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E-News & Views from the Renton Center of Occupational Health & Education

Change in Activity Prescription Form Faxing!

The Activity Prescription Form (APF) in use by COHE providers is being considered for implementation on a statewide basis perhaps as soon as the end of this year. In planning for this, we are implementing a change now in your fax submission of this form. You no longer need to fax the APF to the COHE (425-656-5419). Effective immediately, your clinics and offices can begin faxing this form directly to Labor & Industries; the L&I fax numbers are located at the bottom of the current APF form. PLEASE NOTE - continue to fax the Report of Accident form only to the L&I fax number: 360-902-5252. All other forms and correspondence should be faxed to any of the 8 fax numbers listed at the bottom of the current APF. Please contact us with any questions you may have regarding this at 1-866-663-COHE (2643).

Additionally, L&I has provided a new Spanish version of the APF for use. Click to view the most recent English and Spanish versions you should be using.

COHE Billing/Coding Questions?

Recently, Labor & Industries has been receiving calls from COHE providers with various questions relating to billing and coding. We wanted to provide you with contact information so that you may direct your questions to the appropriate area of expertise and responsibility.

For billing payment questions/issues: Sigrun Mulligan, Medical Treatment Adjudicator, Supervisor 360-902-6065 MULS235@LNI.WA.GOV Sigrun is a bill payment supervisor, so appropriate questions to her would be "I wasn't paid properly for a form, visit, etc."

For CPT & L&I Local Code use questions: Sharon Brosio, Provider Review and Education, Supervisor 360-902-6299, BRSI235@LNI.WA.GOV (questions preferably via email, when possible). Appropriate questions for her group would be, "In order to bill for 99xxx, how should I properly document?"
Attached is the most current fee schedule for COHE participants effective July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. Please contact the appropriate resource should you have questions regarding these codes and fees.

**New Physician Assistant & ARNP Regulations**

The Washington State Laws (Revised Code of Washington) governing Advance Registered Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants were changed during the last legislative session (Laws of 2007). L&I is implementing Emergency Rules (Washington Administrative Codes) effective July 1, 2007 to address the legislative changes. This notice is to make interested parties aware of the necessary changes.

**Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (ARNPs)**

- Pursuant to HB 1666 (Laws of 2007) The expiration date for ARNPs expanded duties was repealed. ARNPs retain the duties of the attending physician on a permanent basis. WAC 296-23-241

**Physician Assistants (PA)**

- As of July 1, 2007, pursuant to HB 1722 (Laws of 2007), physician assistants may now sign and attest to any certificates, cards, forms or other documentation required by the department. WAC 296-20-01501

**Permanent Impairment**

- Neither physician assistants nor ARNPs can rate permanent impairment or perform independent medical examinations (IMEs). Both health care providers may state whether a worker has permanent impairment but cannot perform the rating.

Permanent rules are being developed for both provider types. For more detailed information go to “Rule Updates” on [http://www.lni.wa.gov/LawRule/](http://www.lni.wa.gov/LawRule/)

Inquiries: Contact lifk235@lni.wa.gov or swaj235@lni.wa.gov

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**Renton COHE Health Service Coordinators**

Providers and staff may have noticed over the past few months a new face in their office or voice on the phone. We would like to formally welcome and introduce Anna Walen as the newest team member and Health Services Coordinator for the COHE. Anna has been working in this role since March and brings background experience of 16 years as a Nurse Case Manager in workers compensation. Anna is a certified Case Manager and we are all very excited to have her on staff. For your convenience, listed below are services that a Health Services Coordinator can provide and how to contact them.

**Role of the Health Services Coordinator:** Experienced staff at the COHE is available to assist in coordinating health services for
workers on time-loss. The Health Services Coordinator can help providers:

- Coordinate and facilitate communication with the employer, occupational nurse consultant (ONC) or claim manager, injured worker, and where appropriate, the worker’s union, to assure that no worker “falls through the cracks” due to a lack of integrated services;
- Provide support for meeting occupational medicine best practices (i.e., employer contacts; barriers assessment at 4 weeks of time-loss);
- Access a list of referral sources for occupational health, including clinical specialists, disability specialists, ergonomists, and L&I contacts;
- Schedule and facilitate meetings among the concerned parties when needed, including employers or unions; and
- Contact an employer or union about return to work, in cases where the provider is unable to reach them.

