



## **Despite Treatment, Employees with Depression Generate Higher Absentee Costs, According to Thomson Reuters Study**

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ANN ARBOR, Mich., Feb 09, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- People with depression generate higher absentee and disability costs on the job -- even when they are treated with antidepressants, according to a study published today in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

The study, led by researchers from Thomson Reuters, analyzed insurance claims and employee health and productivity data for more than 22,000 patients diagnosed with depression and treated with antidepressants. Researchers compared this study group with a control group of patients without depression.

They found that employees treated for depression were roughly twice as likely as people in the control group to use short-term disability leave. For workers treated for severe depression, the short-term disability rate was three times higher.

Mean annual short-term disability-related costs were \$1,038 for patients being treated for depression and \$325 for the healthy control group. Among a subgroup of severely depressed patients, these short-term disability-related costs rose to \$1,685 versus \$340 for a control group.

"Despite the widely acknowledged effectiveness of antidepressant therapy, productivity costs related to depression persist even after patients receive treatment," said lead study author Suellen Curkendall, Ph.D., director of outcomes research at Thomson Reuters. "This may be due to the fact that patients often don't respond to the first type of antidepressant that they are prescribed. They also may fail to take their medications on a regular basis.

"These results shine a light on the importance of effective, ongoing management of care for people diagnosed with depression."

The link between depression and reduced workplace productivity has been well-documented in previous studies, but little research has focused on productivity losses among patients who receive treatment for depression. The study was funded by Sanofi Aventis.

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