

## **NB Back Injury Program Overview**

WorkSafeNB (WSNB) will be rolling out a Back Injury Program across the province in March 2012.

This program mirrors the Shoulder Injury Program in many ways. The caremaps and criteria have been worked out through a joint NBMS back orthopaedic surgeon-WSNB committee. An expert network of back physiotherapists (PT) will provide a comprehensive MSK assessment and triage claimants into one of three caremaps. Triggers for referral to the expert network of PTs include:

- Referral to an orthopaedic surgeon (Ortho) or for an MRI
- No lost-time claimants who are taking a prolonged time to recover
- Lost-time claimants still off work at 4 weeks if not being treated by a chiropractor and 8 weeks if being treated by a chiropractor and not progressing satisfactorily in a return-to-work program

Caremap 1: Claimants meeting criteria for the Medical-Surgical caremap would be referred immediately by the PT to Ortho.

Caremap 2: Claimants who meet the criteria for discogenic pain / radiculopathy. The orthopaedic surgeons want a trial of up to 8 weeks of active functional restoration before referral to them is considered. If the claimant is not making satisfactory progress, then the PT should refer the claimant and WSNB should get the FP to book an MRI. If there is a match between objective clinical findings and the MRI, then Ortho will book a guided nerve root injection and consider surgery. If there is not a match, then surgery will generally not be considered and WSNB will send the claimant for a Work Capacity Evaluation.

Caremap 3: The third caremap is “Rehab Only”. All claimants not meeting the criteria for Caremap 1 or 2 fit into this caremap. WSNB does not pay for referrals to Ortho or for MRIs for claimants in the Rehab Only Caremap. Claimants in this caremap will generally receive unidisciplinary active functional restoration by the expert back PT. If the claimant has a high P&A score, the claimant will be referred to WRC for active functional restoration + cognitive-behavioural therapy + work simulation.

The network of back orthopaedic surgeons includes: Dr. E. Abraham, Dr. S. Connolly, Dr. N. Manson, Dr. A. Berkshire, Dr. S. Comstock, Dr. J-P. Daigle, Dr. A. Clark, and Dr. M-A. Le Breton