

Effectiveness Measures Report

2022 Report

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Summary

Title

Overview

In January 2007, WorkSafeBC began measuring the effectiveness of policy and regulation changes by collecting data from various sources. Reports are produced annually.¹

To be able to measure whether a policy change is effective, the Policy, Regulation and Research Department (PRRD) has to first determine what the problem is and if it is measurable. The PRRD works with the operating divisions to determine if there is anything concrete we can measure. Such as reduction in appeals, increase in worker benefits, increase and/or decrease in costs, and stakeholder impacts.

Effectiveness measures are identified and included in the executive summaries to discussion papers for the PRGC and the BOD.²

1 Previous to 2022, reports were produced twice a year, in the second and fourth quarters.

2 The PRRD is working with its internal partners to establish a new process and methodology to measure the effectiveness of policy, regulatory and legislative change.

Effectiveness Measures — Prevention

Amended Stop Work Orders Policy

Topic

The policy statements in the Prevention Manual around stop work orders were amended on an interim basis applying to all inspections occurring on and after May 27, 2015 until the end of December 31, 2015, relating to amendments to the Workers Compensation Act. After stakeholder consultation, the interim policies were finalized on December 16, 2015 and made effective on January 1, 2016.

Effective date

May 27, 2015

Measurements of effectiveness

Changes to Policy D12-191-1 (Stop Work Orders) will provide additional guidance for using the new provisions set out in section 191. The new provisions:

- expand the criteria and lower the threshold for issuing stop work orders, and
- allow WorkSafeBC to stop work from starting at multiple locations for an employer.

Feedback from WorkSafeBC staff will demonstrate the effectiveness.

2022 discussion

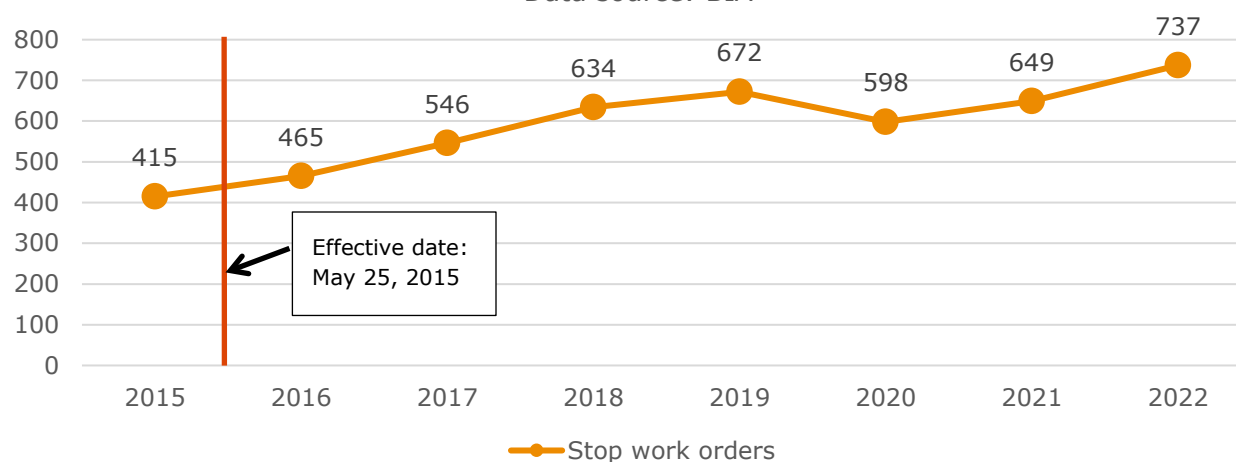
The number of stop work orders have increased by 58% since the amendment came into effect in 2015. Prevention officers comment that the amendment is an effective tool to change the behaviour of employers.

