

The Right Care at the Right Time

Most injured workers recover and return to their jobs. The most complete and quickest recoveries occur when the injured worker receives the right care at the right time.

The Right Care

The right care, as determined by the 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 going on at the same time.

The Right Time

The right time is anytime care is needed – at any stage in recovery. By monitoring the worker's progress, the health care provider can anticipate when more testing and specialized treatment may be needed. The WCB 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 another important aspect 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 life activities, including work, as soon as it is medically safe.

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

- The primary care provider 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 in consultation with the primary care provider.
- The employer modifies the worker's duties to allow a return to work as soon as it is medically safe, and continues to adjust 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 our website www.wcbask.com.



For more information, visit our website 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

Advanced Assessment

Advanced Treatment

Return to Work

Primary Assessment & Treatment

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

The primary care provider:

- Will assess the injury and develop a treatment plan;
- Will lay the groundwork for early return-to-work by giving the worker a list of restrictions to be shared with the employer;
- May ask WCB to arrange prompt diagnostic tests, specialist appointments and surgeries, as needed;
- May ask that the worker be moved directly to advanced assessment and/or treatment, if needed; and
- Will monitor each stage of the worker's recovery.

Most injured workers need only primary level treatment before returning to work; only a few need more 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 life 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 a vital part of the recovery process.

Return to work starts during an injured worker's first visits 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 task so the worker can safely return to work during recovery.

The WCB will help employers and workers develop and adjust return to work activities throughout the recovery process. Each step is taken with the workers' best interest in mind.

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

Advanced Assessment

A worker's condition should be assessed if recovery is delayed or there is risk of chronic disability. WCB Health Care Services will consider a request for assessment from the health care provider, worker, employer or WCB case manager, and make arrangements for a team to do an 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 care provider will:

- Decide which, if any, of the assessment team's recommendations will be implemented; 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 care provider agrees, the WCB will arrange for the worker to attend second or third level treatment.

Advanced treatment is provided at various rehabilitation centers in the province. Normally, treatment five days a week is required to gradually increase functional abilities.

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 should contact the WCB to find out if any additional expenses required to attend this treatment will be covered.

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.

