

Communication between physicians and WorkSafeBC medical advisors

An attending physician may request to consult a medical advisor for their patients who have submitted a WorkSafeBC claim for a workplace injury, occupational disease, or mental health condition. Physicians may request assistance with referrals and imaging, ask about the claim's status, request clarification about or assistance with WorkSafeBC documentation, or discuss the claims process in general. Similarly, medical advisors may need to contact the responsible physician to discuss clinical care plans for injured workers. To streamline this process and to avoid delays in processing the request for consultation, follow the suggestions below.

Identify why you are requesting contact. In addition to checking the "Do you wish to consult with a WorkSafeBC physician or nurse advisor?" box on the Physician's Report (Form 8/11), identify in the body of the report why you are requesting contact (e.g., to request imaging, to make a referral, or to discuss medication, claim status, or other specified patient concerns). This will help WorkSafeBC medical advisors address your queries more effectively.

Provide a phone number and, if necessary, the best time of day to reach you. This is especially important if you are a locum or emergency physician without a dedicated office number or if you work in multiple facilities.

Turn off the default setting requesting consultation. Some electronic medical records systems are defaulted to automatically check the box requesting consultation with a medical advisor. Please check your forms and, if possible, turn off this default setting so you don't receive unnecessary calls.

Call if you need a quick response. For matters that require a quick response, call the medical advisor's contact number: 1 855 476-3049. This is monitored from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, but you can leave a message at any time and get a callback within 1 to 2 days. This phone number is not intended to provide clinical advice in an acute setting. Patients requiring urgent care should be sent to the ER.

You can also call any medical advisor in your region, who can direct you to the most appropriate medical advisor or claim owner.

Expedite imaging. If you need a medical advisor's assistance with expediting imaging, send the requisition to WorkSafeBC along with your Form 8/11. Note what the imaging is for and the claim number on the requisition. Fax requisitions to 604 233-9777 or 1 888 922-8807, or mail them in.

Contact the claim owner for status or decisions. Concerns about the claim status or decisions are best answered by the claim owner (entitlement officer, case manager, or return-to-work specialist). However, the medical advisor can summarize the claims process and provide you with contact information for the claim owner.

Make use of our outreach program. For detailed information about WorkSafeBC billing, disability assessment and management, or WorkSafeBC resources for injured workers, use our outreach program (Patient Care, Physicians and WorkSafeBC). We can come to your office and tailor a presentation to meet your needs. This academic detailing is available to and accredited for family doctors and

specialists and is delivered by medical advisors or billing specialists. For more information, call 1 855 476-3049, email clinicalservicesevents@worksafebc.com, or contact a medical advisor.

Have a protocol for our calls. We understand how busy you are. To maximize efficiency, have a protocol in place with your office staff for calls received from a WorkSafeBC medical advisor. Let your staff know whether they should interrupt you at the time

of the call or set up a more convenient time for a callback. The medical advisor may send you a fax noting their contact information and working hours to help set up a mutually convenient time.

Note that calls are billable. Phone calls with WorkSafeBC personnel are billable, providing they advance your patient's care or claim. Use billing code 19508 when you speak with a medical advisor. ■

—Karima Jiwa, MD, CCFP, FCFP
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This article is the opinion of WorkSafeBC and has not been peer reviewed by the BCMJ Editorial Board.