Reporting

Reporting duration: 8 of 8 years (2015-2022)

Stop work orders

Data source: BIA



Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2021	There was a decrease in the number of stop work orders in 2020 compared to 2019. It is anticipated that the number of stop work orders in 2021 will be consistent with 2020. The decrease in economic activity in 2020 and 2021 is a possible contributing factor to the decrease in the number of stop work orders. View previous report/discussion paper	Q4-2022
2020	The number of stop work orders continue to increase since the amendments in 2015. The amendments provide the prevention officers with greater opportunity change the behaviour of employers.	Q4-2021
2019	Inspection activity level has stayed stable since the amendments to the policy in 2015 while the number of stop work orders have increased steadily. Prevention Officers continue to use stop work orders as a tool in getting compliance from our employers. Approximately 14% of employers end up with another stop work order after their 1st and less than 4% of employers are issued another stop work order after their second order. This suggests that stop work orders is an effective tool at driving behavioural changes in employers if their operations are impacted by their violations.	Q4-2020
2018	Figures in the graph above are as of September 2018, by the end of 2018 the number of stop work orders is estimated to be higher than 2017. The increase in stop work orders results in more compliance from our employers.	Q4-2019

Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2017	As anticipated, the number of stop work orders have increased from 2013, and has remained consistent since the policy change. The increase in stop work orders results in more compliance from our employers.	Q4-2018
2016	This policy has provided more flexibility for our prevention officers in regards to getting compliance from our employers resulting in an increase in the number of stop work orders. By the end of 2016 the number of stop work orders is estimated to be higher than 2015. For the year to date in 2016, 4 Stop Operations Orders were issued. (1 Stop Operations Order was issued in 2015.)	Q4-2017
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per feedback from the Prevention department, this policy has provided more flexibility for our prevention officers in regards to getting compliance from our employers While this will likely result in an increased number of stop work orders, this number is still very small in comparison to the overall number of inspections done each year. 	Q4-2016

Next reporting period

Last report.

Preliminary Incident and Full Incident Investigations Policies Approved

Topic

Policy in the Prevention Manual around employer incident investigations was amended on an interim basis applying to all inspections occurring on and after May 27, 2015 until the end of December 31, 2015, relating to amendments to the Workers Compensation Act. The revised sections each require an employer to ensure that a report of the preliminary investigation and a report of the full investigation is prepared in accordance with the policies of the Board of Directors. After stakeholder consultation, the interim policies were finalized on December 16, 2015 and made effective on January 1, 2016.

Effective date

May 27, 2015

Measurement of effectiveness

- Measure the number of reports received by WorkSafeBC for preliminary and full incident investigations;
- Feedback from WorkSafeBC staff and stakeholders would demonstrate the effectiveness of the policies.

2022 discussion

The new employer incident investigations report (EIIR) online submission form was made accessible to all employers in Q2 2022. The new system allowed employers to manage their EIIR from preliminary reports to full reports.

The volumes of EIIRs received remains below pre-COVID levels. In 2022, the requirement to submit an EIIR was referenced on 5,630 inspection reports and issued in 333 orders.

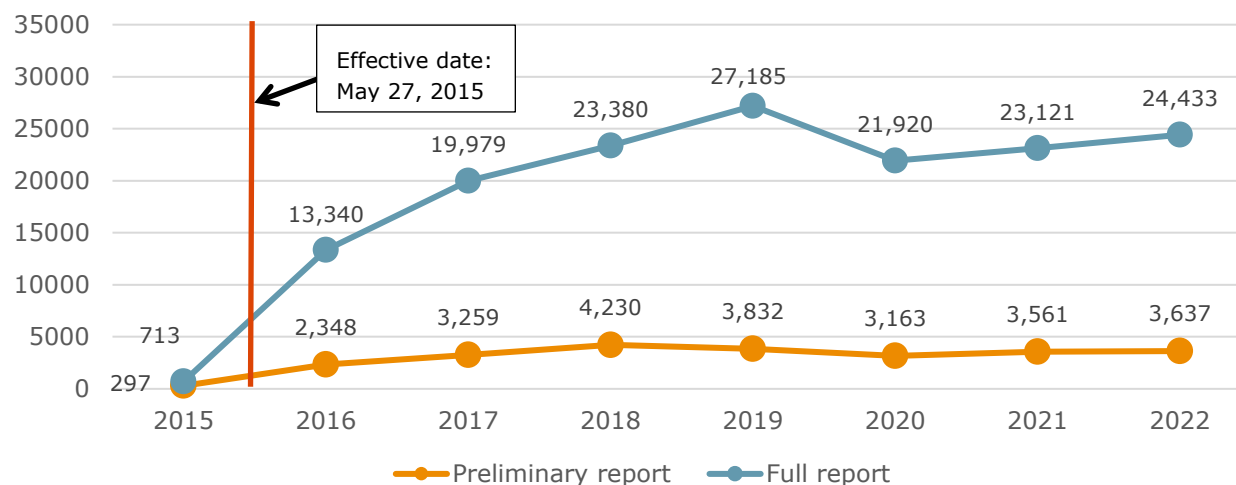
Prevention Services continues to send letters to employers who have a claim but not associated EIIR reminding them of their obligation to submit and follows up with employers where appropriate.

