

Case Manager Selection - Case Study Background Information

CM Comp: 22-28

Today (April 16) you received a claim allocation from Short Term Claims (STC) for Jane Smith, a 48 year meat cutter at a commercial processing plant. Jane injured her right elbow due to repetitive strain over a month while cutting meat on the line, she has worked at ABC Meats in Winkler Manitoba for the last 12 years. She has been off work since March 13.

According to the Claim Transfer Sheet from Short Term Claims (STC) the file was transferred because the worker has refused a modified duties offer from the employer. The workers Physiotherapist has provided restrictions to the employer on the employers functional ability form, and they believe they can accommodate, but the worker disagrees. The claim was accepted for right lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow). (In the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba system claims are first opened STC and the decision is made on their acceptance, following that the claim can be managed from 8-12 weeks or until there are complicating factors before being transferred to Case Management for the longer term)

You intend to contact Ms. Smith today and arrange to meet at her home on April 18 to discuss her claim and your plan for return to work.

You complete your initial claim assessment and note the following information:

Ms. Smith has 6 prior claims in the last 10 years (4 claims involving the right arm/elbow/wrist). The last two claims involved over 12 weeks wage loss. You reviewed these two claims and the worker showed resistance to return to work on both cases, but did return to work at ABC Meats on a graduated basis on alternate duties. Testing on past claims did not show any degenerative issues.

On the last status update taken by the adjudicator on the date of claim transfer the worker reports 6/10 pain. This is in comparison to 8/10 pain reported 7 days post-accident. She reports pain radiating down her arm, and pain when doing most tasks she thinks she may need surgery and that her arm is "wrecked". She is attending physiotherapy twice a week and her doctor every 2 weeks. She stated concerns about the recent spring snowfall as she cannot clear the driveway and she has to attend physio treatment. She lives alone in a house in Winnipeg.

The adjudicator has not contacted the employer regarding the claim. The Employer Accident Report indicates that they can accommodate alternate or modified duties. The worker indicates she has been in contact with her supervisor a few weeks ago and there is no available work. The worker indicated she has little faith in the employer to accommodate her injury, as she has had problems with them in the past.

Reports from the treating doctor provide minimal information beyond the workers subjective complaints and no objective findings. The current diagnosis is right lateral epicondylitis questioning partial tear. The doctor has the worker completely off work with no restrictions and a follow up in 3 weeks (May 7). The doctor has requested an MRI which has been facilitated by healthcare and the appointment is on April 18.

Reports from the treating physiotherapist show that there has been improvement with treatment. The objective findings show increasing range of motion, but the subjective complaints show the worker is

very pain focused. There is no information on home based active rehab. The current diagnosis is a right elbow strain/lateral epicondylitis. General restrictions have been provided to WCB as no use of right arm. The physio provided more detailed restrictions to the employer in their functional ability form.

After checking WCB reference material you note a full recovery expectation for right lateral epicondylitis 3-8 weeks, complicating factors, such as degenerative issues and multiple prior injuries, can increase the recovery an additional 4 weeks.

Case Manager Selection - Case Study Exercises

CM Comp:

1. Based on the background information **(Analysis and Problem Assessment) (20 points):**

- I. What are the current and potential barriers to Ms. Smith's recovery and return to work? (10 points)
- II. What additional information would you seek to obtain to assist with managing the worker's return to health and work? (5 points)
- III. What key messages would you want to share with to Ms. Smith at your first meeting? (5 points)

2. Please draft a letter to the physician, requesting a narrative report. The letter should outline what information you may need to properly manage and/or make decisions on the claim. Please include a paragraph on the importance of prompt reporting for workers, employers and the WCB. **(Written Communication) (10 points)**

You have a maximum of **60 minutes** to complete these exercises.