

**Proposed FY 2012 Research Agenda
Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group at the Texas
Department of Insurance**

Each fiscal year, Section 405.0026, Texas Labor Code, requires the Commissioner of Insurance to adopt an annual research agenda for the Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group (REG) at the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI). This is in keeping with one of the charges from House Bill (HB) 7 (79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005) to strengthen the system's commitment to conduct objective and timely research on workers' compensation system trends and outcomes.

TDI's Research and Evaluation Group is currently developing the FY2012 research agenda with the following projects:

1. Completion and publication of the sixth edition of Workers' Compensation Health Care Network Report Card (required under Insurance Code §1305.502 and Labor Code §405.0025).
2. Continuing examination of the frequency of employers and workers' compensation claims participating in certified health care delivery networks.
3. An annual update of return-to-work outcomes for injured workers, including an examination of the characteristics associated with injured workers and employers who could benefit most from return-to-work outreach and coordination efforts.
4. An update of the 2010 analysis of injured worker access to medical care provided under the workers' compensation system, including an analysis of access to medical care through Department-certified workers' compensation health care networks.
5. An update of the 2010 study to estimate employer participation in the Texas workers' compensation system (required by Insurance Code §2053.012(a) and Labor Code §405.0025); report due on December 1, 2012.
6. An update of the 2010 Setting the Standard biennial report on the impact of the 2005 House Bill (HB) 7 legislative reforms on the Texas workers' compensation system. In accord with Texas Insurance Code Section 2053.012 and Texas Labor Code Section 405.0025, this report presents results on the affordability and availability of workers' compensation insurance for Texas employers as well as the impact of certified workers' compensation health care networks on return-to-work outcomes, medical costs, quality of care issues and medical dispute resolution; report due on December 1, 2012.

As we do each year, we invite stakeholders to send us questions and/or suggestions for the research agenda. If you do, please send them to DC Campbell WCResearch@tdi.state.tx.us by November 18, 2011.