

Information Bulletin

May 22, 2020

Attention: Hand Therapy Providers

Subject: Resuming In-Person Treatment Services, Job Site Visits, and Re-Opening Provider Portal

On May 6, 2020, Premier John Horgan announced a phased approach to re-opening of services across the province. Details regarding the Re-Start Plan can be [found here](#). [The College of Physical Therapists of BC](#), and [College of Occupational Therapists of BC](#) have since provided guidelines around returning to in-person treatment services, please ensure you have reviewed these guidelines prior to considering returning to in-person treatment services.

All clinics should also ensure they have reviewed [WorkSafeBC's Health Professionals: Protocols for Returning to Operation](#). Please note these guidelines are created by WorkSafeBC's Prevention department, any questions related to these guidelines can be directed to WorkSafeBC's Prevention Information Line at 604.276.3100 in the Lower Mainland (toll-free within B.C. at 1.888.621.SAFE).

We understand that many clinics are beginning to resume some in-person services over the coming weeks. As you plan for re-opening please ensure you have reviewed the guidelines above, have taken all necessary precautions, and have [a COVID-19 Safety Plan in place](#).

In order to promote ongoing physical distancing measures and a gradual return to in-person services, WorkSafeBC will be supporting ongoing Telehealth Services or Hybrid Services where clinically appropriate (Hybrid Services are a combination of in-person and Telehealth services). If your clinic is not able to put the necessary precautions in place for in-person services at this time, you may continue to offer services via Telehealth. However, if it becomes apparent that the worker would benefit from in-person services, and you are not able to provide them, please contact the claim owner to discuss.

Job Site Visits

Please note that Job Site Visits (JSVs) must be completed in person, a telehealth platform cannot be used to conduct a site visit. At this time it is anticipated that fewer JSVs will be completed, however, if a JSV is thought necessary and can be completed in line with Provincial Health officer guidelines, college guidelines, and the regulations set forward by the employer, then it may be conducted.

In circumstances where a JSV may be indicated and cannot be completed, it is recommended that critical job demands be confirmed with the employer and injured worker by means of a phone call, or when available by reviewing any Job Demands Analysis documents that the employer may have available.

Re-Opening the Provider Portal

When clinics closed to in-person services for non-urgent care in March, WorkSafeBC closed the Hand Therapy Provider Portal to new referrals. In April the portal was re-opened for clinics who advised WorkSafeBC that they could offer Telehealth Services. If your clinic was not offering Telehealth Services, and is now able to accept new referrals, please contact the Hand Therapy Quality Assurance Supervisor (Nu.Lu@worksafebc.com) to request your portal be re-opened.

If you contacted us in April to advise you were able to provide Telehealth Services, you do not need to contact us again.