

**Workers' Compensation Insurers' Task Force**  
**Dec. 17, 2014**

**Members present**

Michael Johns  
Margaret Kasting  
Stacy Kohlhofer via telephone  
Robert Rangel  
Nancy Ross  
Laurie Simonson  
Gary Westman

**Members absent:**

Mary Abraham  
Robert Farber  
Robert Johnson  
Claire McCoy  
Susan Pilon  
Ryan Shaughnessy  
Cori Wentzlaff  
Cindy Van Eyll

**Visitors and staff members present**

Sandra Barnes  
Kate Berger  
Denise Courier  
Kathy Hanson  
Ralph Hapness  
James Heer, WCRA  
Karen Kask-Meinke  
Chris Leifeld  
Julie Olson, WCRA  
Clayton Overmire  
Jessica Stimac  
Jim Vogel  
Lisa Wichterman  
Laura Zajac

**Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by co-chairman Gary Westman. Announcements and introductions were made.

Executive Director, Workers' Compensation Division, Chris Leifeld made the announcement of Deputy Commissioner Kris Eiden's passing and expressed appreciation and acknowledgement for all of her work for the WCITF and the Department of Labor and Industry. She will be greatly missed.

Leifeld will be taking over the responsibilities as head of the Workers' Compensation Division.

**Approval of the agenda**

Meg Kasting moved to accept the agenda as presented. Nancy Ross seconded and all approved. The motion was passed.

**Approval of the minutes**

Rob Rangel moved to accept the March 26, 2014, meeting minutes as presented. Kasting seconded and all approved. The motion was passed.

## **New business**

### ***Department update – Chris Leifeld***

*The 2015 Workers' Compensation Summit* will be June 17 and 18, at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd, Minnesota. The theme is "Keeping Minnesota Safe and Healthy – A Great Place to Work." A notice will be forthcoming.

### ***Legislative update***

Leifeld indicated this year is a budget year for legislation and there are no plans for a housekeeping bill at this time.

He also spoke about the proposed DRG system and explained last year's legislation provided grants to be given to hospitals and insurers to develop their DRG systems. We now have \$1.3 million in the account for help in making that conversion.

### ***Ekdahl/Hartwig decisions***

The Minnesota Supreme Court came out with these decisions in August that impacted the offset for old age and survivor insurance benefits. The Supreme Court reversed and remanded this decision determining the phrase "old age and survivor benefits" refers to Social Security benefits under the Social Security Act.

### ***EDI SROI project – Jim Vogel***

DLI is working on mandating electronic filing of First Report of Injury forms.

### ***Workers' Compensation Modernization Project planning – Chris Leifeld***

Leifeld provided handouts and gave a presentation about the modernization project and how the work with the outside consultant is progressing. The vendor will produce a final report that includes the final costs, feasible next steps, recommendations, etc. That is expected to be delivered to us by late spring 2015. The consultant team will be on-site conducting meetings with various DLI groups, ensuring they understand all stakeholders' goals while moving forward. We should have an update about the cost of the project before going to the Legislature to request funding. If there is no cost estimate by the end of March, we'll have to wait until next session.

### ***Update about proposed rules on long-term treatment with opioids – Kate Berger***

Handouts were provided and an overview of the proposed permanent rules was given. Kate Berger indicated the department is currently finalizing the statement of need and reasonableness (SONAR) for the proposed rules and had asked the group to provide feedback to the questions sent in an email message Dec. 2, with emphasis on the ones relating to costs. Email feedback to Berger at [kate.berger@state.mn.us](mailto:kate.berger@state.mn.us) or call her at (651) 284-5294.

### ***Patient Advocate Program update – Clayton Overmire***

An overview about how this program is working was presented. Brochures and fact sheets were provided. This is a two-year pilot program. A survey will be conducted to those who have worked with the patient advocate and the results will be made available. Contact Clayton Overmire for additional information.

***Co-chairman position, new board member – Gary Westman***

Rob Rangel will be our new co-chairman, filling the vacancy after Karen Clayton-Ebert's departure. Also, Michael Johns has replaced David Oertli as a board member.

**Reports/meeting schedule**

- The most recent edition of *COMPACT* is online at [www.dli.mn.gov/WC/Compact.asp](http://www.dli.mn.gov/WC/Compact.asp).
- The WCITF meeting schedule, agenda and approved minutes are online at [www.dli.mn.gov/Wcitf.asp](http://www.dli.mn.gov/Wcitf.asp).
- The 2015 meeting schedule is March 18, May 20, Sept. 16 and Nov. 18.
- Next meeting date is March 18.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

***Carrie Rohling***

Executive Secretary