**How to access a Health Service Coordinator (HSC):** To contact or refer a case to the HSC, please call the COHE directly with this request, or e-mail your request to cohe_info@valleymed.org. If you know who your designated Health Service Coordinator is, you may reach us directly:

- Heather Latvala 425-656-5438
  Heather_Latvala@valleymed.org
- Ellen Hull 425-228-3440 x2800
  Ellen_Hull@valleymed.org
- Anna Walen 425-228-3440 x325
  Anna_Walen@valleymed.org

Health Service Coordinators will be tracking all cases with active time-loss. A checklist to identify barriers to recovery will be completed on time-loss cases at 4 weeks of duration. An action plan will then be developed with the worker, the APP, and the Health Services Coordinator to overcome the barriers and assist in a more timely recovery and return to work.

**Labor and Industries Claim Managers:** Claim managers at L&I will continue to be the coordination point for claim activity, such as authorizing treatment. Please continue to work with the Claim Manager assigned to your patient. The Health Services Coordinator at the COHE is a backup when you have problems related to claim management or authorizations.

**Newly Updated COHE Provider Manual!**

The COHE APP Manual has been updated and is now available on CD-ROM. This resource manual provides the most recent COHE forms, publications and contact information. It also provides access information to web-based programs at Labor & Industries as well as the COHE website. Our goal is to continue our partnership with you, L&I, and the business/labor communities to improve outcomes for injured workers in our
state. COHE staff will be distributing new manuals over the next quarter as part of on-going education for the project. When you receive the manual, please take a moment to review it -- and we appreciate your comments and feedback! If you have not received the manual by the end of September, please call us at 1-866-663-COHE.

**Interpreter Use**

Many providers regularly use interpreters for their non-English speaking patients. One helpful website is the Interpreter Lookup Service found at: [https://fortress.wa.gov/lni/ils/](https://fortress.wa.gov/lni/ils/). This website will assist you in identifying L&I approved interpreters available in your area serving a variety of languages. Additionally, Labor & Industries wishes to provide the following reminders to medical providers:

- **Many providers have interpreters available**

Providers have the right to choose the interpreter under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Many providers, especially hospitals and large clinics, have pre-selected interpreters. In order to avoid conflict, interpreters are encouraged to verify a provider’s need for interpretive services prior to a patient appointment. Please clarify with the patient whether your office has pre-selected an interpreter for a patient visit or if the patient needs to arrange for one. L&I will not pay mileage for the visit in the event that two interpreters arrive for the same visit.

- **Worker’s representative may not provide interpretation/translation services**

If the worker has signed a form authorizing the release of information and representation to a person or agency, then that person or agency can not provide interpretive services on that claim. In that event, a neutral interpretive service is required. Please verify with the patient that their interpreter is not also their worker representative.

If you have any questions regarding interpreter use, please contact Cecilia Maskell at Labor & Industries at 360.902.5161 or MILI235@LNI.wa.gov

**New Guidelines for Prescribing Narcotics - Grand Rounds & Free Online Course**

On September 25, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. at the Valley Medical Center Auditorium, Dr. Gary Franklin will be presenting at our Grand Rounds on the New Opioid Guidelines for Treating Non-Cancer Chronic Pain. Additionally, for those doctors who want to improve their ability to treat chronic pain can complete a new online course and receive two free continuing medical education credits. To receive the credits, doctors must read a guideline on prescription narcotics and complete an exam. The free credits are available to doctors throughout the United States and to pharmacists within Washington State.
The guideline underlying the course was developed to help doctors evaluate and monitor narcotics dosage levels during treatment of chronic pain. Developed by the staff of state agencies in collaboration with practicing physicians specializing in pain management, the guideline does not apply to acute pain, cancer pain or end-of-life (hospice) care.

The online course, guidelines, and other tools are available at www.agencymeddirectors.wa.gov. The Agency Medical Directors Group is made up of the medical directors from the departments of Corrections, Health, Health Care Authority, Labor and Industries, Social and Health Services, and Veterans Affairs. Click here to go directly to the CME activity page: http://www.agencymeddirectors.wa.gov/activity/start.asp

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Any comments, questions or suggestions regarding our e-newsletter are greatly appreciated. Or if you have any questions regarding the content of the newsletter or about the Center of Occupational Health & Education, please email cohe_info@valleymed.org, or call 1.866.663.COHE.

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