

Meeting minutes: Medical Services Review Board

Date: Jan. 16, 2025

Minutes prepared by: Katrina Namad

Location: Hybrid – Washington Room, Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN, and online

Members present

- Beth Baker (chair)
- Andrew Wilkins – alternate (remotely)
- Annie BeBault-Juntilla
- Russell Gelfman (vice-chair)
- Chad Griffith (remotely)
- Lisa Hanselman (remotely)
- Michael Head (remotely)
- Ceil Jung – alternate
- Chris Kramer – alternate (remotely)
- Matthew Monsein
- Kimberly Olson (remotely)
- Robin Saunders Ryan (remotely)
- Jessica Stimac, assistant commissioner
- Taiwo Lawal, medical consultant

Members absent

- Elizabeth Alm
- Tammy Bredahl
- Laura Breeher – alternate
- Natalie Haefner
- Michael Head
- Arnes Huskic – alternate
- Erica Kuhlmann
- Clyde Markon – alternate
- Courtney Mitchell – alternate
- Deborah Zurcher – alternate

DLI staff members present

- Sharon Benkufsky
- Bretta Hines
- Denise Holmes
- Alexis Johnson (remotely)
- Ethan Landy
- Katrina Namad
- Sandy Stoddard
- Lisa Wichterman

Visitors present

- Aaron Schenck (remotely)
- Carla Ferrucci (remotely)
- Evan Cordes (remotely)
- Jennifer Leahy (remotely)
- Wendy Harstad (remotely)

Agenda items

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. Roll call was done by Katrina Namad and a quorum was met.
2. **Approval of agenda and previous meeting minutes** – A motion to approve the Oct. 17, 2024 minutes, along with the Jan. 16, 2025 agenda as presented, was made by Chad Griffith and seconded by Russell Gelfman. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed.
3. **Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) updates – Assistant Commissioner Jessica Stimac**
 - The post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) study survey concluded Dec. 30. We are currently analyzing the survey data and moving to stakeholder interviews, which should conclude by the end of February. After that, we will complete data gathering and move into data analysis.
 - The Workers' Compensation Advisory Council (WCAC) meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 22, has been canceled. WCAC will next meet Feb. 12, which is the regularly scheduled date. Please mark your calendars accordingly. This date remains unchanged on the website.
 - The legislative session started a few days ago and will remain busy until late May. Policy recommendations come through WCAC, consisting of labor and business representatives. Currently, only housekeeping proposals have been presented. There is no agenda yet for the Feb. 12 meeting, but stay tuned for possible legislative updates about Minnesota Statutes section 176. The December edition of *COMPACT* has been published; if you haven't subscribed, I encourage you to do so for quarterly updates and Work Comp Campus-focused releases.
 - The agency has been collaborating with the Rehabilitation Review Panel and rehabilitation providers about rehabilitation rules for years. The comment period closed Oct. 23 without any submissions, so no hearing is required. There are no changes to the rules published in the *State Register* Sept. 23. The rulemaking record has been submitted to the administrative law judge for review. They have 14 days to review and issue a report, with potential approvals, disapprovals or technical suggestions. After approval, the rules can be adopted, followed by a 14-day governor veto period. A notice of adoption will be published and the rules will typically become effective five working days after publication.
 - We have a few staffing changes to announce.
 - Dr. Taiwo Lawal, whom you met at the most recent Medical Services Review Board meeting, is now with us in person. She is assisting with developing changes to the low back treatment parameters and working with Minnesota OSHA on rulemaking regarding blood lead levels.
 - Brenda Beebe, our previous insurance verification lead, is now the copy file review lead. For those who worked with Tony Galvan on records, Beebe is now your point of contact.
 - Workers' Compensation Ombudsman Pam Carlson retired Jan. 6 after 35 years in workers' compensation. Lisa Wichterman will fill the ombudsman role starting Jan. 29. Sharon Benkufsky will assist with medical policy issues when Wichterman starts her new position.
 - Compliance Services Officer Lila Zarins retired after 45 years of state service. We have a new compliance services officer who recently accepted the position to fill behind Zarins.
 - Chris Leifeld retired from state service after more than a decade with DLI. Sandy Stoddard has been hired to fill that role as director of Compliance, Records and Training. She started Jan. 2.

4. New member introduction

- Annie BeBault-Juntilla introduced herself. She is a registered nurse and is currently pursuing a master's degree in public health at St. Mary's University. She is employed by Hennepin County.
- Andrew Wilkins is the chief medical director at SFM Mutual. He is an emergency medicine physician by training. Before his current role, he was on staff at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and served in the military for an extended period as both a battalion and brigade doctor.

5. Treatment parameters – Lisa Wichterman of Compliance, Records and Training

- Wichterman led a discussion about updating the epidural steroid injections portion of the low back medical treatment parameters, based on small group meetings with doctors Beth Baker, Gelfman and Griffith. Discussion covered trigger point, sacroiliac joint and facet joint injections. The work group will continue reviewing low back injections and bring additional updates to the full board at the next meeting. Further discussions included the next steps after low back injections, such as addressing the rest of the spine, imaging, PTSD or concussions.

6. Future agenda items – Baker and board

- No future agenda items were brought to the table.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Griffith and seconded by Lisa Hanselman. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.