

**THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

MINUTES

DATE: November 29, 2022

TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

PLACE: 12th Floor WCB Board Room, 9925 - 107 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

BOARD MEMBERS

Erna Ference, Chair
Ray Block, Member
Mike Boyle, Member
Brian Frank, Member
Brian McConkey, Member
Shawna Miller, Member
Mary Phillips-Rickey, Member

EXECUTIVE

Trevor Alexander, President & Chief Executive Officer **
Tarick Ahmad, Chief Technology Officer *
Ron Helmhold, Chief Financial Officer *
Wendy King, Senior Vice President, Operations & Innovation *
Marcela Matthew, Vice President, Millard Health & Special Care Services *
William P. Ostapek, Secretary and General Counsel *
Roxy Shulha-McKay, Vice President, Employee & Corporate Services *

ALSO PRESENT

Leslie Henkel, Board of Directors' Secretariat *
Laurent Charron, Corporate Controller, Financial Management (items 9 and 10)
Nadia Mursky, Senior Manager, Financial Management (items 9 and 10)
Bill Xu, Chief Actuary, Actuarial Services (items 9 and 10)

* excused for item 15

** excused for item 15 (part 2)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

8. Policy Committee

The committee chair provided a report on the committee's recent meeting.

8.1 **Prescribed Opioid Analgesics (Narcotics) – Policy 04-06, Part II, Application 4 and new Addendum B**

WCB has had a long-standing opioid medical benefits policy that has worked well to balance access to medically necessary care with a focus on safe and timely return to work. However, as medical knowledge grows, and to ensure WCB's opioid policy reflects this updated knowledge, a policy review was included in the 2021-2023 Policy Project Plan.

Guided by current medical knowledge, WCB adjudicates coverage for medically necessary opioids differently based on whether they are prescribed during the acute and post-operative period, for palliative care, or during long-term opioid therapy. The proposed policy revisions add clarity and transparency regarding these different treatment modalities and expectations.

The revised policy also updates references to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta's (CPSA) Standards of Practice for prescribing narcotics as well as their advice to the profession reinforcing that the policy is based on current medical knowledge. A draft addendum of medical references used throughout the revised policy has also been developed.

MOTION

2022/06/16

It was moved that,

The Board of Directors approve the proposed revisions to Policy 04-06, Part II, Application 4 and the accompanying new Addendum B, with an effective date of January 1, 2023. This policy will apply to all new prescriptions for opioids (including renewals) made on or after the effective date.

CARRIED