Reporting

Reporting duration: 8 of 8 years (2015-2022)

Preliminary and full incident investigations reports received

Data source: BIA



Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2021	<p>In 2021, our main focus has been on innovation and developing a long term solution to support and promote increases in the number and quality of EIIRs submitted annually. The intention is to improve employer experience and reduce the manual steps involved in processing EIIRs received from employers. In Q2, an IT initiative was launched which engaged employers in the design of a future EIIR online submission form. This form will enable EIIR information to be received in fielded format for data analytics. In addition, it will provide support and education to employers during the incident investigations process and will allow automated upload of the information to WorkSafeBC systems. Initial production release for employer testing was completed in September 2021 with a target to soft launch in November 2021. The full solution is expected to be available to employers in late January 2022. With more businesses opening back up in 2021, we are projecting to receive close to 22,600 full reports by the end of the year, slightly higher than 2020.</p>	Q4-2022

Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2020	In 2020, the core activities to increase EIIR submission rates from prior years continued, including mailed reminders to employers with claims that do not have a corresponding EIIR, and emphasis on EIIR submission in the Serious Injury Prevention Initiative (SIPI) and Program and Committee Evaluation (PACE) programs. YTD, the requirements under the Act to submit preliminary and final EIIRs were referenced over 27,000 times in workplace consultations and inspections. Technological enhancements to Prevention's health and safety portal and revisions to the online portal access are being undertaken in Q3-4 that are intended to increase awareness of EIIR requirements and improve the online submission process for employers.	Q4-2021
2019	In 2017 through 2018, efforts to increase EIIR submission rates focussed on identified large employers with high claims volumes and low percentages of submitted EIIRs. A process of escalating enforcement was applied, beginning with education and consultation and escalating to orders where necessary as a means to effect behaviour change. In 2019, inspection initiatives such as Serious Injury Prevention Initiative (SIPI) and Program and Committee Evaluation (PACE) continue to utilize education, consultation and enforcement to ensure EIIR submission for employers identified under these initiatives. As well, standardized inspection text is used by all officers responding to workplace incidents that directs employers to submit completed EIIRs within 30 days and provides links to resources to assist employers to complete and submit EIIRs.	Q4-2020
2018	The number of reports received continues to increase in 2018. We are projecting close to 21,000 reports received by the end of the year. Using the database to track status of reports, Prevention Officers continues to follow up with employers who have not complied.	Q4-2019
2017	The number of reports received continue to increase in 2017 from 2015. The data base enables us to track all the reports received and follow up with employer who have not complied.	Q4-2018
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a significant increase in the number of preliminary and full incident reports received year to date compared to 2015. We are estimating close to 15,000 reports received by the end of the year. The EIIR database was developed in January 2016 and is tracking the reports received for follow up. 	Q4-2017

Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of preliminary and full incident reports received are now being tracked since May 2015; we expect to see a large increase over the next 2 years on the number of reports received. • While this will likely result in an increased number of stop work orders, this number is still very small in comparison to the overall number of inspections done each year. 	Q4-2016

Next reporting period

Last report.

Asbestos Inventory

Topic

On January 25, 2017, the Board of Directors approved amendments to the OHS regulations.
Section 6.4 - Asbestos inventory

The proposed amendments would ensure asbestos inventories are completed for all workplaces with asbestos-containing materials. As a result, the risk assessments based on these inventories would be accurate. This would prevent workers from being inadvertently exposed to asbestos fibres.

Effective date

May 1, 2017

Measurement of effectiveness

A review of inspection reports and orders would help determine if asbestos inventories are being completed as required.

2022 discussion

The Commercial Asbestos Initiative began in 2016. The first five years of the initiative was limited in scope to commercial retail properties owned or managed by small property managers or owners themselves. In 2021 Prevention Services expanded this initiative to residential strata corporations which somewhat refreshed the pool of employers to inspect. Many of these employers did not have prior exposure to WorkSafeBC and the result was an increase in section 6.4 orders. The trend is expected to continue at the 2022 level for another year or two.

