

# ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

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

---

## **Lost Time Claim Recording**

This subcommittee held their first meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. The group reviewed the information provided by WCB as an outcome of the 2021 review requested by Minister Copping. Current interests and priorities of subcommittee members were then discussed, along with possible strategies to advance this issue. The subcommittee identified two initiatives for further consideration to address member interests. These include development of criteria for an exemption to the classification of a claim as a Lost Time Claim within the WCB system, and introduction of a pricing option that would allow an experience rated employer to pay the worker for one or two days post injury (not only the day of the injury as is currently the case).

A discussion document outlining the rationale for this approach is included in the agenda package for discussion at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **ELP Working Group**

The working group met on February 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss current trends and 2026 priorities and action items.

ELP volume is down 11.6% from 2024 and overall costs have decreased 8.3% from 2024. However, the cost of 0-based ELPs has increased 3.6% primarily from higher average costs based on unemployability. Sixty two percent of ELP awards involved situations where the worker was employable, which is the best result WCB has had over the past decade. The average ELP cost in 2025 was \$486k, whereas it is \$275k when the worker was employable. The public service and construction sectors see the highest ELP experience.

The working group then discussed priorities and initiatives for 2026. A major emphasis will be on identifying issues and gathering data to support a review of the ELP policy. Consultation on a draft revised ELP policy is anticipated in Q3. In addition the group will look at whether there are any quick hits that can be actioned in 2026 to better manage ELPs prior to a new policy being approved.

## **Physiotherapy Services**

The ITF subcommittee met on February 20<sup>th</sup> in advance of the stakeholder meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup>. There was a 6.9% increase in the number of workers accessing physiotherapy services in 2025. Reductions in both

average number of treatments and average duration of treatment for both time loss and no time loss claims were achieved in 2025. Data indicates despite shorter PT episodes, workers are still returning to work at equal or improved rates.

## **WCB Policy Consultation Follow-up**

On February 26<sup>th</sup> members of the Policy Consultation subcommittee met with WCB in follow-up to the 2025 consultation on the Policy Interpretation and Application draft policy. WCB wanted an opportunity to walk through the policy intent and proposed application, clarify areas of misunderstanding from the draft language, and discuss the concerns ITF raised.

WCB advised that initially their primary interest was clarifying effective dates (prospective and retroactive) when policies are changed. This has been misunderstood in some situations. The draft was then expanded to include foundational principles and current practices in an effort to increase transparency and create a consolidated document all stakeholders and WCB staff could refer to.

ITF members reaffirmed that while confirmation of effective dates may have value, other provisions continue to be a concern and potential pitfalls outweigh benefits. WCB indicated they would consider our feedback in determining next steps for this policy.

## **Upcoming ITF Association meetings**

The next member open forum is on March 19<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:30 am. Dr Cho will provide the annual update on physician engagement. WCRI will then present their new research on Psychosocial Factors and Functional Outcomes Following Physical Therapy. Representatives from the City of St Albert will also discuss their approach and experience in removing barriers to positive psychological injury outcomes

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

February 2026