

Medical advisors—Your WorkSafeBC resource

WorkSafeBC medical advisors are your resource for collaboration on the clinical condition of your injured worker patients or for medicolegal opinions.

While the majority of WorkSafeBC claims are relatively straightforward and are resolved smoothly and without delay, about 20% of claims are medically complex and/or result in prolonged disability and are referred to one of our medical advisors. The referral can come from either you—the injured worker's physician—or a WorkSafeBC officer.

WorkSafeBC medical advisors are fully licensed physicians in BC working full or part time. Most are family doctors with at least 5 years' experience in the community, and many have additional qualifications in sports medicine, epidemiology, and disability or occupational medicine. In addition, specialist consultants in areas such as ophthalmology, internal medicine, occupational medicine, orthopaedics, and psychiatry are available to provide expert advice.

Our medical advisors play a rewarding and integral role in a team-based environment that includes adjudicators, nurses, psychologists, and vocational rehabilitation consultants who meet as frequently as necessary to collaborate with treating physicians,

discuss medical issues, and manage claims. This kind of work environment helps ensure best clinical outcomes for injured workers.

Collaborating with community physicians

Whether you initiate contact—by phone or Form 8 or 11—or a WorkSafeBC medical advisor contacts you, the advisor's role is to provide effective, expeditious clinical care to your injured worker patient.

For example, WorkSafeBC medical advisors are available to discuss your patient's care; assist in expediting specialist consultations and imaging, when covered; provide a second opinion/specialist opinion to clarify diagnosis or treatment; examine your patient if you would like us to, or when appropriate; and to visit your patient's job site to better understand the work issues.

In addition, WorkSafeBC medical advisors are involved in disability management research, evidence-based best practice development, physician education, outreach, and systematic reviews, which have resulted in WorkSafeBC being recognized by the Cochrane Collaboration. The application of these principles of best practice has a major influence in the work medical advisors perform. Optimal clinical

outcomes for injured workers are of paramount importance in preventing disability, and this perspective guides the approach of our medical advisors. Of course, success depends on collaboration with you and we appreciate your support in our endeavors.

New fee code

When your telephone discussion with a WorkSafeBC medical officer is to collaborate on treatment issues or rehabilitation health or disability outcomes, ask about the new fee code 19508.

Contact us

WorkSafeBC regularly mails an updated list of medical advisors to all physicians in the province. If you would like to talk to a medical advisor and don't have a name or phone number, please call 604 244-6224 or toll free 1 800 967-5377, option 3, local 6224.

Become a medical advisor

If you are interested in becoming a part-time or full-time WorkSafeBC medical advisor, please call Dr Celina Dunn at 604 244-6224.

—Don Graham, MD, CCFP
WorkSafeBC Chief Medical Officer

HOLD THAT DATE!

WorkSafeBC's 8th Annual Physician's Education Conference

Saturday, December 8, 2007 • Vancouver Marriott Pinnacle Hotel

Mark your calendars and watch for details in upcoming WorkSafeBC pages.