

WORKERS' COMPENSATION
MANAGEMENT-LABOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Access To Care Subcommittee Committee Meeting

June 04, 2025
1:00 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.

Committee members present via zoom:

Emily Rivas, Oregon Nurses Association
Kim Schlessinger, Samaritan Health Services

Staff:

Teri Watson, MLAC Committee Administrator
Jeffery Warburton, MLAC Assistant

Agenda Item	Discussion
Opening (00:00:57)	Co-chair Kim Schlessinger called the meeting to order.
Review the Scope Statement and Objectives (00:02:53)	The subcommittee reviewed the Scope Statement and Objectives . The document is a living document and will be visited each meeting to keep the subcommittee in the statement and objectives; additional future changes may be made.
(00:04:11)	Self-insured Third Party Administrators (TPAs) and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) will be added to the second draft of Scope Statement and Objectives document.
An MCO's Perspective on Access to Care in the State of Oregon (00:06:38)	Ann Klein, Majoris Health Systems, presented An MCO's Perspective on Access to Care in the State of Oregon .
(00:32:14)	Thais Lomax, Sedgwick, asked if there has been any comparisons of non-enrolled injured workers in the state, as there is a large portion who do not utilize MCOs. Ann Klein mentioned that Majoris does not have access to such data, hence the use of the term 'an MCO's perspective'. Thais Lomax added that the subcommittee should keep in mind the kind perspectives for non-enrolled workers and employers who are not enrolled in an MCO as they need the most support. Ann Klein agreed, recognizing that there is a wide range of injured workers with different needs.
WCD Updates Documents: Provider Matrix & Infographic (00:35:10)	Matt West presented the Matrix for health care provider types , which gives a snapshot of provider capabilities and limitations in the workers' compensation system. He also presented the WCD Worker Journey infographic , which shows a visual of an injured worker's claim process and WCD's involvement; also

available in Spanish. Additionally, Matt West shared an update that the research team is analyzing unique providers through medical billing data in the workers' compensation system, versus total number of providers in Oregon across metro and rural areas. Results are expected to be shared at the next meeting.

SAIF Data Presentation w Q&A

(00:39:49) Ivo Trummer, Elaine Schooler, and Byron Null, SAIF, presented [SAIF data on access to care issues and rising medical costs](#).

(00:51:45) Teri Waston asked if inflation was normal, would the rising medical costs look different. Brian Null answered that the data shown is SAIF's pure medical cost with no inflation rate.

(00:53:14) To Co-chair Schlessinger's question, Bryon Null describes physical medicine services as physical therapy, chiropractic, licensed massage therapist, and acupuncture.

(00:54:05) Steve Bennett, American Property Casualty Insurance Association (APCIA), asked about the 8.2% rise in medical cost, and Bryon Null responded that it is the average cost per claim.

(00:54:52) To Co-chair Schlessinger's question, Bryon Null answered that payments in physical medicine for 40% of SAIF's injured workers who have a medical payment have one in physical medicine.

(00:55:48) Matt West asked about comparisons to decline of workers' compensation providers to the number of claims. Bryon Null answered SAIF is working on that, but the frequency has been down but not to the degree that costs are up in provider counsel.

Provider Feedback

(00:57:22) Teri Watson confirmed that a provider will be participating at the next June 20th meeting. Different providers on the matrix chart will be available during future meetings, as well as non-traditional providers such as naturopaths. Many providers are also participating.

Public Comment - Stakeholder Feedback*

(00:59:12) Dr. Verne Saboe, Oregon Chiropractic Association, advocated for the use of chiropractors in the workers compensation system referencing a survey that shows chiropractors higher survey response and training in treating musculoskeletal injuries. He also referenced data that showed lower cost when injured workers' are treated by chiropractors.

Dr. Saboe called for allowing chiropractors to serve as attending physicians for a full duration of claims and better informing injured workers of their right to choose their provider.

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- (01:04:41) Thais Lomax clarified that closing exam decisions must come from the attending physician at the time of medical stationary, not just by Independent Medical Exam (IME). She also supported expanding the role of nurse practitioners and physician associates as attending physicians to help improve access to care.
- (01:07:11) Meeting minutes will be available on the MLAC website after the cochairs approve them with no formal voting.
- (01:08:28) Next meeting action items:
- Reviewed Scope Statement and Objective Draft #2
 - Research report from DCBS Research Team
 - Provider feedback and participation
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- (01:10:49) Co-chair Schlessinger adjourned the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

*These minutes include time stamps from the meeting video found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJb4u6V2LF8>

**Referenced documents can be found on the MLAC Meeting Information page here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DCBS/mlac/Pages/access-to-care-subcommittee.aspx>