

July 19, 2019

Dear Ms. Patterson;

As the representative of a company that operates across many provinces, I find it of great interest that British Columbia's Minister of Labour is directing a change to the workers' compensation system to be more worker centered.

While we want to ensure that workers are not injured, we also believe that injured workers should be absolutely treated with compassion, respect and dignity. But the system is already very much worker centered, as a company that strives to provide safe, meaningful modified duties we find it extremely frustrating to the road blocks that are placed in our way in the province of British Columbia.

In Alberta for example, when a worker is injured, they attend an OIS clinic and are seen by a doctor who has a clear understanding of what the job entails and what the injured worker is capable of, completes the modified duty offer and has the worker back in the workplace, as long as it doesn't compromise the injured worker's health any further. In British Columbia, often a worker with a similar injury visits a family doctor who will not even look at the modified duty offer, talks to the worker for 5 minutes and tells the worker to take two weeks off, this does nothing to aid the worker in their recovery.

Numerous studies have been completed across the globe that show the importance of modified duties in the recovery of an individual from both a physical and mental standpoint.

In Alberta, WCB views the WCB/Employee/Employer as a partnership, a team to get the worker back to full health. In BC, it appears that there is a divide between the case manager and the employer. I can leave 2-3 messages with a case manager over a two-week period, and never receive a call back.

- In the absence of specialist OIS doctors in British Columbia with expertise in soft-tissue injuries, injured workers (with soft tissue injuries) should be directed to contracted physiotherapists who understand PDA's, available modified duties and the actual limitations of the injured worker.
- Case managers need to respond to employers' concerns in a timely fashion, with clear lines of communication to a supervisor if an employer is not satisfied with a case manager.

Our goal is never to harm an injured worker further, but to safely return them to meaningful work where they have the ability to recover and remain connected to the workplace.

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Regards,

Matthew Cook, CRSP  
Director, HSE  
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