Reporting

Reporting duration: 6 of 6 years (2017-2022)



Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2021	The number of orders for asbestos inventory decreased in 2020 compared to 2019. It is anticipated that the number of orders in 2021 will be higher than 2020. The amendments and continued targeted prevention efforts have increased compliance. Once inventories are established, compliance focus moves to other asbestos contained materials related requirements.	Q4-2022
2020	The number of orders for asbestos inventory has decreased in 2019, and it is anticipated that 2020 will have less orders than 2019. The amendments, continued targeted prevention efforts have increased compliance.	Q4-2021
2019	As part of the 2019 occupational disease strategy, WorkSafeBC continue with an enforcement initiative aimed at reducing exposure to asbestos during cleaning, maintenance, repair, and renovation work in commercial buildings. The focus was inspection of previously inspected multi-location employers to ensure asbestos management programs are implemented and maintained at other locations. The decrease in orders issued YTD 2019 September under Section 6.4 suggests that clarification of the regulation requirements along with targeted prevention activities have had an effect on lowering non-compliance in employers.	Q4-2020

Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2018	The number of asbestos inventory orders have increased since implementation of the policy change as Officers are looking for compliance in asbestos inventory. It is expected over the next few years once awareness has increased, the number of orders for asbestos inventories will decline as employers complete their asbestos inventory.	Q4-2019
2017	It is too early to establish the effectiveness of this change.	Q4-2018

Next reporting period

Last report.

Respirable Crystalline Silica and Rock Dust

Topic

On January 25, 2017, the Board of Directors approved amendments to the OHS regulations. Section 6.110 to 6.112.7 - respirable crystalline silica and rock dust

Sections 6.112 to 6.112.7 apply to a workplace where a worker is or may be:

- a) engaged in the silica process, or
- b) exposed to potentially harmful levels of RCS dust.

The proposed amendments would likely prevent RCS dust exposures from becoming an occupational health and disease issue like asbestos in the decades to come, which may contribute to preventing and minimizing worker exposure.

Effective date

May 1, 2017

Measurement of effectiveness

The measure would be a review on silica dust order numbers.

2022 discussion

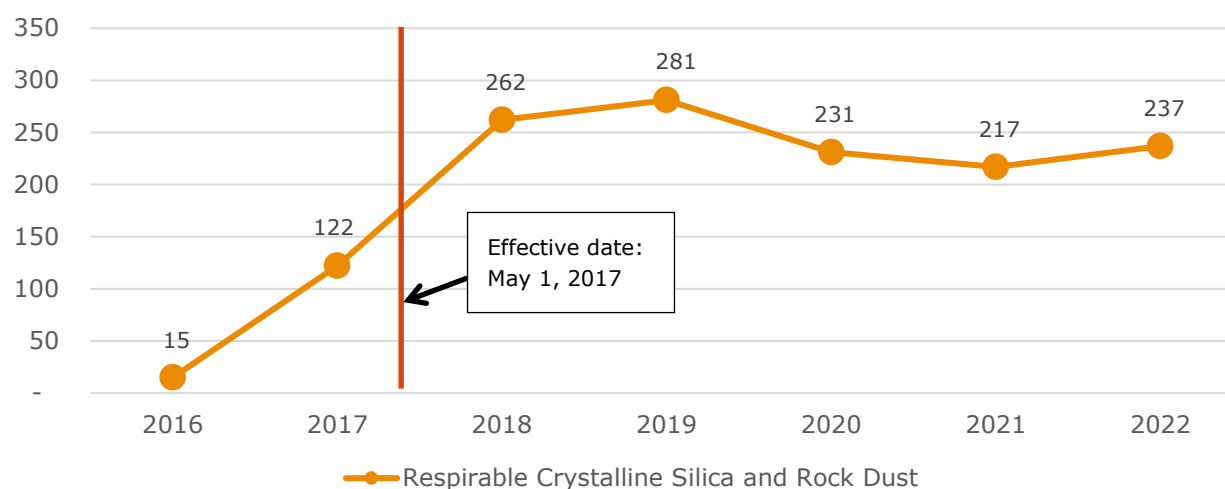
The number of orders increased slightly in 2022 from 2021. Because there are many employers that may come into contact with silica dust, Prevention Services is still contacting employers that have not previously been inspected. This has resulted in orders continuing to be issued.

