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Workers' Compensation Insurers' Task Force
Nov. 17, 2010
Minutes

Members present
Charlie Bierman, Mayo Clinic
Karen Clayton Ebert, MCIT
Robert Farber, Berkley Risk
Meg Kasting, SFM
Claire McCoy, GAB Robins
Mike Johns for Dave Oertli, Sedgwick CMS
Laurie Simonsen, Travelers
Kristin Brusegard for Cindy VanEyll, General Casualty
Gary Westman, MN Dept of Administration

Members present via telephone
Jodi Connor, Wausau

Members absent
Mary Abraham, Westfield Ins.
Bruce Baker, Liberty Mutual
Karen Clayton Ebert, MCIT
Bob Johnson, Insurance Federation of MN
Susan Pilon, RTW
Jerry Walthour, City of Minneapolis

Staff members present
Penny Grev
Ralph Hapness
Julie Klejewski
Melissa Parish
Patricia Todd
Jana Williams
Lisa Wichterman

Visitors present
Dawn Carlson
Lorna Leatherdale, MCIT

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by co-chair Karen Clayton Ebert. Members and visitors introduced themselves. The agenda was accepted as presented.

Assistant commissioner

Updates

Patricia Todd announced that 11 staff in the Workers' Compensation Division will be retiring by Dec. 29, 2010, including Data Management and Training Manager Jana Williams. She thanked everyone for their great service and dedication to this agency over the years. The staff is continuing to prepare for a smooth transition to a new administration, as well as continuing to some minor rulemaking, matching the rule to the statute, etc.

New business

Workforce Center presentation

Kyle Uphoff, from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) gave a presentation about what the Workforce Centers do around the state and also talked about the economic statistics their department pulls together for the state. Some topics reported included the labor markets, recessions, unemployment rate measures, jobs market and employment projections.

For additional information or a copy of the presentation, Kyle can be reached at (651) 259-7185.

Old Business

Self-audit and alternative dispute-resolution update

Penny Grev, of the department's Benefit Management and Resolution (BMR) unit, reported the self-audit letter was sent to insurers since the last time the task force met, and encourages them to report back; however, it is totally optional. The department is very interested in knowing if members are finding it as a useful tool.

ADR update – The department does have a process for managing disputes between insurance companies and providers that is working, however, the ADR unit has now been inviting a select number of insurance stakeholders, who have used ADR for resolving these type of disputes, to ask them how the process is currently working, are there better ways for the department to do it. This will assist the workgroup in coming up with different ideas and approaches for dealing with these types of disputes successfully so all stakeholders that are involved will know what is going on, etc.

CEUs for licensing claim adjusters

Grev reported that after doing some investigation, for the agency to be able to assist these people in acquiring the appropriate CEUs needed, the department would need to qualify not only as a facility to be able to offer these courses, but the instructors need to meet certain criteria under the International Distance Education Certification Center (IDECC), as well as the course work needs to be qualified under the same entity. Grev stated if the agency should choose to go in this direction, a possibility may be to partner with an education facility such as MnSCU. She will continue to work on this project and will report her progress back to the group.

E-billing update

General discussion – Meg Kasting commented it is her understanding there is still a very small percentage of the bills that are both sent and paid electronically, and there are issues to do with the clearinghouses speaking to each other, and until that gets resolved it won't move much further. Other members agreed they are experiencing the same issue.

Lisa Wichterman, DLI, commented it is getting better but not at the rate we would like it to. The Department of Health amended the statute to include that clearinghouses must communicate with each other by Jan. 1, 2012. An acknowledgement piece was added as well, which the clearinghouse will communicate back to the health care provider when they receive the bill and will give the status on it. Lisa stated if members are having a problem with a specific clearinghouse, let her know and she will assist in helping to resolve it. Her contact information is lisa.wichterman@state.mn.us and (651) 284-5173.

Future agenda items

Karen asked members for ideas, topics or speakers for future agendas. Some ideas include:

- MSA/liability claims vs. WC claims; and
- settling out future medical claims.

There was discussion about a topic for the next meeting, in March. Kristin Brusegard, from General Casualty, agreed to present about what's been successful at their company with regard to settling out future medical on a claim. Julie will email the chairpersons Kristin's contact information.

The next meeting is **Wed., March 16, 2011, at 9 a.m.**

Reports/meeting schedule

- The November 2010 edition of *COMPACT* and past editions are available online at www.dli.mn.gov/WC/Compact.asp.
- The WCITF meeting schedule, agenda and minutes are available online at www.dli.mn.gov/wcitf.asp.

The meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Klejewski

Executive Secretary