

2010 SAWCA All Committee Conference  
Medical Rehabilitation Committee  
Lucretia Johnson, Kentucky Department of Workers' Claims, Co-Chair  
Betty Reid, Rehabilitation Advisors, Co-Chair  
November 9, 2010 / The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, WV

The Medical Rehabilitation Committee met at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 9 at the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The meeting was facilitated by Co-Chairs Lucretia Johnson and Betty Reid. Approximately 25 members attended this session. Presenters were Ken Eichler, Director of Government and Insurance Services, Reed Group; Chris Broadwater, Director, Louisiana Office of Workers Comp and Don Hurter, Senior Vice President Medical Management Services, Chartis, Insurance.

Our committee was fortunate to have three outstanding speakers. Two of our presenters focused on the various types of medical guidelines. Ken Eichler, Reed Group advised that MDGuidelines are evidence –based and physician-reviewed for quality and accuracy, providing the foundation for superior return-to-work outcomes. The primary goal of MDGuidelines is to provide expedient, appropriate and case specific health care instead of focusing on cost savings. One topic that impressed our committee was the company's approach to functional restoration and how the perceptions of functional ability differ. Ken explained they put great emphasis on the physiological recovery by returning the injured employee to life and then transitioning them to work.

Ken also discussed other guidelines including Medical Treatment Utilization System (MTUS), American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) and Navigation Software. Additionally, he advised that the state of Colorado authored and maintains its own guidelines internally and they are very highly regarded. A state may also customize its own guidelines by using a combination of the above.

Our second speaker gave his presentation through SKYPE. Chris Broadwater discussed the Louisiana medical guidelines scheduled to be effective on January 1, 2011. He indicated one of the reasons they revised their guidelines was due to the back log of workers' compensation cases. All litigated cases were decided by a judge and took up to 380 days for resolution. Their objective was to shorten the time period to resolve disputes. They reviewed the ODG, ACOEM and Colorado's guidelines. The costs and possible ODG denials were considered when deciding on which guideline(s) to utilize. Their new guidelines are based on Colorado's standards, stakeholder input and a medical advisory board. They have reduced the decision making process from 18 months to 60 days. Chris recommended that states considering changing their guidelines allow at least one full year for completion and to also incorporate an ongoing medical advisory board. For more information regarding the new guidelines (RS 23:1203.1) click on <http://www.legis.state.la.us/lss/lss.asp?doc=108459> .

Don Hurter with Chartis Insurance gave an overview of current pharmacy trends and issues regarding prescription medications. According to Mr. Hurter, studies indicate that 10% of all

costs associated with health care were for prescription drugs in 2008. Also, the number of physician's prescribing medications to a patient was up 8% in 2009. This issue as well as repackaging and use of compound drugs is of concern for various reasons including possible duplication and over medicating, an increased risk of a drug interaction and incorrect billing procedures. Mr. Hurter referenced the *Journal of Managed Care Pharmacy*, (September 2010) for additional information regarding the average wholesale price (AWP) of prescription medications. Some of the alternative price benchmarks referenced in the article included Actual Acquisition Cost (AAC), Average Manufacturer Price (AMP), Average Sales Price (ASP), Average Wholesale Price (AWP), Estimated Acquisition Cost (EAC), Federal Upper Limit (FUL), Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC), Manufacturer List Price (MLP), and Wholesale Acquisition Costs (WAC).

During the presentations, attendees asked questions and shared their concerns and suggestions.

The Medical/Rehab committee would like to thank our guest speakers, Ken Eichler, Chris Broadwater and Don Hurter for sharing their knowledge with us. We would also like to thank Pam Carter for assisting us with SKYPE and Gary Davis for his continued assistance. We encourage participants to make plans now to join us for the 2011 SAWCA Convention in Biloxi, Mississippi.