

ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

Effecting positive change and ensuring sustainability of the workers' compensation system through the views of Alberta employers

Policy Consultation Advisor Group (PCAG)

The PCAG met on December 9th. Leighann Poitras, Craig Hryncuk, Sydney Dowhaniuk and Angelina Tlustos represented ITF. The Terms of Reference was reviewed and WCB emphasized the intent of the PCAG is two-way dialogue. WCB spoke to the development of a policy lifecycle and in January a new diagram and process will be published on the WCB website that includes monitoring and evaluation. ITF emphasized opportunities to be involved at an earlier stage in the process and the reasons this would be beneficial, discussion of post implementation policy reviews by PCAG, as well as communication at the desk level and the importance of change management when new policies are rolled out.

The 2026-2028 rolling policy plan will also be posted on the website in January. It is expected to include ITF proposals for review of Economic Loss Payments, Psychiatric and Psychological Injury, Cost Relief for Back Injuries and Access and Privacy among other policies.

Access to Information

The ITF subcommittee met on December 15th to discuss priorities and Terms of Reference for this working group. The top three actionable items the subcommittee would like to advance include: review of policy and legislation interpretation, the legal framework, Privacy Commission decisions and application of WCB policy; collaboration on development of a privacy risk assessment that incorporates employer concerns regarding impacts of non-disclosure by WCB; and completion of a psychological injury redaction review to assess appropriateness of criteria. While the focus is on psych injuries, it is understood learnings will be applied to non-psychological injuries as well.

The group agreed more frequent meetings will be necessary in 2026 to ensure progress is made in key areas. The full working group will meet in January.

ITF Subcommittees & Working Groups

At the December 3rd meeting members were encouraged to consider involvement in subcommittee work since much of the progress made in past years is because of the collaboration that occurs in this forum. Please let Melanie know if you are interested in joining any of the following groups.

- **Duration of Disability** – focus is on analyzing data and identifying opportunities and strategies to reduce average duration.
- **Psychological Injury Working Group** – primary and secondary psychological injuries present challenges for employers and WCB. This group is focused on addressing barriers and ensuring effective management of these claims.
- **WCB Policy Consultation** - this is a standing subcommittee that meets as needed based on WCB policy consultation activities.
- **Access to information** – members identified several concerns regarding access to claim information ranging from the extent to which WCB redacts information through to the significant discrepancies in information being released as part of the appeal process by the Appeals Commission versus by the WCB.
- **Economic Loss Payments** - ELP costs have become a primary driver of premium rate increases. The current policy and practices were developed before the significant emergence of psych injuries and the current approach is being reviewed to ensure appropriateness.
- **Physiotherapy Services Subcommittee** – A new contract was introduced in 2025 and this group continues to evaluate the impact of the contract changes and discuss any remaining issues.
- **Industry Custom Pricing** - the focus is on monitoring WCB repolling of industries involved in the ICP program and process efficiencies.

Upcoming ITF Association meetings

The next member open forum is on January 22nd starting at 11:00. If there are topics you would like to have discussed please let Melanie know.

The next guest presentation webinar will be held on March 5th starting at 9:30 am. Dr Cho will provide the annual update on physician engagement. In addition, WCB will discuss use of AI/Machine Learning. WCRI will also present on Psychosocial Factors and Functional Outcomes Following Physical Therapy.

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Wednesday March 11th starting at 8:30. The in-person meeting is at the Manufacturers Health & Safety Association in Rocky View.

December 2025