**RETAIN Kentucky Podcast Series 1, Episode 4**

***Success Story: Registered Nurse***

Hello and welcome back to the RETAIN Kentucky podcast. My name is Bethaney Curry and I am one of the Return to Work Coordinators with the RETAIN Kentucky project. Today we are going to share a success story from one of our participants who recently returned to work successfully after utilizing RETAIN Kentucky services. Join me as we share their story.

**Return to Work Coordinator:** **Tell me a little bit about your background and how did you come to RETAIN?**

**Participant:** I have been a Registered Nurse since 1992. In September of 2019 I was in a car wreck on my way to work and suffered a concussion, which is just a very simple word for Traumatic Brain Injury and I really believe that the term “concussion” is a simplification of what a person can experience. I had been getting physical therapy with a strong emphasis on my neurological symptoms and started seeing the University of Louisville Neurorestorative and Rehabilitative Services in October of 2019 due to the severe and constant symptoms I was having. I found out about Retain in January of 2020. The irony of my introduction to Retain began at my doctor’s appointment in January. I was in the waiting room with my father, he was taking me to every appointment, and I saw a flyer on the wall about the Retain program. I told my dad I was going to ask my doctor about it, the thing was the doctor asked me if I would be interested in the program before I could ask him! It was that day that I met my Return to Work Coordinator, and she signed me up and explained the program and the services available.

**Return to Work Coordinator: What was it like before you received RETAIN services?**

**Participant:** I essentially felt lost from the moment of my injury. There was no guidance from the physician in the ER, in fact he did not even evaluate me for a concussion while my main complaint was the pain in my head. I even tried to continue working as the symptoms only worsened and I had no idea where to turn. I knew I had a concussion; I knew I was hurt bad but had no idea where to get help. When I became involved with RETAIN, I knew I was getting close to being able to go back to work but had no idea how to go about it. My employer had been sold and the transition to the new owner had taken place while I was off on sick leave. I had never met my new director/manager and had no idea how to contact her because every time I called Human Resources, they said they could not verify my employment. I was getting nowhere in trying to contact anyone at my workplace.

**Return to Work Coordinator: What was preventing you from returning to work?**

**Participant:** I knew in January that I was coming close to returning to work. My doctor had told me that when he did release me, I would have to work part time for 2 weeks to work my way back into the job due to my injury. I was trying to contact my new director or human resources, anyone as early as possible to let them know of the stipulation of my return. My main concern was that I would not be able to return to work because of the part time stipulation and my employer would not be able to accommodate that. I just wanted to know as early as possible if I was going to need to look for another job when released from my doctor.

**Return to Work Coordinator: How did RETAIN help you?**

**Participant**: RETAIN helped me in so many ways. The support I received from the Return to Work Coordinator, my case manager was unbelievable. I do not know how many times our meetings ended up with me crying at some point, I am sure they all did but her strength and reassurance, her humor and confidence were what I needed. She was with me every step of the way. I had a very bad initial meeting with my director, nothing she said to me sounded positive about me having a job but at the same time she said she “didn’t know.” When I finally got a meeting with Human Resources my Return to Work Coordinator was right there with me and I think she made a great impression and brought some knowledge of the Retain program to my employer. I do know I saw quite a few emails asking my coworkers if they had ever heard of the program or worked with anyone in the Retain program.

**Return to Work Coordinator: How do you think RETAIN helped your employer?**

**Participant:** I am hoping that now that my employer knows about the Retain program, they will be open to working with the program and not be concerned that Retain is a program that is a threat to the employer. I think that at the time I was with Retain and we were working with the Human Resources department at my employer their concern was that Retain was a detriment to the employer when in reality any program that can help a company keep a skilled employee can only be an asset.

**Return to Work Coordinator: Why should other people work with RETAIN?**

**Participant:** Not only does Retain assist you in working with your employer in getting back to your job they offer so many other services. If you must look for another job they can assist with resumes, interviewing skills, and worksite accommodations. One of the first things I got in the mail was a packet of resources available and where to go if needed. The personal support, the emotional support, the true desire for you to succeed and do well, that is the reason people should work with RETAIN.

**Return to Work Coordinator:** Thank you so much for sharing your success story with us. We are so glad that you have taken time to share how RETAIN Kentucky has helped you to return to work after your accident. We wish you nothing but the best.

Thank you for listening in on this success story. If you have questions about RETAIN Kentucky, you can visit our website [www.kyretain.org](http://www.kyretain.org).

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