In 2020, the scope of the silica initiative was increased to employers outside of construction to include employers in industries like marble and stone shops and concrete product manufacturing. Inspecting employers traditionally outside the scope of the silica initiative may increase the number of order's issued as Prevention Services connects with these employers for the first time on this issue.

Reporting

Reporting duration: 6 of 6 years (2017-2022)

Respirable Crystalline Silica and Rock Dust



Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2021	The number of orders issued in 2020 were lower than 2019, and it is anticipated that the 2021 will also be lower than 2019. We have seen that have more employers are using the silica control tool to assists them in conducting appropriate risk assessments and implementing effective controls and safe work practices where silica dust may be an occupational hazard. As of September 2021 we have seen 1 additional claim for silica exposure, bringing the total number of accepted claims to 8 since 2016.	Q4-2022
2020	The number of orders issued continue to increase since the policy amendments in 2018. The effectiveness of the policy is uncertain in the short term due to latency of silica exposure. Since 2016 to YTD 2020, there have been 7 accepted claims for silica exposure, it is anticipated that through prevention activity, exposure will be minimized and claims will decrease over time.	Q4-2021
2019	Prevention activity continues which is reflected in the increase in orders issued related to silica and rock dust. There have been 2 accepted claims related to silica and rock dust YTD 2019. However, due to the long latency of silica exposure the policies effectiveness would not impact silica claim statistics in the short term. It is anticipated the number of claims arising from this section will decrease over time as efforts are taken to minimize and prevent exposure through prevention activity.	Q4-2020

Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2018	<p>Figures in the graph above are as of September 2018. It is expected that by the end of 2018, the number of orders issued to employers relating to compliance with Silica and rock dust exposure will increase compared to 2017 as there are more prevention activity due to increase awareness from the amendments. This in turn should contribute to preventing and minimizing worker exposure.</p> <p>It is still too early to report on silica claim statistics due to the long latency of silica exposure. It is anticipated that the number of claims arising from this section will decrease over time as efforts are taken to minimize and prevent exposure.</p>	Q4-2019
2017	It is too early to establish the effectiveness of this change.	Q4-2018

Next reporting period

Last report.

Effectiveness Measures — Compensation

Infection Caused by Communicable Viral Pathogens

Topic

On July 22, 2020, the Board of Directors approved amendments to Schedule 1 of the Workers Compensation Act to add a presumption for infections caused by communicable viral pathogens, which are the subject of a B.C.-specific emergency declaration or notice.

Effective date

August 20, 2020

Measurement of effectiveness

Claims would be accepted under Schedule 1 presumption for COVID-19 and other diseases caused by communicable viral pathogens.

2022 discussion

There was a significant influx of COVID-19 claims in 2022, with widespread community transmission of the omicron variant. In 2022, 12,370 COVID-19 illness claims were reported and 10,686 were allowed.

Of claims registered in 2022, the allow rate was approximately 94% of the COVID-19 claims that have proceeded to an allow or disallow decision. Since the start of the pandemic, the allow rate is approximately 87% of the COVID-19 claims that have proceeded to an allow or disallow decision.

