

Travel May Be Needed:

Upgrading medical provider leads to great outcome on diabetic ankle fracture

A 58-year-old woman in rural South Texas with uncontrolled diabetes fell on the job and was injured. If you have diabetes, you're already prone to having serious foot complications from nerve damage and poor circulation. This was a big setback in her health. She sustained three complex fractures in her ankle.

The only physician in the area willing to perform surgery wanted to use an external fixator, which would greatly increase the likelihood of an infection and loss of her foot. The Injury Benefit Plan's medical director said that was a bad idea. Instead, the employer paid to fly her and her sister to Houston to receive care from one of the top orthopedic surgeons in the state. The physician did not accept workers' compensation patients, but willingly accepted employees covered under high quality option programs.

After surgery and two weeks in a rehabilitation hospital, she was ready to return home. The employer graciously flew her to Houston for appointments until she was ready to undergo more rehab with a local physician in her area.

She has since returned to work and said, "My whole family is grateful for the attention and assistance provided. I have had nothing but the best treatment since I was injured."