

**Workers' Compensation Insurers' Task Force
March 19, 2008
Minutes**

Members present

Rob Rangel; Broadspire
Meg Kasting; SFM
Bruce Baker; Liberty Mutual
Laurie Simonsen; Travelers
Robert Farber; BRAC
Karen Ebert; MCIT
Charles Bierman; Mayo
Ryan Shaughnessy for Jodie Connor; Liberty
Nancy Ross; City of Minneapolis
Mary Abraham; Westfield
Dave Clark for Dennis Ballinger; Western Nat'l
Tim Wiering for Cindy Van Eyll; General Casualty
Claire McCoy; GAB Robins

Members excused

Gary Westman; MN DOER

Members absent

Dave Oertli; Sedgwick
Ken Gildow; RTW
Bob Johnson; Insurance Federation

Staff members present

Chris Beaubien
Patricia Todd
Carol Pankow
Jana Williams
Phil Moosbrugger
Ralph Hapness

Visitors present

Heather Howard; PMSI

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by chairperson Rob Rangel. Members and visitors introduced themselves.

4) Updates

Data-driven Workers' Compensation System

Assistant Commissioner Patricia Todd reported the QRC activity is being evaluated to put all the "R" forms online. They anticipate that the technical proposal will be done in October 2008. Meg Kasting asked about the employee's signature on the forms. Todd indicated that the original employee's signature will be maintained by the QRC.

Treatment parameters online demonstration

Todd demonstrated a pilot Web site dealing with treatment parameters. Browsing can be done by condition and treatment option. Todd indicated that work still has to be done on the table of contents and by condition and treatment option. The goal is to have this available by the end of the year. Charles Bierman asked if there had been any collaboration on this project with Wisconsin. Todd indicated that there had not been, but she will look into it.

5) Workers' Compensation Advisory Council

Todd reported that the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council's (WCAC) workers' compensation bill is presently going through the Senate and House. The bill number is H.F. 3566. The following overview of the bill was given.

- Clarification of who is responsible for workers' compensation in two specific cases, personal care assistance and Minnesota Response Medical Reserve Corp. A cross-reference was added on the independent contractor language.
- The maximum weekly comp rate was increased from \$750 to \$850.
- It extends the maximum duration of temporary total disability from 104 to 130 weeks.
- It increases the maximum hourly rate for QRCs from \$88.06 to \$91, and QRC interns to \$81.
- Extends timeframe for injured workers to request, not receive, retraining benefits from 156 weeks to 208.
- Prohibits reimbursement of unlicensed/unregistered complimentary and alternative health care providers.
- Allows the department to update the relative value fee schedule in a cost-neutral manner by reference.
- Removes financial limitations that employers must have before being eligible for the collective bargaining agreement.
- Clarifies the department's state purchase procedures regarding equipment and supplies for uninsured employees.
- Permits the department to issue penalties against rehabilitation providers that delay or do not put in forms within the required timeframe.
- Implements the department's ability to audit files using a statistical sampling process.
- Allows the department to create a worker's identification (WID) number instead of using the employee's Social Security number (SSN).
- Authorizes the department to file and receive documents electronically.

There were a number of questions regarding the WID number. Todd indicated that any of the documents that the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) sends out will have both the WID number and SSN number. The WID number is identified after the first claim creating document is sent.

Spring/summer meetings

Todd reported that the department has established work groups that will meet during the spring and summer.

The **Provider Billing and Auditing Work Group** will be charged with bringing forward issues relating to the billing process, automation of billing, compensability, pay-for-performance, post-audit process, repricing professional code of conduct and regulation of the industry and general efficiency and effectiveness of the system's billing and auditing processes to the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council.

The **Billing and Auditing Subgroup** will review the new practice of repricing of Minnesota workers' compensation claims and providers' bills and the legislative changes and regulatory requirements other states have made for this industry. They will send their recommendations to the Provider Billing and Auditing Work Group.

The **Employer Choice/Health Care Benefits Work Group** is charged with bringing forth reform/recommendations to the WCAC focusing on an employer choice option in the workers'

compensation system, the continuation of health care insurance and other benefits for injured employees.

The **Vocational Rehabilitation Work Group** will make policy and operations recommendations about the current practices of QRCs. It will compare statutorily defined vocational rehabilitation to the actual practice and services provided, cost containment reforms, pay for performance standards, and the efficiency and effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation.

All of these work groups will be meeting monthly. The groups will have members from the department, WCAC members, legislators, employers, insurers, employees and other interested stakeholders.

6) New business

DLI community services representative

John Stiffin, the department's community services representative, gave a presentation about how DLI reaches out to the minority communities. Stiffin represents DLI at community events, conducts training/presentations, provides information to customers and does referrals to appropriate units/agencies. From June through December 2005, 85 events were attended and approximately 17,000 customers were given brochures, posters, etc. Last year, approximately 29,000 people were reached.

7) Future agenda items

Medical cost drivers

Rangel indicated that medical cost drivers will be a focus at future meetings.

Electronic billing

Kasting noted that the electronic submittal of medical bills is required to be in place by 2009. It was decided that this be an agenda topic at a future meeting.

8) Paper reports

Rangel pointed out the case law summary and the 2008 meeting schedule in members' packets.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Beaubien
Executive Secretary