

I'm here to help

Customer service professionals explain what compassion in customer service means to them



At Optum Workers' Comp and Auto No-Fault, we're making it personal. Whether you're an injured person, healthcare provider, pharmacist, employer, or insurance carrier, we work to provide the human touches that make the difference between simple transactional services and a holistic approach focused on both cost savings and the health and safety of claimants.

But what does this mean in a fast-paced and constantly changing world? How do we integrate these human touches into our services and stakeholder interactions?

To answer these questions, we asked four of our experienced customer service professionals: "What does compassion in customer service mean to you?" On the following pages are their answers, in their own words.



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Optum wants us to spend as much time with the injured person as we need to make sure everything is taken care of in each interaction.

Linda

Customer Service Representative, Ancillary Services

To me, compassion is putting myself in the place of the injured person who is talking to me. Thinking about what their needs are and what I can do to make their day better. Because to tell you the truth, I have been on the other side, as a cancer survivor. I've lived through a recovery journey, and I know how they feel.

I have customers who share their personal stories and challenges with me, and ones who ask for their calls to be directed to me because they have gotten to know me. I love providing the extra care each person needs. For example, researching their care history to see what they received last time, and then finding out whether it worked for them.

We don't want people to have to call back again about the same item. Our calls aren't timed; we're given all the time we need to serve customers and make sure they are properly taken care of.

I suppose I just feel I am meant to take care of others. When I'm not helping people, I raise monarch butterflies, which are a vulnerable species. To take care of monarchs, you have to grow milkweed, which butterflies lay their eggs on, and caterpillars eat after hatching. The milkweed has beautiful flowers and monarchs can't live without them. When they lay their eggs on the flowers, they flap their wings and flutter, like a dance. I want to help the future of these beautiful butterflies, just like I want to help the future of the injured people I serve.





With my team, I work to make sure there is always someone there to take the time to help.

Jessica

Manager of Order Completion, Ancillary Services

To me, compassion is making sure everyone – from the patient, to the insurance carrier, to the vendor, to other Optum team members – is happy with the service they got. It's really important to be compassionate with an injured person and make sure they get all of the services and support they need. But I also want to make sure the provider is treated fairly as well, for example, paid on time and able to get help if there are any issues. I want to do the job with care from start to finish. Take the time to listen to what the person on the other end of the phone has to say. Take note of it, clearly and accurately; make sure I'm getting all the necessary information. Order and send the right thing, every time.

The important thing we focus on is quality over quantity. My team knows to make sure they hit all the touch points to verify information and push back when necessary. I tell them, "If you see something, say something." That's important in making sure that ultimately the patient gets what they need.

AI can help with certain things, but the human aspect is the most important. I feel good about the compassionate care my team provides and the fact they are always asking me to let them know how they can improve even more. This shows me how much they care about providing the best customer service.

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word... all of which have the potential to turn a life around.

-Leo Buscaglia, professor and author



Patrick

Manager, Billing

To me, compassion is listening intently to an injured person to hear what they are asking for and giving feedback in ways that make them know they've been heard and are important to us. And then – once an injured person tells us what they need – it's all about taking action. Doing what we promised we would do. Following up to let them know what we did, and checking to make sure everything is OK.

I like to help others, first of all, but second, I just like to see others be successful. What's most important to me is doing the things that put our customers in a position to have a better outcome or a better way of life as they move forward after an injury. I also emphasize this with my team. As a leader, you want to create an environment where all your team members feel that same way.

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First, I listen carefully to find out what an injured person needs. Then, it's all about taking action.

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Every injured person's experience is unique. I remember one customer with an injured knee whose job absolutely required travel. She had some important travel coming up, and in order to be mobile, she needed a brace quickly. For her particular injury, an off-the-shelf brace wouldn't work. I coordinated with other agents on my team, along with vendors, to get her the brace she needed two weeks ahead of the normal delivery time. We had to pull several different levers to make that happen, but we were focused on getting her what she needed.

The feedback that customers provide about how well we did at supporting them and solving their issue – and also how we could have made their experience even better – helps us and can positively affect other injured people in the future. And I think that's really important. I always take that approach. I want to make each individual feel important, but I also review the interaction in case there are ways we could have made the injured person's experience even better.



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I want each injured person to know I'm here to help them.

Tiffany

Senior Resolution Specialist

In my role, I serve as a bridge between the doctor, the pharmacy, the adjuster, and the claimant. To me, compassion means seeing our process through and taking the extra steps needed to make sure everyone involved in the process is satisfied. For example, a client may have escalated the delivery of medication, but the injured person hasn't received it yet. There are reasons why things can get held up: maybe the medication wasn't ordered on time, or the doctor is waiting for a toxicology report. I build the timeline and do the research. Then, I get back to the client and also follow up with the injured person to make sure they have received the medication. My focus is on making sure that everything processes as efficiently as possible.

I love what I do at Optum and have been doing this job for 26 years. I know that each part of the job is important: the order processing promptly and accurately, the injured person receiving their medications to help them recover, and the insurance company receiving their cost savings.

When I talk to injured people, I try to put myself in their place. I know they may be in pain and may be trying to interpret a lot of information related to their injury. Often, I try to break that information down in terms that are easier to understand. I want to give that extra touch; I want them to know I'm here to help them.

I also take notes on clients I talk to more than once so I can remember things about their life and build a stronger relationship. Some patients are house-bound, and some don't have a lot of interaction with other people. Knowing that I truly care makes all the difference to them.

Thank you so much. You make this so much easier. You're helping me get my medication on time. I'm not in pain and I'm able to do things a little bit better.

-Injured worker



Learn more

If you would like to learn more about our clinically based personal approach to providing cost-efficient, whole-person care, we'd love to connect. Contact us at expectmore@optum.com.