

An opportunity to improve relationships between physicians and ICBC

Every day there are close to 700 car crashes in BC. These crashes kill at least one person and result in more than 215 people being injured. Some of these injuries are life altering, while others, although less severe, require the same careful management to ensure they do not have long-term effects.

Family physicians are generally the first line of contact for individuals injured in a motor vehicle crash, but often do not have a complete understanding of ICBC's coverages and processes. This can create misunderstandings not only between physicians and ICBC, but also between ICBC and its injured customers.

A physician acting as medical community liaison is needed to fill this gap. The medical community liaison is an "ICBC champion" and a resource in the community to fellow physicians.

Injury claims management is a complex process, which has become even more so with new and emerging medical conditions, treatment, and technology. While ICBC claims staff are knowledgeable and are comfort-

able with the legal process relating to claims, they are not always as comfortable with the medically related issues.

The medical community liaison is a bridge to positively influence the relationship between ICBC and the physicians who treat individuals injured in motor vehicle crashes. They will act as a resource to other physicians in the community to enhance physicians' understanding of ICBC's processes and coverages. They are also a resource to ICBC, providing strategic advice and insight into the medical community's questions and concerns about ICBC.

Working with ICBC's Bodily Injury Services Department, the medical community liaison will work on the implementation of a joint communication strategy and the development of educational materials and information articles designed for ICBC staff and the medical community.

The communications strategy will be supported by editorial columns in the *BC Medical Journal*. The articles will focus on timely issues of interest to physicians treating the ICBC

patient, barriers to recovery, strategies for successful injury management and recovery, and will work to explain ICBC programs, coverages, policies, processes, and legal requirements.

The medical community liaison will also participate on the BCMA/ICBC Liaison Committee. The committee meets several times a year to address matters of mutual interest regarding processes and services relating to ICBC claimants. The medical community liaison will act as an ICBC representative, presenting concerns to the committee and suggesting workable solutions.

The medical community liaison is a paid part-time position that may be of interest to a practising physician who wants to vary his or her experience. ICBC requests a minimum 1 year commitment.

If you are interested, or would like more details about this opportunity to help improve the management of bodily injury claims, please contact Anita Gill by e-mail at anita.gill@icbc.com or by telephone at 604 647-6134.

— Anita Gill

ICBC Manager Injury Technology and Program Support

Speed kills nearly 180 people every year

Year after year, police report speeding as the top contributing factor in all fatal collisions in BC. This May, ICBC has launched a public awareness campaign to draw attention to the issue. Extra police enforcement will also be targeting speeders at high crash and injury locations. You can help do your part by reminding patients, family, and friends to slow down.

Road safety tips:

- Slow down and maintain a safe traveling speed between their vehicle and the one in front.
- Be realistic about travel times. Allow extra time for possible delays that may arise due to traffic volume or construction.
- Warmer weather can encourage motorcyclists and bicyclists to get out on the road. Remember to use extra caution, share the road, and keep a look out for these other road users.

