non-profit devoted to integrated disability and absence management. Its membership represents employers from the Fortune 500 to those with fewer than 500 employees. Unum and DMEC have partnered in producing the Virtual Education Series since 2002, making it one of the first such web-based learning forums in the industry.

“Unum is excited to be able to offer participants a chance to learn from industry experts and employers on ways to manage employee health, disability, absence and productivity,” said Phil Bruen, vice president of Unum's national client group practice. “Participation in these forums continues to increase, which underscores the strong interest in and need for a forum to share ideas and information.”

The 2011 winter-spring forum schedule is as follows:

- **Feb. 8: FMLA Patterns and Trends: FMLA Utilization by Employer Size and Industry - a 2010 study** - This session will highlight the patterns of family and medical leave (FML) use across a sample of 64 employers with a combined workforce of 350,000 employees. The data will focus on the use of intermittent and full FML leave across industry and workforce size segments.
  **Presenter:** Kenneth Mitchell, Ph.D., and researcher

- **March 8: Integrating Absence Management Programs: When and How Does It Really Pay Off? A Consultant’s Roundtable** - This session will go beyond the fundamentals of integrated health and productivity benefits and will provide a candid view of what works, what doesn't and why.
  **Presenters:** Mary Tavarozzi, senior consultant, Health and Productivity Lead, Towers Watson; and Karen English, partner, Spring Consulting Group

- **May 10: Johnny’s Not Back To Work?!?!: Corporate Strategies for the Less-Than-Motivated** - Calibrating the likelihood of a successful return-to-work program will be presented, along with corporate worker’s compensation and disability case studies applying a unique motivational model.
  **Presenters:** Kenneth Mitchell, Ph.D., WorkRx Group, Ltd., and an employer representative to be determined.

- **June 7: Voluntary Benefits: Who Buys What and Why? - A Study of Employer Benefit Buying Habits** - This session will provide insights gained through an industry wide study defining employer benefit buying habits.
  **Presenters:** Unum researchers

- **Sept. 13: 2011 FMLA Regulations and Legal Update** - This session will provide an update on new, current and pending FMLA regulations and legal cases.
  **Presenters:** Angela Ripper, AVP, senior counsel, Unum; and Helen Applewaite, branch chief, FMLA, U.S. Department of Labor

- **Oct. 11: Protecting Productivity: The Impact of Transitional Work in the Current Economic...**
Environment: An Empirical Study – This session will share the outcomes of a 2010 international study on the impact of transitional work as a lost-time management tool. There will be an emphasis on the influence of corporate culture, policy and practices.

Presenters: Kristin Tugman and Heidi Bimrose, directors of health and productivity at Unum; Joy Reymond, head of rehabilitation and medical services at Unum UK; and an employer representative to be determined.

These sessions are held on Tuesdays at noon Eastern/9 a.m. Pacific. The one-hour presentations will be followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer session. To register, visit www.dmec.org and select Virtual Education Forums under the Conferences & Events tab.

About Unum

Unum (http://www.unum.com) is one of the leading providers of employee benefits products and services in the United States and the United Kingdom. Through its subsidiaries, Unum Group paid approximately $6 billion in total benefits to customers in 2009.

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 for more information about educational publications and events.

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