



Connecting members, advancing knowledge Relier les membres, développer les connaissances

Compensation & Benefits Committee - AWCBC Jurisdictional Update Report

Committee Member: Jim McCaskill	From: BC	Date: September 2016
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Mandate	<i>Defines expectations / responsibilities. Facilitates better focus on objectives and activities by which the committee operates.</i>
The AWCBC Compensation & Benefits Committee works collaboratively to share experiences, identify and improve claim-related outcomes and identify and action opportunities around operational, research and policy development initiatives.	

Goals	<i>Based on your mandate, set realistic and specific goals. What is the long-range aim? What do you hope to achieve?</i>
1. To share jurisdictional experiences and knowledge.	
2. To put before the committee, emerging issues that are deemed high priority, for consideration of planning	
3. To identify, plan, and carry out specific projects for the benefit of the committee members and their respective jurisdictions.	
4. To be available to other AWCBC / national committees to provide input and or partner with when requested.	
5. To provide feedback to AWCBC Executive when required or requested.	

<p>Objectives <i>Improving Return to Work Outcomes/Reducing Durations (Share work that is being done within your organization to support RTW, reduce duration etc)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizational Changes to support RTW 2. New Initiatives 3. Best Practices 4. Outcomes 	<p>Activities</p>
<p>Realignment of claims services</p>	<p>In 2015, we realigned our Claims Services model in order to enhance service to workers and leverage similar business processes for our staff. The realignment preserves much of the fundamental structures that have provided injured workers with the support they need to return to life, function and work. The changes have allowed us to build portfolios across departments and business units that are complementary — to focus on the critical functional areas from claims registration right through to pension implementation. Changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combining Claims Front End, Entitlement, and Prevention Support Services into a new department • Realigning the previous four provincial regions into three. • Creating a new department combining Return to Work Services, Vocational Rehabilitation and Disability Awards
<p>Three Pillars of Case Management</p>	<p>As we updated in 2015, we launched the Three Pillars of Case Management (TPCM) in 2013. This is our best practices approach to case management and return to work - 15 best practices align to three fundamental groupings: investing in relationships with our workers and employers; proactively planning for return to function and work; and delivering quality service and adjudication. We focused first on four of the best practices - completing the initial worker interview, completing the initial employer interview, identifying and mitigating RTW risk factors, and proactively managing the recovery and RTW plan. Case Management conferences in 2014 and 2015 and a course in motivational interviewing, supported staff in applying the TPCM. We then identified that stronger management oversight was required. In 2015, we hosted a one day conference for managers to provide them tools to monitor key measures and do file reviews. A dashboard was developed for managers to focus attention on the TPCM and send automatic alerts to managers to review at claim at a particular milestone or event (e.g. change to the aRTW).</p>

<p>Objectives <i>Service Delivery/Quality Initiatives</i></p> <p><i>Share what is being done in your organization to improve Customer service delivery and to support Quality service/decisions to stakeholders.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Initiatives 2. Best Practices 3. Outcomes 	<p>Activities</p>
<p>ASTD claims</p>	<p>Further to our May 2015 update, we have continued to evolve our case management model for ASTD.</p> <p>We have had dedicated ASTD Case Managers in each of our offices for many years, but we identified an opportunity to improve consistency of decision making across the province and better leverage the expertise of these ASTD Case Managers.</p> <p>We launched a new province wide ASTD model. We have implemented a new formalized triage process, an entitle and route model, and a new oversight structure that provides support to ASTD case managers from one manager in each region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New ASTD claims will be triaged by a dedicated desk in each region, and adjudicated unless a site visit is required. • If a site visit is required, the claim will be assigned to the ASTD Case Manager in the office closest to the job site. • If ongoing case management is required the claims will be transferred to a case management team in the region. • ASTD initial entitlement work was moved under the Director who currently manages the provincial Initial Adjudication Unit and the Entitlement Unit (Director of Entitlement and Prevention/Claims Support Services)
<p>Appeals implementation</p>	<p>In 2014/15 we implemented a regional model for appeal decision implementation in case management. Dedicated Case Managers in each region handle all appeal implementations. Their first job is to communicate with the injured worker and set expectations for how the appeal will be implemented. The new model will ensure that each worker or employer receives the benefits that flow from appeal findings and that the service is timely, consistent, and implemented with a high degree of quality.</p> <p>In 2015 specialized VRC (Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant) desks were established to ensure that appellate returns with vocational rehab issues are addressed in a timely manner.</p>

