

- Policy & Procedure
- Take Note
- Milestones

State of California

DWCNewsline

Division of Workers' Compensation
Carrie Nevans, Administrative Director

1515 Clay Street, 17th floor, Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 286-7100

Internet Web Page: <http://www.dir.ca.gov>

Bulletin No. 71-07

October 24, 2007

Division of Workers' Compensation posts treatment guidelines for postsurgical patients to online forum for public comment

Functional improvement report form also posted

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has posted its proposed postsurgical treatment guidelines, along with its new functional improvement report form, to an online forum where members of the public may review and comment on the proposal. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that injured workers recovering from surgery receive an appropriate course of therapy

“The DWC obtained valuable input from its medical evidence evaluation advisory committee in the process of developing this proposal,” said DWC Executive Medical Director Dr. Anne Searcy. “Now we are asking the broader medical community to review this proposal in its early stages and provide feedback to help us refine the guidelines before moving into formal rulemaking.”

The postsurgical treatment guidelines and functional improvement report form are being added to the proposed update of the medical treatment utilization schedule (MTUS). The MTUS update, which includes new chronic pain and elbow guidelines, was previously posted to an online forum for review and public comment. Once the comment period for this forum posting on postsurgical treatment guidelines is complete, formal rulemaking on the entire package of updates to the MTUS will commence.

The proposed postsurgical treatment guidelines define key terms commonly used in the regulations, address the presumption of correctness and application of the postsurgical treatment guidelines, address postsurgical patient management, set forth the postsurgical patient treatment approach and describe the indications, frequency and duration of postsurgical treatment.

The proposed postsurgical treatment guidelines are authorized by Labor Code section 5307.27 and Assembly Bill 1073, which provides that the 24-visit cap on physical medicine services shall not apply to visits for postsurgical physical medicine and rehabilitation services provided in compliance with a postsurgical treatment utilization schedule established by the administrative director. The proposed changes are in the California Code of Regulations, Title 8, section 9792.20 et seq., and will be specifically contained in section 9792.24.3. The proposed functional

improvement report form is authorized by Labor Code section 5307.27 and may be used to document functional improvement in the course of treatment.

The forum can be found at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/WCJudicial.htm>. Please click on "current forums" at the top of the page. Comments will be accepted at the forum through Nov. 3, 2007. Please feel free to participate in this important process.

###