

The right care at the right time

Most injured workers recover and return to their jobs. The best and quickest recoveries happen when the injured worker gets the right care at the right time.

The right care

The right care, as decided by the health care provider, may include things like testing, medication, therapy, referral, surgery and return to modified work. Often, the worker may have several types of care at the same time.

The right time

The right time is anytime care is needed — at any stage in recovery. By watching the worker's progress, the health care provider can see when testing and specialized treatment may be needed. We can arrange to have the right care available as soon as possible or when the injured worker is ready for it.

Return to work

Return to work is an important part of a worker's recovery. A return to the normal routine of work and support from the employer and co-workers promotes faster healing.

A working partnership

There is a partnership at work to return injured workers to their normal activities as soon as safely possible.

If an injured worker is not recovering as expected, each of the partners must accept responsibility and take action:

- The primary practitioner makes decisions about the worker's treatment and adjusts the worker's restrictions as recovery progresses.
- The WCB monitors the worker's recovery and arranges advanced assessment and treatment with the primary practitioner.
- The employer changes the worker's duties to allow a return to work as soon as it medically is safe, and continues to change those duties as recovery progresses.
- The worker takes an active role in recovery by cooperating with medical treatment and return to work.

Working together, these partners do what needs to be done to provide the right care — including return to work — at the right time.

For more information, see our Recovery and Return to Work for Injured Workers brochure or visit www.wcbask.com.



For more information visit www.wcbask.com or contact us directly:

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The Right Care at the Right Time

Health care for injured workers

Primary assessment & treatment

Normally, one health care provider will make the decisions about an injured worker's treatment at every stage of recovery. This primary practitioner can be a family doctor or nurse practitioner, a chiropractor, dentist, optometrist or physiotherapist.

The primary practitioner:

- Assesses the injury and develops a treatment plan;
- Lays the groundwork for early return to work by providing the worker a list of restrictions and shares this list with the employer;
- Asks the WCB to arrange diagnostic tests, specialist appointments and surgeries, as needed;
- Asks that the worker be moved directly to advanced assessment and/or treatment, if needed; and
- Monitors each stage of the worker's recovery.

Most injured workers need only primary level treatment before returning to work. Only a few need advanced care. Almost all workers can return to some type of work while they recover.

Return to work

The WCB's goal is always to return the injured worker to normal activities, including work, in a timely and safe manner. Everyone has a role to play in meeting that goal: the injured worker, employer, health care providers and the WCB. Return to work is an important part of the recovery process.

Return to work starts during an injured worker's first visit to the health care provider. The provider will give the worker a list of restrictions to share with the employer.

The employer must fulfill their legal duty to accommodate the injured worker by using the list of restrictions to change the worker's job tasks so the worker can safely return to work during recovery.

The WCB helps employers and workers develop and adjust return to work activities throughout the recovery process. Each step keeps the workers' best interest in mind.

If the worker has reached maximum recovery and can't perform their previous job tasks, all partners work together to arrange permanently modified duties with the same employer.

The WCB can fine an employer who does not cooperate, but this as a last resort.

Advanced assessment

An assessment team should check a worker's condition if recovery is delayed or there is risk of chronic disability. The WCB's Health Care Services department considers requests from the health care provider, worker, employer or case manager and makes arrangements for a medical team assessment.

Assessment teams include a physician, at least two other medical professionals and, if needed, a specialist or psychologist.

Team members examine the worker to:

- Determine the worker's physical and psychosocial condition;
- Confirm a diagnosis or request additional testing if needed;
- Recommend a return to primary care, a move to advanced treatment, and/or return to work.

The primary practitioner will:

- Decide which, if any, of the assessment team's recommendations to implement; and
- Communicate any decisions about further treatment and/or return to work restrictions to the WCB and to the employer through the worker.

Advanced treatment

If the assessment team recommends advanced treatment, and the primary practitioner agrees, The WCB arranges for the worker to attend second or third-level treatment.

Advanced treatment is provided at various rehabilitation centers in Saskatchewan. Normally, an injured worker requires treatment five days a week to increase functional abilities gradually.

If advanced treatment is available locally, the worker may be able to return to work with the same employer on a part-time basis during recovery.

If treatment is only available in another community, the worker contacts the WCB to confirm if the WCB covers expenses to attend this treatment.

A number of medical disciplines may be involved to help the worker improve physical function or adjust to permanent restrictions. The worker may also need help dealing with chronic pain, fear of re-injury or other issues that may arise because of the injury.

INJURY

