

Information bulletin

November 15, 2024

Attention: Physiotherapy providers

Subject: Customized Recovery & RTW program
information session recording and Q&A
summary

We thank those of you who attended the information session regarding the new Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work Program and for sharing your questions and feedback.

A [recording](#) of the information session is now available.

Below is a summary of the questions from our session.

Q&A summary

Extensions to physiotherapy

Q: If we are recommending a program referral after our initial block should we be doing an extension to account for the lag time?

A: If physiotherapy treatment is still clinically indicated while awaiting a program referral, then it is reasonable to request the extension and indicate that a program would be beneficial and that the request for an extension is intended for continuity of care until the program start date.

Q: Did you say typically on any claim only one 4-week extension will be approved?

A: In general, most extension requests should be in the 4 to 6 week range to ensure updated treatment plans and clinical status are shared to allow for informed claim management. When

claim owners decide whether to approve a physiotherapy extension request or to refer a worker to a program, they consider several factors. With respect to an extension request specifically, the following considerations will help to guide their decision:

- Has the worker returned to work, or are they close to returning to work?
- Is there a clear plan to support recovery, return to work and return to function?
- Is treatment focused on functional recovery, with an active treatment approach?
- Is the worker progressing as anticipated based on the injury?
- If progress has been limited in the treatment period, is there a clear rationale for the lack of progress and a clear treatment plan to address this?
- Would the worker benefit from an interdisciplinary treatment approach to support ongoing recovery and return to work?

If the worker is not progressing as anticipated based on the injury, then consideration may be given to a program; whereas, if there is a clear treatment plan and progress towards return to work, then continuing in physiotherapy and supporting a return to work is the goal. For straight forward sprain/strain injuries, where progress is not as expected, if you are recommending an extension of physiotherapy beyond the initial 6 weeks, we ask that you consider the best treatment options at that point. If it is clinically reasonable that additional physiotherapy will support a worker in their recovery and returning to work within the extension period, then it is reasonable to request additional treatment; however, these are examples of where we will be looking at 4 week extensions, to ensure that the worker's response to treatment can be re-evaluated in a timely manner.

Q: If the OR1 program is still being run in our area will the 4 week extension approvals still be standard, or will there be 6 week extensions?

A: Extension requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If the worker is making functional gains and the goal of treatment is return to work, the claim owner may consider a further extension and have the worker continue in physiotherapy. However, if an interdisciplinary treatment approach is indicated to support the worker in their recovery and towards return to work, then a program referral may be considered. Essentially, they will be

looking for earlier referrals if the worker would benefit from an interdisciplinary rehabilitation program.

Physiotherapy reporting

Q: Is there access to the sample physiotherapy reports that were published a few years ago?

A: Physiotherapy reports with detailed guidelines and instructions on how to complete them are available in the [Physiotherapy Services Reference Manual](#). Please note that after downloading the reference manual you will need to save a copy in order to be able to access the reports.

Q: Do we need to put in the injury section if we diagnose the injury as a simple strain or complex, as I am guessing this will change how many extensions we may get?

A: In the field "Area(s) of injury accepted on this claim" you should enter the areas of injuries accepted by WorkSafeBC only. If your documented assessment findings indicate a more complex injury, when compared to the accepted area of injury or initial diagnosis, please provide additional detail of your clinical rationale in the "Recovery and/or return-to-work (RTW) factors" section. Please note that the decision to authorize a physiotherapy extension is based on the totality of evidence on the claim file which includes all information available on the claim file; physiotherapy reports are one piece of evidence, there may be additional information on the file as well.

General physiotherapy questions

Q: Is our initial physio still the 6 week - 15 visits?

A: There are no changes to the Physiotherapy Services Agreement; the physiotherapy treatment period is still up to a maximum of 15 visits or 6 weeks in length.

Q: We have had clients disappear from our care with no notice and find out later that they were sent to a program. Will there be better communication going forward?

A: There should be collaboration and conversations happening between the claim owner and provider in terms of the clients that you are treating and prior to a decision to transition a worker from physiotherapy into a program or other form of treatment.

Customized Recovery & RTW program & OR1

Q: Where can we find the list of providers for the Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work program?

A: On our WorkSafeBC website, under "Health Care Providers" we have a page for the [Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work Program](#) and a tab linking to the list of [service providers](#) for the program.

Q: Where can we find the list of the rural OR1 providers?

A: On our WorkSafeBC website, we have a page for the [OR1](#) program and a tab linking to the list of [service providers](#) for the program.

Q: How do you become a contracted provider for the Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work program or OR1 program?

A: Please refer to the WorkSafeBC website page on [becoming a provider](#). Alternatively, you can reach out to Health Care Programs (HCSINQU@worksafebc.com) and we're more than happy to have a discussion.

Q: What criteria will the claim owners be using to ascertain whether the referral will be to OR1 or Customized Recovery & RTW program?

A: Essentially if there is the presence of vocational, psychosocial, and/or medical return to work factors that preclude return to work, the Customized Recovery & RTW program would be more appropriate than the OR1 program.



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