

# ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

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

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## WCB Policy Development/Consultation

The ITF response on the Medical Cannabis draft policy as approved by membership at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting has been submitted.

The deadline for consultation has been extended to June 20<sup>th</sup> on the Funding Policy. The Funding Policy subcommittee met on April 6<sup>th</sup> and the Executive met on April 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss options for moving this forward.

A WCB stakeholder information session was held virtually the afternoon of April 19<sup>th</sup>. There was little new information provided on the funding policy and questions could only be submitted via chat so there was no opportunity for dialogue. We have requested copies of the presentation but they have not been provided yet.

The ITF Executive has had a preliminary discussion with a consultant who is available to support ITF in the review of issues regarding the funding policy. A virtual information session for members is being planned for 1:00 on May 17<sup>th</sup>. In addition, ITF has requested an in-person meeting later in May with the WCB to further discuss the funding policy and funding model. Details on both sessions will be shared as soon as plans are confirmed.

## Value of a \$0.01 WCB Premium Change

ITF asked the WCB to confirm the projected financial impact of a 1 cent change in premium rates. WCB advised the general "rule of thumb" is a change of \$10M in claim costs is required to change premium rates by 1 cent and is an approximation. If a calculation was done each rate year based on that year's inputs, the number would alter slightly. When the provincial assessable earnings are at or near the \$100B threshold, the rule of thumb is a reasonable approximation to illustrate the type of movement required to make an impact in the rate.

To calculate the 2022 actual premium change for a 1 cent change in rates, WCB used the projected assessable earnings of \$105 billion which was the forecasted amount for 2022 when rates were set in November last year. A 1 cent change in the rate would result in a change in premiums of \$10.5M. If WCB calculated the *rule of thumb* figure precisely for 2022, and held all other factors constant, the amount of claim costs to change premium by \$0.01 would be \$10.5M.

## Psychological Injury Working Group

The working group met on April 20<sup>th</sup> for a final review of the Psychological Injury Dashboard. The new dashboard will be presented to members at the guest presentation webinar scheduled on May 26<sup>th</sup>. For the balance of 2022 the working group will be undertaking data analysis and discussion of claims involving secondary psychological issues. Work on assessment of cognitive demands and identification of work restrictions continues and new processes and reports are being piloted by WCB. Process flow charts developed in 2021 will also be reviewed to validate new processes are being consistently followed.

## Physiotherapy Services Working Group

A summary of highlights regarding the 1 April 2022 physiotherapy contract changes for employers is still in development. WCB hopes to have this ready for review by the Working Group within the next week and will make it more broadly available to employers shortly after if there are no further changes required.

## Lost Time Claim Recording

This was one of the topics discussed at the April 19<sup>th</sup> WCB information session. The WCB review looked at impact on administrative burden, bidding process for contractors, overall costs to system and on employers in various sizes, impact on public health systems and economic impacts. While the WCB is not contemplating major changes they are considering excluding hearing loss claims from LTC recording. There will be a follow-up meeting with reps from ITF and the Labour Coalition to discuss this in more detail.

## Upcoming ITF Association meetings

A guest presentation webinar has been scheduled for the morning of May 26<sup>th</sup>. The Appeals Commission will be presenting their quarterly update, followed by a presentation by WCB on the new Psychological Injury Dashboard. The third presentation will be by Bill Howatt, focused on psychologically safe workplaces.

The next quarterly membership meeting is on Wednesday June 1<sup>st</sup>. and plans are underway for a hybrid in-person and virtual meeting. The in-person meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Edmonton Airport in Nisku.

April 2022