



# DEPRESSION IN PRIMARY CARE: WORK-SITE INTERVENTIONS AND COORDINATION OF CARE

## PPG Industries Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### Dealing With Depression in the Workplace

PPG Industries (PPG), headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is a global supplier of coatings, glass, fiberglass, and chemicals. The company has more than 33,000 employees in 50 production sites in the United States and about 120 sites worldwide. PPG has 11 sites in Pennsylvania, and with mental illness being one of the top 10 reasons for hospitalization in Pennsylvania in 2002,<sup>1</sup> dealing with depression among its employees has become an important focus for PPG. PPG recognizes that depression affects health and productivity and that inadequate care has an impact on disability. The company believes one of its responsibilities is to help shape a different kind of "healthy company" culture that could counteract the stigma associated with depression and empower employees to take an active role in their own healthcare.

Depression has also become a focus of the Pittsburgh Regional Healthcare Initiative (PRHI), a regional partnership that gathers numerous stakeholders in healthcare, including physicians, patients, employers, and insurers, to improve the quality of healthcare. It is a partnership in which PPG is actively involved.

The importance of focusing on depression is underscored by a recent study among more than 6000 employees at 3 corporations that found decreased job performance was 7 times higher for employees who are depressed than for those who are not, and the stigma associated with depression resulted in a large proportion of hidden costs to employers.<sup>2</sup>

### Combating An Epidemic With Education

PPG developed its *Depression in Primary Care: Work-Site Interventions and Coordination of Care* program to help improve the diagnosis and management of depression for its employees and their families and to ultimately improve the health and increase the productivity of employees with depression. The program was conceived as a component of a collaborative effort led by the PRHI. Hallmarks of the PPG program include education, awareness, and early recognition of depression aimed at employees, supervisors, management, and healthcare providers.

### Implementing the Program

The *Depression in Primary Care: Work-Site Interventions and Coordination of Care* program seeks to meet its goals by applying a number of intervention tactics to employees and their healthcare providers in 6 of 11 Pennsylvania sites, with the other 5 serving as control sites.

#### KEY FEATURES OF THE PROGRAM INCLUDE:

##### 1. WORK-SITE INTERVENTION

- Occupational nurses and wellness teams will provide depression education and awareness to employees, supervisors, managers, and company

healthcare providers, including nurses and contracting physicians in coordination with employee assistance program (EAP) agents. One method of disseminating this information will be through on-site seminars and wellness programs

- PPG will add a depression-specific section to its Web site to provide online access to self-management support. The site will feature information for patients and their families about depression, assistance in learning about treatment options, self-management techniques, and links to EAP resources

##### 2. COORDINATION OF CARE

- PPG seeks to align all of the services it uses for behavioral health management, such as its EAP programs, pharmacy benefit management program, and behavioral health specialty program to improve coordination

- In an effort to reduce the variability in the diagnosis of depression, PPG will provide, through the major health insurance plans and the PRHI, healthcare providers with consistent training about depression screening using PRIME MD™, an instrument that helps screen for and diagnose mental disorders

- PPG will promote, through the major health insurance plans and the PRHI, the use of practice guidelines and protocols to ensure healthcare providers are uniformly diagnosing and treating depression. These guidelines and protocols should outline standard procedures for recognizing depression, stratifying patient risk, treating depression, following up with patients, and assessing whether a referral to a mental health specialist should be given

### Measuring Outcomes

A variety of tools will be used to measure the success of the *Depression in Primary Care: Work-Site Interventions and Coordination of Care* program, including:

- Health risk assessments
- Depression surveys
- Newly sought care from EAPs and primary care physicians
- Medication use indicators

In addition, data from work and non-work-related sources will be used to measure the overall impact of employee health on productivity, such as:

- Medical and mental health claims
- Absenteeism
- Workers' compensation
- Turnover data

#### REFERENCES

1. Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council. County Profiles Inpatient Results. Available at: <http://www.phc4.org/ldb/CPQ/CntyProfshPatResults.cfm>. Accessed April 16, 2003.
2. Druss BG, Schlesinger M, Allen HM. Depressive symptoms, satisfaction with health care, and 2-year work outcomes in an employed population. *Am J Psychiatry*. 2001;158:731-734.