

# ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

*Effecting positive change in Workers' Compensation through the views of Alberta employers*

---

## **Joint OHS/WCB Reporting Project**

As discussed at the March meeting, ITF wrote to Myles Morris voicing concerns about the merits, costs and the timing of this project. We also stressed the importance of stakeholder consultation and the need for a business case. We specifically requested there be no further work on the project until terms of reference are developed in consultation with employer stakeholders. We also asked for confirmation of the expenditures and deliverables for the \$700,000 included in the 2020-21 budget for this project and whether there is also a budget allocation for 2021-2022. There has been no response to date.

## **Policy Consultation on Legislative Changes**

Following discussion at the March meeting, ITF wrote to Wendy King on March 5<sup>th</sup> expressing concern that there would be no opportunity for stakeholder review of the new policies prior to the policies being presented to the Board of Directors for approval. Wendy spoke with Darren on March 17<sup>th</sup> and ITF subsequently received a response to our letter on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Wendy's letter is posted on the Members Only website for those who are interested.

She acknowledged our request that ITF be given the opportunity to review and comment on the new Bill 47 policies similar to the way we had with the recent employer account management policy changes. Wendy agreed that was a productive process but sees a fundamental difference between the two situations. The employer account management scenario represented a change to an existing policy, where the intent of the policy did not change but the wording needed clarification. The PCAG's review happened after stakeholder feedback was reviewed by the Policy Committee and BOD.

Wendy expressed the view that our suggestion deviated from that established policy consultation process as well as the mandate of PCAG because the PCAG would be reviewing the draft policy prior to the BOD review. Her letter indicated this could create an untenable position for members of PCAG, who would have to balance their responsibilities to a variety of interested parties (their associations or coalitions, their employers, etc.). Furthermore, she noted the PCAG is not meant to evaluate the views of others and this responsibility lies solely with the WCB Board of Directors. Legislators have entrusted the Board with the duty to weigh stakeholder feedback and make choices in the best interest of the

workers' compensation system in its entirety. WCB feels strongly this responsibility cannot be delegated to any other group.

The Bill 47 Policy Stakeholder group will be meeting on May 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss the April 1<sup>st</sup> policy changes and whether there are any challenges, changes or clarification needed. Members are asked to provide comments on any issues and concerns regarding implementation of Bill 47 changes to Melanie no later than May 18<sup>th</sup>. The ITF representatives are meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss member comments and prepare for the meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> with the WCB and Labour Coalition representatives.

## **Psychological Injury Working Group**

The Modified Work team has met twice to discuss content of forms for identifying work restrictions and modified work options. Refining forms and processes continues.

## **Medical & Appeal Process Review**

There was no contact or update in April from the project team doing this review.

## **Upcoming ITF Association meetings**

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday June 2nd starting at 8:30 am**. We have also confirmed the guest presentations starting **at 1:00 pm Monday May 31<sup>st</sup>**. These are Zoom sessions. Speakers on the 31<sup>st</sup> include:

- Demet Edeer with the Evidence Based Practices Group at WorkSafe BC on the topic of Virtual Physiotherapy and Telerehabilitation – Efficacy and Effectiveness
- Dr. Michael Stolte, Chair of the Psychologists Association of Alberta Technology in Practice Committee on the topic of applications and efficacy of telepsychology
- Dale Wispinski along with the senior leaders for the Appeal Advisors Branch and Medical Panels Program to provide an update
- Leanne Salel from the Privacy Commission to discuss employer access to WCB information and the implications of their June 2019 Order