

Physiotherapy Consultant Role - WCB

The Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists issues Advisory Statements to provide guidance to members on practice issues. This Advisory addresses interaction of Physiotherapy consultant within the WCB program and within the private practice community. The College perceives no Conflict of Interest in this activity.

Background:

There are currently two PT consultants, on part time contract to WCB, who work remotely to provide advisory services to case workers on specific cases. These consultants were secured via a fair public tendering process open to all physiotherapists a few years ago. These same consultants are also contracted Tiered Services providers in their respective areas. To manage the obvious inherent conflict, one consultant is located in Cape Breton and normally offers advice for cases on mainland NS. The other Consultant is located on the mainland and normally offers advice for cases in the Cape Breton region. Conflict of interest is eliminated in all cases as both consultants are contractually prohibited from treating/assessing any worker for whom they have provided an opinion to WCB. Nor can that worker attend the consultant's clinic and be treated/assessed by any of the consultants' colleagues.

How does it work?

The interaction between the PT consultants and the WCB is largely at the case worker level. The consultants do not reside onsite at the secured WCB offices, but rather the work is performed online using the WCB electronic claim file system.

At their discretion or if directed by a medical advisor, a case worker may send a secured electronic request to their assigned consultant (as outlined above) with questions related to a specific case.

The PT consultants will review the relevant sections of the claim file and provide an electronic response back to the case worker.

The information provided is considered advice only and the case worker retains 100% of the decision authority on all claim related matters. From time to time, a case worker may call a PT consultant if the information provided required clarification. The PT Consultants are fully arms-length external providers. They have access only to the claim files and secured internal email. They do not have any influence over and do not have any access to any records related to corporate planning, program development or procurement of any services including the Tier 2/3 tenders.

PT consultants do not have any influence over which clinics are used; that is decided either by the injured worker (self-selected) or the case worker (recommended). Case workers tend to use clinics where they get the best service/results. They are mandated to deliver the best results possible.

The Manager of Health Services may connect with the PT Consultants from time to time usually by phone/email to discuss contract or service related matters only.