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	<p>Next, the dedicated appeals desk model will be implemented for Disability Awards and Special Care Services.</p>
<p>Customer service training</p>	<p>We have been rolling out a Service Promises initiative to claims staff since 2011. Staff observe focus groups, hearing first-hand accounts and perspective on the service areas that matter most to injured workers. Staff engage in developing a set of customized service promises for injured workers – measurable commitments staff agree to undertake as a group, to address their client’s top needs.</p> <p>The service promises initiative started with Claims Managers, and continued with Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants and Entitlement Officers. In 2016 we started to engage our Service Coordinators in a Service Promise initiative.</p>

Objectives <i>Human Resources/Training</i> <i>Share information on staff related issues including training, recruitment, management oversight etc..</i> 1. Staffing Issues 2. New Initiatives 3. Training	Activities
Professional Development	<p><u>Case Management Conference:</u></p> <p>Third annual case management conference planned for November 2016. Conference is for customer facing claims teams, including Case Managers, Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants, Return-to-work specialists and Medical Advisors. The theme for is Connect, Collaborate, Communicate. Program themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating with our clients to lessen the impact of disability • Connecting effectively with external treatment providers • Communicating with different generations • Understanding our clients' perspective and improving their experience • Writing with clarity and purpose • Building your memory power <p><u>Claims Managers Conference:</u></p> <p>Two days of professional development, knowledge sharing, and team building planned for the fall of 2016 for managers in the Claims Division.</p> <p>Day 1 will be dedicated entirely to professional development and training. A mix of top-rated speakers – both from inside and outside of our organization – who will arm managers with practical tools and solutions to manage and inspire their team.</p> <p>Day 2 is dedicated to 2016 results and 2017 strategic plan. Talk managers about how they shaped our key performance indicators and strategic initiatives in 2016, and engage in a dialogue about the goals, objectives, and initiatives that underpin our 2017 strategic plan.</p>

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	<p><u>Service Coordinators:</u></p> <p>From Oct 3 through to Jan 27, all service coordinators in the province will participate in professional development workshop sessions. It will include two days of core training for everyone in their home office. At the end of the core training, each of the service coordinator teams, Case Management and Vocational Rehabilitation Services, will come together in Richmond to participate in two days of desk-specific training targeted to their individual roles and learning needs.</p> <p>The professional development will reinforce the skills and aptitudes required for the service coordinator role, focusing on why that role is critical, how service coordinators can best provide support and expertise to their teams, and how their role is aligned to the customer experience and return-to-work. Our vision for the success of service coordinators is this: they are key members of our case management and Vocational Rehabilitation Services teams. Their work is grounded in return to function, life, and work, and a greater service experience for workers and employers.</p>

Objectives <i>Emerging Issues/Changes in policy or Legislation</i> 1. Share information that is related to changes in legislation, policy and other significant changes within your organization	Activities
GECA	<p>On January 1, 2016, changes to policy item #66.00, <i>General Rule for Determining Long-Term Average Earnings</i>, of the <i>Rehabilitation Services & Claims Manual</i>, Volume II came into effect. Under the revised policy, long-term average earnings are calculated for all GECA workers. Previous policy provided that long-term average earnings are not calculated for GECA workers who are maintained on full salary by their employer while injured.</p>
Opioids	<p>On January 1, 2015 WorkSafeBC policy on “Potentially Addictive Drugs” was amended to limit payment for opioids to 4 weeks post injury or post surgery, for chronic, non-cancer pain. Extensions beyond 4 weeks can be approved in exceptional cases.</p> <p>At four weeks for all new claims/new surgeries where a physician indicates they will continue to prescribe opioids, a letter which includes an opioid risk assessment tool, is sent to the physician for validation as to why ongoing opioids are required.</p> <p>For injured workers who are on opioids for greater than six months and is deemed high dosage (e.g., greater than 120 MEDD -- Morphine Equivalent Daily Dose – mg of Morphine), a specialized medical review team consisting of an Addictions Physician specialist, Pharmacist and Case Managers, actively reviews and manages these claims.</p>

