

**Alberta WCB  
Policies &  
Information**

Chapter:

**BENEFITS**

Subject:

**HEALTH CARE**

Authorization:

**BoD Resolution 2002/10/50**

Date:

**September 24, 2002**

**REFERENCE:**

[\*Workers' Compensation Act, RSA 2000, Sections 1\(1\), 34, 38, 56, and Part 5\*](#)  
[\*Workers' Compensation Regulation, Section 12\*](#)

**POLICY:**

WCB provides or pays for any reasonable and necessary *medical aid* to treat injuries or alleviate the effects of injuries resulting from compensable accidents.

In providing medical aid WCB's objectives are:

- to promote safe and early recovery and return to work,
- to alleviate the effects of workplace injury or illness by facilitating the timely and safe delivery of appropriate, quality and cost-effective care and treatment, and
- to make best use of current, generally accepted medical knowledge.

WCB has the authority to decide the nature, sufficiency, and cost of health care, bearing in mind individual needs and system well-being.

All medical aid authorized by WCB is provided without charge to the worker. Neither WCB nor the worker will reimburse *service providers* for "extra or balance billing" for the treatment of a compensable injury or condition.

This policy is effective September 24, 2002, unless noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

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**INTERPRETATION**

**1.0 Medical Aid**

Section 80 of the *Workers' Compensation Act (WCA)* gives WCB the authority to determine what medical aid is necessary and the appropriate payment for that aid. This authority extends to medical aid outside the province as well as within.

Medical aid is defined in s.1(1)(p) of the *WCA* and includes medical and other services provided by a person licensed to practice the healing arts in Alberta, nursing, hospitalization, drugs, medical dressings, x-ray treatment, special treatment (e.g., chiropractic, physical therapy, etc.), appliances, apparatuses, transportation (e.g., inter-hospital transfers), and any other matters and things WCB authorizes or provides.

**2.0 Service Providers**

The term "service providers" includes health care providers as well as suppliers of medication, appliances, or any other medical supplies or equipment.

The term "health care providers" includes physicians as defined in the *WCA* (see Part II, Application 1, Question 1), as well as hospitals and other treatment facilities.

When providing medical assistance on behalf of WCB, health care providers must confine treatment to those parts of the body specified by licensing.

**Please see Part II for additional information on the following subjects:**

**Application**

- 1 – [General](#)
- 2 – [Medical Aid Accounts](#)
- 3 – [Hospitals or Other Treatment Agencies](#)
- 4 – [Prescribed Opioid Analgesics \(Narcotics\)](#)

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5 – [Medical Assistance in Dying \(MAID\)](#)

6 – [Pharmaceutical Cannabinoids and Cannabis Authorized for Medical Use](#)

**Addendum**

[Addendum A - Cannabis Authorized for Medical Use - References](#)

[Addendum B - Prescribed Opioid Analgesics \(Narcotics\) - References](#)

**Previous versions**

- [Policy 0406 Part I - June 2019](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - September 2018](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - April 2018](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - August 2015](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - May 2006](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - January 2004](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - January 2003](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - September 2002](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - January 2002](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I - July 2001](#)
- [Policy 0406 Part I \(consolidated manual 1st Issue\) - February 1997](#)