

WCB process for physician reimbursement

We have a contractual agreement with the Alberta Medical Association (AMA) that defines physician payments when they provide treatment to a patient with a workplace injury.

This contract also outlines how physicians are paid when a WCB claim is denied after a physician has treated the patient. Below we have outlined some improvements to this process.

What does WCB pay a physician when a claim is later denied?

As per the agreement with the AMA, we pay unbundled fees to physicians. This means that we pay 100 per cent for all procedures (visit plus procedure and no inclusive care periods) provided during the same patient encounter. This differs from Alberta Health (AH) payment rules.

Infrequently, new information on a claim can result in an entitlement change. The claim may subsequently be denied. Costs associated with the first visit are not impacted; however, the remaining costs paid to a physician are automatically recovered. A physician then submits the billing to AH for payment, using the AH payment rules.

We don't auto recover 100 per cent of the payment from physicians in denied cases. Since AH does not pay procedures on an unbundled basis, the amount paid to the physician is slightly less than what was initially paid out by us.

This was creating a payment shortfall. According to the agreement, that small amount remains payable to the physician by us and will not form part of the payment recovery.

This process aligns with WCB's contract obligations. On payment recoveries, physicians will be provided with details about the amount that will be collected and the information they need to invoice AH for the amount recovered by WCB.

This information will also be available on the payment remittance report on the Electronic Injury Reporting (EIR) system. We have worked closely with AH to ensure our process is clear and manageable.

Administrative fee for recoveries, effective April 1, 2020

When payment reversal occurs for billing(s) paid to a physician previous to the current calendar year and the physician must bill AH to recoup the payment, administrative costs may be incurred. To offset these costs the physician may bill us an administrative fee (RAF01). The fee is payable once per reversal episode.

Who to contact

- **For questions related to billing and unbundling as it relates to the AMA contract with WCB**, please contact Norma Shipley at 780-482-2626 or norma.shipley@albertadoctors.org.
- **For WCB inquiries**, please call our Contact Centre at 1-866-922-9221.