Other Topics/issues that would be of national interest	Activities
None	

<p>Objectives: <i>reporting KPI outcomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to initial payment • Short term duration • Long term duration • RTW outcomes 	<p>Activities</p>
	<p><u>2016 results to June:</u> STD Timeliness: 17 days year to date July 2016 (date of disablement to first pay) RTW at 26 weeks: 83% Active Claims Inventory: 985 STD claims >240 days Voc Rehab RTW Outcomes: 79.5% Employers' Overall Experience: 81% good/very good Injured Workers' Overall Experience: 75% good/very good</p>

<p>Objectives: <i>What is new/upcoming in the jurisdiction that will be of national interest.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information 	<p>Activities</p>

Topic to be discussed. (Topics identified at last meeting) Objectives	Activities
B.C.'s Mental Health Recovery guides	Presentation/discussion by B.C. on their mental health recovery guides
N.S. coaching model	----
Manitoba	----
Psychological injuries	<p>WorkSafeBC is starting a pilot to offer an online CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) program, for workers who are waiting for an adjudicative decision as to whether their claim with the Mental Health Claims unit will be allowed or disallowed. Workers will be referred by the case manager, and must be committed to using the program and have access to a computer/internet. It is not intended for workers who are already involved with critical incident response or mental health treatment.</p> <p>The CBT program is an online educational program based on the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. It is expected to help workers develop coping strategies to manage challenges, and improve their resiliency to stressors. The program provides form and language to worker struggles and helps them understand what they can do about it.</p> <p>Additional supports for workers who have filed a claim for a mental disorder, but are waiting for an adjudicative decision as to whether the claim will be allowed or disallowed, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical incident response - WorkSafeBC's critical incident response (CIR) program is an early intervention initiative that provides critical incident intervention to workers and employers who have experienced a traumatic event in the workplace or a work related fatality, regardless if a claim has been filed. Providers are registered counselors, social workers and psychologists who have specialized training. Treatment is normally short term, but can be extended based on need. • Supporting counseling - Supportive counseling services are provided to injured workers who have filed a claim for a psychological injury related to workplace stressors, including bullying and harassment. The goal is to provide emotional and psychological support while the claim is being adjudicated. Treatment is normally short term and includes an initial intervention and up to 5 hours of individual support, but can be extended if needed.
Medical Marijuana	Our practice on approving medical marijuana (smoked, oils & edibles) remains the same – we don't allow.

<p>Topic to be discussed. (Topics identified at last meeting)</p> <p>Objectives</p>	<p>Activities</p>
	<p>Our Evidence Based Practice Group is just completing a rapid review to review the clinical efficacy/effectiveness and adverse effects of cannabinoids (pharmaceutical derivatives) for chronic non-cancer pain. When final the study will be published on our website. Guidance is being prepared to support our medical advisors in reviewing and approving requests for cannabinoids for chronic non-cancer pain (assuming other options have been tried first).</p>
<p>Flexible work arrangements</p>	<p>WorkSafeBC does not have any formal compressed work week arrangements or telecommuting.</p> <p>Case Managers and Voc Rehab Consultants are 'B type employees, defined under our collective agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize their own work schedules within the normal work week • Not working under direct supervision • Ensure that the primary consideration in scheduling their own work is the effective and efficient performance of their duties
<p>Case management systems</p> <p>Each jurisdiction to document the following from their case management models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons learned • Work flow • What drives outcomes • Dashboards • System activities and outcomes of the activities 	<p>See attached.</p>
<p>Customer/Client Service training</p>	<p>----- (updated under service deliveries/quality initiatives)</p>