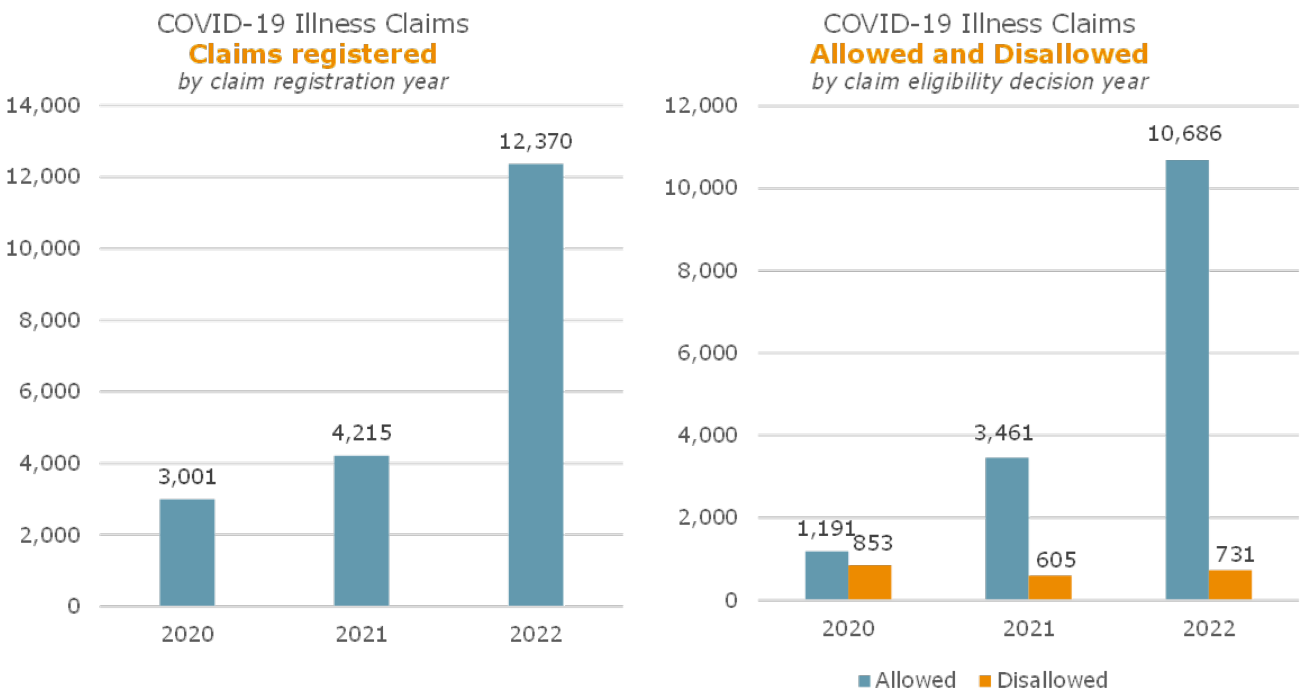
Up to the end of February 2022 we were reporting on an allow rate excluding exposure only claims. In 2020 and 2021, most of the disallowed claims were “exposure only” – that is, the worker was potentially exposed, tested, and/or required to self-isolate, but didn’t actually develop the illness, as confirmed with a negative test result or absence of symptoms. On decisions to the end of February 2022, when the exposure-only claims are excluded from the disallowed claims, the allow rate is approximately 95%.

Fewer ‘exposure-only’ claims are being reported, likely a result of increased awareness that WorkSafeBC cannot provide coverage where the evidence does not support a conclusion that the worker developed COVID-19. Claims are first considered under the Schedule 1 presumption and are adjudicated on a case-by-case basis, considering the specific demands of the worker’s job duties, to determine whether the risk of exposure to a source or sources of COVID-19 infection is significantly greater than that to the public at large. Although the public at large is considered to be at risk of contracting COVID-19 and variant with the widespread community transmission of the Omicron variant, there remain situations where workers are still at significantly greater risk than the public at large. WorkSafeBC must determine which job

demands/duties would generally place the worker at a significantly greater risk of exposure to a source of COVID-19 than the public at large.

Reporting

Reporting duration: 3 of 4 years (2020-2023)



Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2021	<p>In 2021, 3,040 COVID-19 illness claims were allowed and 521 were disallowed through September 30.</p> <p>Most of the disallowed claims are “exposure only” – that is, the worker was potentially exposed, tested, and/or required to self-isolate, but didn’t actually develop the illness, as confirmed with a negative test result or absence of symptoms.</p> <p>When the exposure-only claims are excluded from the disallowed claims, the allow rate is approximately 94% in 2021. This better reflects the allow rate on claims where the worker developed COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 6% of claims that were disallowed, either COVID-19 was confirmed but there was no exposure in the workplace; or there was not sufficient evidence to establish that the worker had COVID-19 or any disease or condition caused by work. • When the exposure-only claims are included in the disallowed claims, the allow rate is approximately 85% in 2021. 	Q4-2022
2020	<p>The large influx of claims in September and the unusually high proportion of disallowed claims largely reflect one positive COVID-19 case, with numerous workers potentially exposed, tested and required to quarantine as a preventative measure.</p> <p>The disallowed claims are largely workers who did not develop COVID-19 (as evidenced by test results or symptom clusters). With testing more widely available, a higher proportion of disallowed claims are now confirmed with a negative test result.</p> <p>For a small proportion of disallowed claims, the worker potentially developed COVID but the claim was disallowed – either because there was no exposure in the workplace or there was not sufficient evidence to establish that the worker had COVID-19.</p>	Q4-2021

Next reporting period

Q4 2023.

