

# Potential Designated Doctor Program Improvements

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# Designated Doctor Program

Review of designated doctor program

- Examined various areas for possible improvement to the program.
- Received initial input from designated doctors during certification training.
- Seeking additional input from all system participants for ways to improve the program.

# Designated Doctor Program

## Goals:

- Increase physician participation.
- Maintain doctor of chiropractic participation.
- Decrease administrative burden for participation in the program.

# Designated Doctor Program

DWC Sunset Bill, House Bill 2506, 2011

- Changed selection criteria for DDs from the injured body part and the medical treatment the injured employee received to the injured body part and diagnoses.
- Required DWC to define DD qualifications, certification, training, and testing requirements and actively monitor the quality of decisions.
- DWC adopted rules in the fall of 2012.

# Designated Doctor Program

## 2018 Rule Updates

- Added DD selection methodology.
- Adjusted selection process to provide a more equitable balance of musculoskeletal exam offers to physicians.
- Make minor changes to DD qualifications.

# Designated Doctor Program

Improvements to the DD program:

- Improved quality and frequency of training.
- New certification test.
- Communicating regularly with DDs when reports can't be used at a contested case hearing (CCH).
- New performance review process.
- Sample test questions.

# Designated Doctor Program

## Survey of designated doctors at certification training

*Top five areas to improve*

- Reimbursement
- Testing required too often
- Training required too often
- Hassle and confusion of creating multiple certifications of maximum medical improvement (MMI) and impairment rating (IR)
- Test too difficult

# Designated Doctor Program

## Issues for Discussion

- Certification training and testing requirements
- DD qualifications
- Administrative burdens
- Billing and reimbursement



# Designated Doctor Program

## Certification Training and Testing Requirements Issues

- Travel and expense to attend required training
- Testing requirement frequency
- Complexity and length of test

# Designated Doctor Program

## Certification Training

**Possible improvements:** Offer comprehensive online training so doctors:

- can receive immediate feedback on their understanding of the material, and
- receive continuing medical education credit for all online courses.

# Designated Doctor Program

## Certification Testing Requirements

### Possible improvements:

- Decrease frequency of testing.
- Decrease length of test.
- Ensure that the test measures knowledge required for a new DD.

# Designated Doctor Program

## DD Qualifications

**Issue:** Lack of board-certified DDs to examine injured employees with traumatic brain injury (TBI).

- About 1,000 exams a year for 13 doctors.
- Board-certified doctor available for TBI exams less than 75% of the time.

# Designated Doctor Program

## DD Qualifications

### Possible improvement:

- Evaluate whether other board-certified specialties should be able to examine injured employees with TBI.

# Designated Doctor Program

## Administrative Burdens

### Issues:

- Complexity of reporting may negatively impact participation in the program.
- Current reporting requirements create confusion for system participants.

# Designated Doctor Program

## Administrative Burdens

### Possible improvements:

Remove the requirement for multiple certifications of MMI and IR when exam addresses MMI, IR, and extent in a single examination.

Most reports with multiple certifications are not used at a benefit review conference (BRC) or CCH because:

- a BRC or CCH was never held; or
- a Presiding Officer's Directive (POD) issued to obtain certification.

# Designated Doctor Program

## Administrative Burdens

### Possible improvements:

- Discontinue the DWC Form-068, *DD Examination Data Report*.
  - Data about extent of injury not as useful as hoped, possibly due to information about accepted injuries on the DWC Form-032, *Request for DD Examination*
- Simplify the DWC Form-032, *Request for DD Examination*



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## Billing and Reimbursement

### Issues:

- Reimbursement is the number one issue for DDs.
- Billing methodology and reimbursement amounts do not:
  - reflect the complexity of the body areas or diagnoses involved in an exam; and
  - recognize the increased effort for producing quality extent-of-injury reports.
- Billing methodology:
  - could be simplified; and
  - does not clarify payment requirements for referral doctors and referrals for testing to providers not in the same workers' compensation health care network.

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## Billing and Reimbursement

### Possible improvements:

- Examine the billing methodology to reduce complexity.
- Review reimbursement rates for exams to ensure they reflect the level of effort required.

# Designated Doctor Program

**Other issues or opportunities for improvement**

# Designated Doctor Program

## Virtual focus group meetings

Focus Group	Date	Time
Insurance carriers	Tuesday, November 9	1-2 p.m.
Health care providers, including DDs	Wednesday, November 10	10-11 a.m.
Injured employee representatives and OIEC	Wednesday, November 10	1-2 p.m.

For more information, send an email to:

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