

ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

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

Government Engagement

Minister Jones has been invited to attend our December 6th ITF quarterly membership meeting.

Access to Information

A meeting has been scheduled for October 5th to discuss ITF member concerns regarding ATI processes and timelines. WCB will be providing data regarding ATI volumes and timelines, as well as the process flow, in advance of the meeting. The discussion will focus on three streams: accessing information that impacts urgent disability management efforts such as RTW, appeal processes, and cost relief. Parts of the process ITF members find challenging and why, how often, and the impact on employer claims management will be the focus.

If you are not on this subcommittee but would like to join the discussion let Melanie know.

Duration of Disability Working Group

The group met on September 11th. Members discussed the draft fitness to work template letter to health care providers and proposed several changes. Members also reviewed options for a fillable form for the modified work pre-confirmation pilot. The new process will be piloted in October. WCB is looking for volunteers for the pilot so if you are interested let Melanie know.

Addition of new resources and initiatives to support modified work were then discussed. WCB is reviewing the resources for employers developed by WorkSafe BC. Members suggested development of similar resources for health care providers including OIS clinics.

An employer outreach session is being planned for October 25 and 26 in Lethbridge. Topics will include a session on modified work and a general discussion on improving service delivery. Upcoming enhancements to the Worker and Employer Apps and the employer portal were also discussed. A demo will be included as part of the agenda for the December meeting.

Strategies for increasing connections to expand Training on the Job and Train and Place opportunities were also discussed. WCB will be drafting information that can be used by organizations to highlight financial benefits of these programs to employers.

Physiotherapy Subcommittee

The ITF physiotherapy subcommittee met on September 22nd in advance of the September 26th stakeholder meeting with WCB and Labour Coalition representatives. Boris Makale and Craig Hrynychuk attended the September 26th meeting representing the ITF.

Coaching with claim owners at the desk level continues, and WCB will blitz in Q4 to review all long-term physio claims. All extensions for PT are reviewed by the claim owner however this can be an adjudicator, case manager or case assistant. ITF reiterated that the case assistant may not be the most appropriate decision maker based on their limited experience. It was acknowledged by WCB that at times PT extensions and auto-authorized letters are sent based on invoicing. ITF requested that the letter be amended to include the PT provider and reason for extension, and that claims on the CAP desk be assigned an adjudicator if a PT extension was or is requested.

The September PT stats were also discussed. Of note, the duration of PT in the Edmonton region is significantly higher than Calgary (the average number of treatments is similar). Duration for TL claims is 101 days in Edmonton versus 83 in Calgary. NTL duration is 70 versus 60 days.

ITF Association 2024 Meeting Dates

Dates for the quarterly ITF Association meetings are:

- March 6th and September 11th at the Manufacturers Health & Safety Association in Rocky View
- June 12th and December 4th at the Holiday Inn Edmonton Airport in Nisku

Upcoming ITF Association meetings

The guest presentation webinar is scheduled for Wednesday November 30th starting at 1:00. The agenda includes an update from the Appeals Commission team followed by a presentation by Dr. Doug Gross on models of care for soft-tissue injuries in Alberta. The third session will be a presentation by WCB on their use of AI for claims administration. The webinar will close with a roundtable discussion regarding administrative/claim issues as discussed at the September quarterly meeting.

The next quarterly meeting is on Wednesday December 6th at the Holiday Inn Edmonton Airport in Nisku. This will include the 2024 WCB premium rate presentation.

September 2023

Additional information can be found on the ITF website - <http://www.itfassociation.ca>