<p>Topic to be discussed. (Topics identified at last meeting)</p> <p>Objectives</p>	<p>Activities</p>
<p>Internal Training</p>	<p>----- (updated under human Resources/training)</p>
<p>Labour Market Re-Entry</p> <p>Carry over from the spring meeting. Documentation from spring meeting to be discussed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of programs are available that will target injured workers with low levels of education and limited variability in work experience • Challenges with LMR • Types of OJT programs that are offered • How is wage information identified. 	<p>WorkSafeBC Vocational Rehabilitation Services offers the following programs, which can be utilized as a component of a worker's rehabilitation plan. These can assist injured workers with low levels of education and limited variability in work experience, to return to suitable work after a compensable injury or the onset of an occupational disease:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Job Search Assistance</u> - for workers who require help in securing appropriate employment. May include any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational assessment and goal-setting through individual and/or group counseling. • Referral to external employment resources - network of contracted external providers to assist injured workers with resume and cover letter preparation; job search skills; or individualized job placement • Marketing to prospective employers. • Financial assistance, by way of wage loss equivalency benefits while the injured worker is participating in job search activities and assistance with other costs directly associated with the job search (e.g. travel expenses). ➤ <u>TOJ</u> - a shared-cost training-on-the-job program (TOJ) which is undertaken at an employer's worksite and provides the worker with specific skills leading directly to employment. A TOJ program is designed to provide skill enhancement or the development of new occupational skills. ➤ <u>Work Assessment</u> - a funded 2-4 week on the job work assessment can be utilized to assess a workers physical suitability for a job. The work assessment is designed to provide a realistic work environment by which to test a worker's ability to undertake active employment and/or to perform the specific duties of a particular job or occupation an opportunity for employers to determine an injured worker's suitability for their position. A work assessment can be arranged with the pre-injury employer or with a new employer. A funded work assessment can be offered to prospective employers (as part of the Find a worker program, described below) as an opportunity for employer to assess the worker's suitability for their position. ➤ <u>Formal Training</u> - full-time or part-time trades, technical or academic programs or courses offered through recognized training or educational institutions, which add to or upgrade the worker's existing skills or qualifications, or provide new occupational skills

<p>Topic to be discussed. (Topics identified at last meeting)</p> <p>Objectives</p>	<p>Activities</p>
	<p>WorkSafeBC also offers a Hire a Worker (Assistance for B.C. Employers). B.C. employers can submit a job opportunity to our website – it gives them access to skilled workers, without incurring the usual expenses associated with advertising, recruiting, and training new employees, and employers who use our hiring program will qualify for cost-incentives, which can offset new employee training costs. Cost incentives can include a paid work assessment and a cost-shared TOJ. Injured workers can search these postings on line through the job finder application.</p> <p>The Job Finder application is a portal into a WorkSafeBC database of job opportunities for injured workers. It includes the jobs posted through the hire a worker program, plus opportunities identified by our Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants and external providers.</p> <p>Information sheets on the Hire a Worker and Job Finder Programs available on WorkSafeBC.com :</p> <p>https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/about-us/guides/hire-a-worker-program-hiring-assistance-for-bc-employers?lang=en</p> <p>https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/about-us/guides/job-finder-employment-assistance-for-bcs-injured-workers?lang=en</p> <p>Challenges with labour market re-entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job opportunities for workers with English as a second language • workers staying in the workforce longer - some injured workers are older, and are projecting a much later retirement date. Finding job placements for older workers presents unique challenges for the VRCs • complexities associated with psychological conditions

<p>Topic to be discussed. (Topics identified at last meeting)</p> <p>Objectives</p>	<p>Activities</p>
	<p>Determining earnings:</p> <p>The VRC gathers earnings information for the recommended occupation from several sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Occupational Class Average information from the Statistical Services Department of WorkSafeBC • Service Canada’s information at the Working in Canada site • WorkBC - Provincial average salary • Labour market survey conducted by VRCs - other relevant information gathered from direct contact with employers, trade associations, collective agreements, etc. <p>The VRC also considers actual earnings of the worker, if applicable, and other aspects of the specific worker’s circumstances, in recommending the earnings that best represent the injured workers projected earnings in the recommended occupation.</p>