

D Russell

From: Lisa J [REDACTED]
Sent: July 19, 2019 10:05 AM
To: info@wcbreview.ca
Subject: WSBC Review....and hopefully improvements on the side of the injured worker

Ms. Patterson,

I apologize for not being able to make it to my in-person appointment as it would have been a pleasure to have present to you, now as an Advocate for First Responders with psychological injuries and claims with WSBC.

I have had at one given time, 8 first responders with claims at various stages with their WSBC Claims. There has been one thing I can say that has been a consistent complaint, that being the newly revamped "Orion" Program was of no use to any of them. In fact, for some of the clients who live in the smaller communities, it actually exacerbated their PTSD symptoms by the end of the program.

The other issue that is that they are finished their program and are assumed to be "healed" and ready to begin a RTW or Vocational rehabilitation; when in fact, most of the individuals felt they didn't have any or the appropriate/personalized counseling that worked for them.

Again, IF counseling is offered, WSBC chooses the provider and tells the injured worker they only have 8 sessions. This is defeating right off the bat and in fact, not true. The counselors or psychologists I have interacted with can always request for more sessions if they deem appropriate. WSBC then has a paper doctor (as I refer to them) a psychologist or psychiatrist review documents and make a judgement on a human being they have never met, never spoken to, heard their story, emotions or seen the distress they are in yet the counselor that worker is seeing, has and is making the request.

Another issue that comes up and as an Advocate and a former injured worker is that every injured worker may ask for the support of a Social Worker. It is from my personal experience that had I not had a social worker, I would have NEVER been able to manage the letters that inundate the injured workers mailbox that comes from WSBC. I believe this should be an offer made to the worker the day they make their claim. It was the former Minister of Labour, Shirley Bond that made this public, that all workers are entitled to this support.

The form giving WSBC carte blanche to medical information is incredibly invasive and unnecessary. What should be made available to them is ANY AND ALL MEDICAL INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THIS INJURY AND GOING BACK NO FURTHER THAN 10 YEARS. In some cases, case managers are reaching as far back at 20 years to deny a workers claim. This is clearly a breach of privacy especially when there was no claim ever made but WSBC can use information from it to MAKE something out of nothing.

As far as Vocational Rehabilitation being completely separate from Case Managers. Are we all not on the same team with the INJURED WORKER the quarterback of their life? Is it not better to work together to get this worker back to work, smoothly, quickly and as sensitively as possible? Of course, saving WSBC and the employer money in the process. IF we listen to the worker, they after all know what is going on for them, what might work for them, if something isn't working then let's try something new! Then chances are, they will be a productive member of the workforce once again.

It appears if a RTW is not possible, the go-to-answer is to put these individuals into a Laundry Department in a hospital setting or as a Unit Clerk.

Seriously? A paramedic, now a Unit Clerk? A Dispatcher now a Court Clerk? A corrections officer now working in a laundry facility?

A great many of my clients, even after counselling still find the hustle bustle of the large community, or taking transit extremely triggering, so home businesses are quite enticing and financially viable. This is not acceptable to Vocational Rehabilitation because these educated highly intelligent individuals never had private business before.....sometimes people don't fit in all the boxes.

Janet, I could go on with more suggestions so in a nutshell:

- **the system still favors WSBC in time restraints**
- **the worker still has no say in who is treating them or for how long**
- **some case managers/vocational rehab workers have literally "threatened" benefits will be cut off if >>>>>**
- **let's get social workers involved to help our PTSI workers with some decisions making**
- **Home businesses are productive**
- **a little more sensitivity training surrounding psychological injuries would be a huge benefit as would working as a team**
- **Medical release forms be relevant and with a timeline**

Thank you so very much for taking your precious time reading my email, and more importantly hearing all of the concerns of those whose lives have been dramatically impacted by work related injuries. I speak only for those first responders with psychological injuries today and as an advocate, as one myself, I have seen some positive changes. However, not as much as I had hoped.

The most important person in this process...is the injured worker. They must have a voice in their recovery.

Respectfully,

Lisa Jennings-Church

Advocate,

Paramedic, Retired

Founder and Director

www.youarenotaloneptsdbc.ca

"The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short, but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark."- Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroto Simoni (1475-1564)