Managed Care Organizations (MCO) and Third Party Administrators (TPA) have different roles and share a common goal to assist the Injured Worker in return to work. Managed Care Organizations originated in the Ohio Workers’ Compensation system in 1997 as a result of the Health Partnership Program (HPP). Every employer in Ohio must have an MCO, which is paid for directly by Ohio BWC. Managed Care Organizations are responsible for the medical management of Ohio Employers’ work-related injuries and illnesses.

Activities of an MCO are focused on the Injured Worker and include coordination of key details relating to the First Report of Injury (FROI) and transmission of injury claims to Ohio BWC. They also provide and maintain a diverse panel of Ohio BWC certified health care providers. MCO’s are responsible for medical case management including review of treatment requests and making treatment decisions including utilization and medical review.

In addition, MCO’s also offer processing of treatment appeals, provide an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process, handle medical bill review and payment processing and educate and assist employers regarding safety and return to work initiatives.

A Third Party Administrator is a private company that an employer contracts with to represent the employer’s interests on issues relating to matters regarding workers’ compensation and alternative rating programs. The focus is on the employer and there is a fee to participate in a group plan or hire a third party administrator to manage an employer’s claims. The TPA focus is to assist employers with claim allowance, reviewing rates and has the employer interest in mind. Conversely, an MCO is a neutral party who focuses on the injured worker relating to medical issues and educating employers on controlling medical costs and appropriate response. Both MCO’s and TPA’s have a common goal of assisting the Injured Worker to return to the workplace as quickly, safely and efficiently as possible.

There are no direct costs for MCO services. MCO fees are included with an employer’s BWC premium. Managed Care Companies are responsible for helping injured employees return to work in a timely and safe manner by delivering effective medical and vocational case management services.