

Information bulletin

July 9, 2024

Attention: Physiotherapy providers

Subject: Physiotherapy network coffee chat Q&A session summary

Physiotherapy Q&A session summary

We thank those of you who attended the June 20, 2024, Q&A session and for sharing your questions and feedback. We will look to host another session later this year. Please see below for a summary of the main topics from the recent session.

Q: Physiotherapy clinics are having difficulty booking workers outside of their working schedules; is there a solution to have workers come in during the physiotherapist's working hours?

A: Typically, workers are requested by their Claim Owner to book outside of their work schedule to minimize time loss on their claims. If there are significant scheduling issues, it would be best to speak to their Claim Owner to see if there are any exceptions that could be considered.

Q: The current physiotherapy fee schedule is lower than our private rates. Are there any considerations of viewing/charging the current WSBC rates?

A: Rates are reviewed annually and a 2% increase was applied to the Fee Schedule effective June 1, 2024.

Q: Are there any resources to provide a new Physiotherapist joining a clinic or a post-graduate Physiotherapist?

A: The following resources are available on our website.

[WorkSafeBC | Physiotherapist Handbook](#)

[WorkSafeBC | Physiotherapy Services Reference Manual](#)

[WorkSafeBC | Physiotherapy Services Flowchart](#)

[WorkSafeBC | Billing WorkSafeBC for Physiotherapy Treatment](#)

Q: Are there any guidelines to provide a new physiotherapist on when they should consider the worker to attend an OR program and is there additional information regarding programs?

A: Our website (www.worksafebc.com) and Appendix E of the [Physiotherapy Reference Manual](#) have details regarding the treatment programs available. No additional resources are currently available; however, Health Care Programs will explore the development of additional resources.

Q: How does a clinic get more information regarding applying for an Occupational Rehabilitation program?

A: You can access resources regarding how to become a program provider on our website by clicking [here](#). Additionally, you can sign up to receive our health care bid notifications by clicking [here](#) to receive updates when bids become available. For more information regarding bid opportunities through BC Bid, please click [here](#) and follow the link to **View available bids**.

If there are more specific questions, you can reach out via e-mail to OR1@worksafebc.com or OR2@worksafebc.com.

Q: Do you know if the WorkSafeBC portal for extensions will be changed or upgraded to include more details (e.g. updated Case Manager, details on why the extension was rejected, whether a patient is past their approved sessions/end date if they are coming back after a while, whether initial reports were received/approved) as it is often hard to get in contact with the Case Manager or the responses and answers are very delayed.

A: There is currently work underway to explore expansion of the physiotherapy extension request application in the My Provider Services Portal. We understand a timely response is needed and are exploring opportunities.

Q: How can physiotherapy providers sign up to provide services to workers with concussions? What are the requirements?

A: Details regarding how to become a Concussion and Vestibular Physiotherapy Provider can be found on our website by clicking [here](#). If you have questions regarding the Concussion and Vestibular Physiotherapy contract or fee schedule, please contact us at CVPT@worksafebc.com.

Q: For claims that are still pending, but are a part of the Early Access to Physiotherapy Program (EAPP), do the Claim Owners need a doctor's report, considering many people do not have a family doctor nor access to a walk-in clinic?

A: For physiotherapy services, the initial assessment is covered on pending claims, provided the assessment occurs within 60 days of the date of injury. Under the EAPP an additional 3 visits may be provided while awaiting a decision on the claim. If the claim is denied, the employer would be responsible to pay for the three treatment visits. If the claim is accepted, then the visits would be invoiced to WorkSafeBC as per regular practice. For most straight forward musculoskeletal injury claims, if there is a physiotherapy report on file, that may be sufficient for the Claim Owner to make the entitlement decision; however, this may vary depending on the specific circumstances of a claim.

Q: Our physiotherapy clinic recently completed a survey on the different patients that come into clinic (elderly, new immigrants, LGBTQ+), how can the clinic provide more support to these patients and how to access that?

A: It would be best to have a discussion with the Claim Owner and identify any additional needs the worker may have; they may be able to aid in exploring additional supports when indicated.

Q: Contact with Claim Owners is an issue, what should we do if we are waiting to hear a response?

A: Responsiveness is something WorkSafeBC strives for, however, we do recognize that there can be challenges at times. The following are recommendations if you are having trouble connecting with a Claim Owner.

