

Medical Treatment Guidelines: A Year of Experience

Outcome Statistics From the WCB:

- There have been 60,000 unique variance requests from medical providers
- 20% of the variance requests are not being responded to by carriers
- About 50% of variance requests are being denied (mostly PT and chiropractic)
- Not many requests being sent in for WCB Medical Director review
- 400 variance reviews per week are done by the WCB
- 3,500 providers have submitted variance requests so far
- Over 50% coming from only about 250 individual providers
- Doctors are for the most part willing to do the pre-authorized surgeries; so far there have been less than 20 problems where the doctor wouldn't do the surgery for fear he wouldn't be paid
- 80-90% of variance requests are for extensions of chronic manipulation treatments
- The quality of these types of variance requests is usually poor- this is why so many are being denied by the judges: judges are overturning only 20% of carrier denials of variance requests
- Financial results of the MTGs are mostly anecdotal, and most are concluding that it's mostly a wash- they are spending as much defending their variance denials as they are saving through denying treatment.

Future Changes:

- Carpal Tunnel Guidelines have been posted for comment until December 1, 2011
- Draft Chronic Pain Guidelines begun Oct 4th
- Eventually, technology improvements at the WCB will allow for the constant "variance requestors" to be flagged and investigated
- In order to educate claimants, there is a pamphlet written by the WCB (at a 6th grade level) "Get the Facts About Medical Treatment Guidelines"