

Client Services Policy Manual

Policy Number: **HC-12**
Subject: **Occupational Rehabilitation Services – Private Clinics**
Chapter: **Health Care Services**

Definitions

Licensed Practitioners of Occupational Rehabilitation have met the professional and legal requirements necessary to provide health care and related services under the laws of the Province as authorized to practice either Physiotherapy or Occupational Therapy.

Non-Licensed Providers of Occupational Rehabilitation are knowledgeable in the field of Occupational Rehabilitation through experience, education and/or training and are directly involved in the provision of Occupational Rehabilitation only under the supervision of a Licensed Practitioner.

A *Memorandum of Agreement* is defined as a contract between WorkplaceNL and a contractor that outlines the general obligations and standards for both parties related to the provision of Occupational Rehabilitation services.

Policy Statement

WorkplaceNL recognizes Occupational Rehabilitation defined as a form of health care where a Licensed Practitioner of Occupational Rehabilitation renders the treatment.

All Occupational Rehabilitation services covered under this policy will be under the direction, supervision and professional practice monitoring of at least one Licensed Practitioner, who has a minimum of five (5) years' experience or 9000 clinical hours in Occupational Rehabilitation in physical medicine. Individuals who do not meet the above criteria shall not maintain a vendor number and can only provide services under the direction of a Licensed Practitioner who meets the criteria.

General

Occupational Rehabilitation services may be utilized in the promotion of early and safe return to work programs that enable the injured worker to return to suitable employment that is safe and within the worker's functional ability. They may also be used to determine functional ability in the identification of suitable employment options for the purpose of labour market re-entry assessment or planning. In some cases, WorkplaceNL may request specific services for the purpose of adjudication or determining functional limitations regarding health care entitlement.

Workplace parties (employers and workers) are responsible for co-

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operation in early and safe return to work with support from the appropriate health care provider and WorkplaceNL.

WorkplaceNL may assist the workplace parties and the health care provider by offering information or guidance that may be required to aid in the early and safe return to work process.

A referral for Occupational Rehabilitation may be necessary, but not limited to, cases where:

- i. the workplace parties require assistance in clarifying the worker's functional abilities;
- ii. the workplace parties require information to assist in assessing the workplace in terms of the worker's functional abilities, skills, knowledge and fitness for work;
- iii. the workplace parties require assistance in identifying workplace issues related to the physical demands of the workplace and/or worksite, or
- iv. the worker needs direct intervention to build physical tolerances to enable or facilitate participation in early and safe return to work.

Types of Services

Occupational Rehabilitation refers to interventions of assessment and treatment of an injured worker which are intended to assist an injured worker to regain the necessary physical, behavioural and/or vocational function for return to either pre-injury employment or other suitable work and to enable the injured worker to effectively self-manage the condition. Interventions may include one or more of the following assessment and treatment components:

1. Job Site Analysis
2. Work Station Review
3. Functional Capacity Evaluation
4. Specific Functional Assessment
5. Worksite Occupational Rehabilitation
6. Clinic-based Occupational Rehabilitation

1. **Job Site Analysis:** An objective evaluation of the tasks of a job, which identifies postures, movements, forces, repetitions, loads and other physical demands of each job task. The physical environment in which the job occurs is also documented, including workstation dimension and

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layout, equipment, tools and any other factors which affect workers. The worker's presence is not required, but it may be useful for the worker to attend. This service is not necessarily completed by a Licensed Practitioner. However, a referral must be made to a Licensed Practitioner for the service to take place. This service may be useful in WorkplaceNL's adjudication process, or in assisting workplace parties to identify physical job demands for early and safe return to work planning and labour market re-entry.

- 2. Work Station Review:** An evaluation which analyzes the essential job demands in relation to the worker. The injured worker must be present in order to establish anthropometrics (i.e. human body measurements) and individual requirements in relation to workstation layout, measurements, job demands and task organization. This service may be useful in WorkplaceNL's adjudication process, or in assisting workplace parties to identify issues related to the workstation layout, measurements, job demands and task organization. This service must be completed by a Licensed Practitioner as it involves the interpretation of medical information.
- 3. Functional Capacity Evaluation:** A standardized, quantifiable and intensive examination which objectively measures a worker's level of function and ability to perform functional or work related tasks on a safe and dependable basis over a defined period of time. The evaluation includes: an examination of pertinent clinical pathology, identification of client behaviours that impact physical performance, objective musculoskeletal, neuromuscular and biomechanical testing, functional testing and the interpretation of these data based on the evaluator's clinical judgment and competencies. A functional capacity evaluation is useful in assisting workplace parties in identifying an injured worker's maximum functional tolerances for various purposes in early and safe return to work or labour market re-entry. Components of this assessment may be carried out by a non-licensed provider as assigned by a Licensed Practitioner. However, the analysis and interpretation of the results must be completed by a Licensed Practitioner of Occupational Rehabilitation.

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- 4. Specific Functional Assessment:** A comprehensive physical and functional assessment which differs from a Functional Capacity Evaluation in that it focuses on a specific area of the body. Its purpose is to identify the injured worker's physical baseline abilities in relation to the specific injured body part and a specific job. This type of assessment does not always provide workday tolerances and does not always assess maximum capacity. The assessor must be a Licensed Practitioner and a Job Site Analysis and/or objective knowledge of the physical demands of the injured worker's job, is required for the assessor to be able to determine the injured worker's abilities in relation to early and safe return to work.
- 5. Worksite Occupational Rehabilitation:** A highly structured, goal-oriented, individualized, work-oriented program specifically designed to improve/restore physical, behavioural and vocational functions. The objective of worksite occupational rehabilitation is to use graded work activities to progressively improve areas such as physical capacities, psychomotor and physical skills, interpersonal and communication skills, work habits, productivity, knowledge of safe work practices and other work-related skills. The focus of worksite occupational rehabilitation is to provide comprehensive rehabilitation and may include, but is not limited to, the following activities or processes: monitored and/or graded easeback, modified work, work hardening, and early and safe return to work planning. WorkplaceNL believes that occupational rehabilitation is best accomplished at the worksite and every effort should be attempted by workplace parties and health care providers to facilitate this prior to moving to clinic-based occupational rehabilitation. An occupational rehabilitation treatment intervention at the worksite is designed, monitored and evaluated by a Licensed Practitioner throughout the process. The duration of the treatment intervention will depend on the nature of the injury, functional level of the injured worker, and his/her job demands.
- 6. Clinic-based occupational rehabilitation:** An intensive treatment program specifically designed to address an injured worker's physical capacity and function as it relates to his/her job demands. The objective of clinic-based

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occupational rehabilitation is to implement physical and occupational interventions to attain sufficient physical tolerances and other occupational skills for pre-injury job requirements, or, in the event that pre-injury employment is not an option, to attain sufficient physical tolerances and occupational skills for other suitable work. Interventions may include the use of simulated graded work activities or work conditioning activities and/or a combination thereof. Generally, it does not exceed 8 weeks in length, and ideally, is offered 2-4 hours a day at 5 days per week. Clinic-based occupational rehabilitation is designed, monitored and evaluated by a Licensed Practitioner throughout the process.

Reporting Requirements and Fee Schedule

Reporting requirements and fees payable for Occupational Rehabilitation Services shall be in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between WorkplaceNL and Occupational Rehabilitation Providers in Private Clinics.

Reference: *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act, 2022, sections 95, 96, 100, and 103.*

Amendment History

Original Effective Date 2003 12 01