- Leave a detailed message about what you are specifically asking for and provide your contact info (phone and email), including the best days/times to contact you.

- Contact the Claims Call Centre at 604.231.8888 or toll free at 1.888.967.5377 and request to have your call logged and/or request for a call back.
- If several attempts have made without a response, you may request to speak to the Service Coordinator (if it is a Case Manager) or the Claim Owner's Client Service Manager (CSM).
- If there are still no updates, you may reach out to Health Care Programs.

Q: How can the worker consent to email communication? Is it done in the early stages of a claim?

A: Email can only be used to communicate with a Claim Owner about a claim if the injured worker has given their consent. The Claim Owner must be the one to get this consent, so please only email them about a claim if you have received an email from the Claim Owner about the claim first. The worker can withdraw their consent at any time; if this happens, the Claim Owner will let you know. Email consent from the worker can be provided anytime throughout the claim.

Q: Is there an expectation on the part of WSBC that Claim Owners are familiar with the physiotherapy resource manual/contract? We find there to be vast difference in knowledge between Claim Owners with respect to things like program interrupts, treatment time frames, reports required etc..

A: Health Care Programs has provided Claim Owners with resources and education regarding the changes to the contract, however, there are more than 80 different health care programs available to injured workers; we do not expect Claim Owners to be the experts on all aspects of every contract. As the provider, it is up to you to read and understand the terms of the services agreement. If a request is out of scope for the agreement, please contact Health Care Programs to discuss. For clarity, payment can only be provided under the terms outlined in the service agreement and fee schedule, the Claim Owner is not able to alter the agreement or approve any exceptions to the service agreement.

Q: Are Claim Owners able to see which contracts are active with each clinic or only the billing/procurement department sees this?

A: Claim Owners have access to a list of providers under each service agreement.

Q: How do clinics know if any employers have partnered with your clinic through EAPP? Whose responsibility is it to create these relationships?

A: It is up to the employer to find physiotherapy clinics to partner with (employers are provided with a list of EAPP clinics). If there are certain employers you often work with, you may speak to them regarding this program, but they must have a robust disability management program. Details regarding the EAPP can be found [here](#).

It is recommended that you complete the Early Access to Physiotherapy Program (EAPP) Principles of Agreement (Form 65M118A) with any employers you are working with and keep it for your records. Please click [here](#) to access the form.

Q: Who does oversee the claims side, if not Health Care Programs?

A: Client service Managers for each department.

Q: Are practitioners able to extend treatment from their 30 minutes sessions, especially if they are treating multiple injuries?

A: The Physiotherapy Treatment Visit fee is a per visit fee, not a time base fee. Treatment time should be clinically appropriate for all treatment sessions. If there are multiple areas of injury under one claim, you may consider increasing the frequency of visits to allow you to address all areas. Treatment should be provided as clinically indicated and support the worker in their recovery and return to work and function.

Q: What about at home physiotherapy sessions, how does one bill for this?

A: The claim must meet the requirements for home physiotherapy, it must be approved by the Claim Owner, and services must be provided as outlined in the Home Physiotherapy Treatment Services Fee Schedule, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Please note that if a worker is able to attend in-clinic physiotherapy sessions, they would not be eligible for home physiotherapy.

Q: Are there additional resources for gradual return to work planning. If a physiotherapist is struggling to gather key information, are there other resources they can provide like Return-to-Work support services?

A: You should reach out to the Claim Owner to discuss circumstances where additional support may be required for a RTW. Some Claim Owners (Case Managers) have access to Return to Work Support services, other Claim Owners (Recovery and Return to Work Specialists) will develop RTW plans with the aid of the worker, employer, and physiotherapist. With the recent legislative changes there are new RTW obligations; the worker and employer are obligated by law to work together and identify suitable work opportunities. The worker can provide their treating physiotherapist with this information and/or physiotherapist can update the reports with the information worker has provided.

Contact us

physiotherapy@worksafebc.com

For Payment Status, Inquiries, and Issues:

Check out our online [View Payment Invoice Status](#) service.

If you are a My Provider Services user, [log in](#) for a more robust online Invoice Status and History service.

WorkSafeBC Payment Services

604.276.3085 extension 2

1.888.422.2228 (toll free)

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