Acupuncture

Topic

On July 22, 2020, the Board of Directors approved policy amendments regarding acupuncture. WorkSafeBC determines whether it will pay for acupuncture treatment as part of an injured worker's claim. Approval of acupuncture treatment includes direction on the number of authorized treatment visits. Generally, WorkSafeBC limits payment to a maximum of eight treatment visits unless otherwise stated in any current contract and/or fee schedule in place at the time-of-service delivery.

Effective date

September 1, 2020

Measurement of effectiveness

There are two effectiveness measures for the policy amendments to Acupuncture: the measurement of the coverage time period for acupuncture, and the amount of acupuncture treatments claimed by workers. This is determined by:

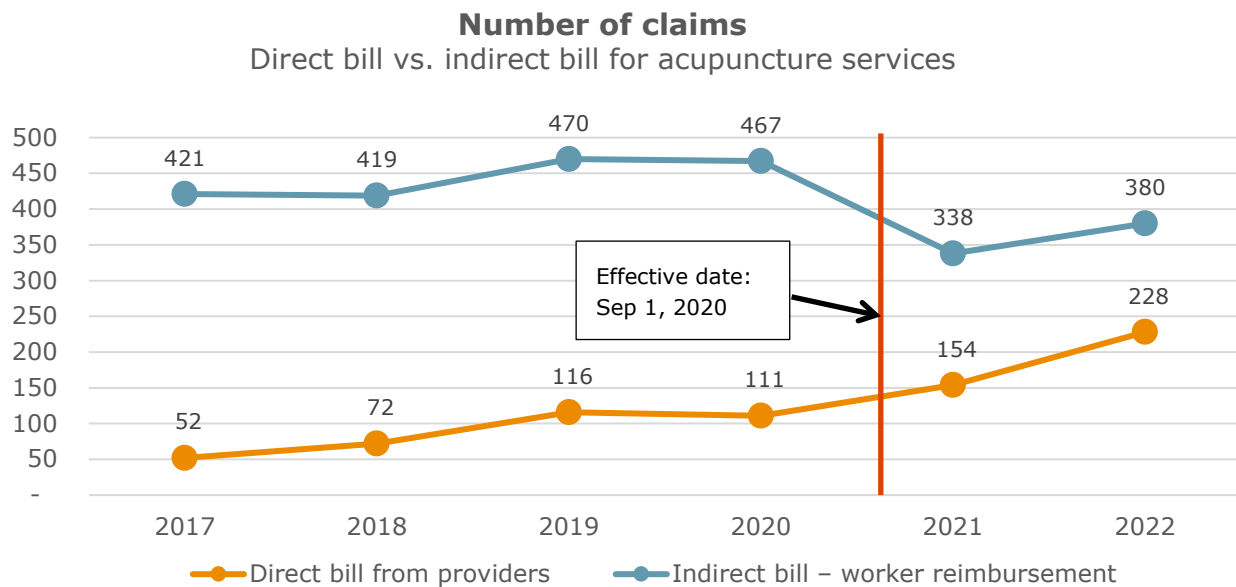
1. Measured by comparing workers' return to work for:
 - a) workers using acupuncture either alone or concurrent with other health care modalities, and
 - b) workers not using acupuncture.
2. measured by the increase in the number of claims that are direct billed from providers.

2022 discussion

There has been a significant increase in the number of acupuncturists that are direct billed to WSBC. It also shows that despite some increases in indirect billing, there has been an overall increase of 28.5 percent in the number of workers using acupuncture since 2017. This demonstrates that the policy change has increased the accessibility of health care services to workers and providing them with options to the care they need.

Reporting

Reporting duration: 3 of 3 years (2020-2022)



Year	Discussion	Next reporting
2021	The measure of effectiveness is improved access for injured workers to acupuncture services, the policy change in September 2020 allowed for the removal of the requirement for pre-approval by a WorkSafeBC Board officer, as well as the implementation of a formalized fee schedule for acupuncture services, implemented in February 2021. With these changes there has been an increase in acupuncture services direct billed to WorkSafeBC (provider invoices WorkSafeBC directly), over time, we anticipate a reduction in the number of claims that are indirect billed to WorkSafeBC (worker pays out of pocket and seeks reimbursement).	Q4-2022
2020	It is too early to establish the effectiveness of this change. View the Discussion Paper - Acupuncture	Q4-2021

Next reporting period

Last reporting period.