



2010 Provider Satisfaction Survey Results

August 2011

Healthcare providers tell Labor & Industries what they think

Labor & Industries contracted with Gilmore Research Associates in the fall of 2010 to survey healthcare practices, mostly those of attending practitioners, regarding:

- Satisfaction treating injured workers,
- Use and helpfulness of L&I resources, and
- How to improve the workers' compensation system.

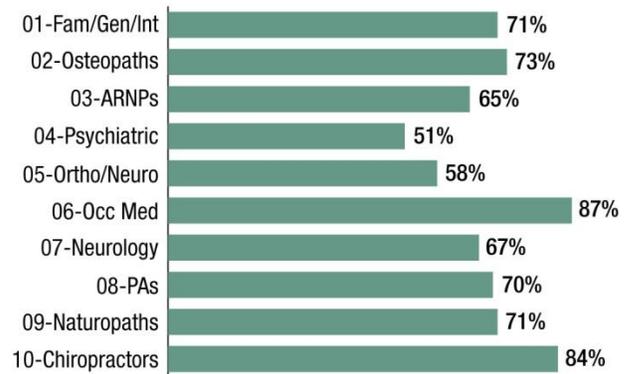
Nine hundred seventy-four (974) practices that are registered with L&I to treat injured workers responded either online or by telephone. Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents were clinical staff and the remaining 58% were administrative personnel such as office and billing managers.

Attending providers comprise the majority of the survey respondents. Chiropractors, medical and osteopathic physicians and physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and naturopathic doctors' practices were included. Some specialists were also surveyed: orthopedic and neurological surgery, psychiatry, neurology, occupational medicine, and physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Seventy percent of providers are satisfied treating workers' compensation patients

1. Approximately 70% of the responding practices are somewhat or very satisfied treating patients with L&I claims.

My practice is somewhat or very satisfied treating patients with L&I claims



2010 Attending Provider Satisfaction Survey

2. Sixty-eight percent (68%) say they treat any L&I patient; another 13% treat on-the-job injuries only for their existing patients. Only 1% said they do not treat any workers' compensation patients.
3. When asked if they want to increase the number of L&I patients they treat, results were fairly even between yes (38%), no (35%), and don't know (27%). This may indicate that providers are satisfied with their current case mix.
4. Most practices compare L&I as the same or better than other healthcare payers (insurers) on Responsiveness (75%), Fees (70%), Payment Processes (63%), and Reporting and Paperwork Requirements (55%). The latter was mentioned throughout the survey as an area of concern.
5. Orthopedic and neurological surgeons, as a group, were less satisfied in 2010 than in 2008.

Providers assess L&I resources as helpful

- Seventy-five percent (75%) of practices considered the claim manager a helpful resource, with 15% indicating they didn't know.
- Awareness of seven L&I resources ranged from 29% (Medical Treatment Guidelines and Coverage Decisions) to 70% and above for the Provider Hotline and Provider Bulletins.
- Providers that use L&I resources overwhelmingly consider them helpful.
- Providers who are more satisfied treating injured workers are aware of more L&I's resources than less-satisfied providers.
- Other L&I resources are also helpful. The top 5 mentioned are:
 - Centers of Occupational Health and Education (COHE)
 - Customer service
 - Billing and electronic billing
 - L&I website
 - Workshops, presentations, and seminars

What can L&I do to make treating injured workers more satisfying for providers?

Responders expanded on many of their answers by offering well over 4,000 comments. By far, the overwhelming concern was the amount of paperwork and provider staff time required to process L&I paperwork when treating injured workers.

They also said that making decisions more quickly and better explaining L&I processes to injured workers and providers about workers' compensation would increase their satisfaction.

We hear you and we're improving

Thank you for your input. We are using the results of the survey to prioritize improvements.

Here are some of them:

- Reducing and streamlining paperwork:
 - Electronic bill adjustment – Fall 2011
 - Electronic Funds Transfer – Early 2012
 - Online accident reporting – pilot project now under way in Northwest Washington
 - Reducing unwanted mail – Planning underway
 - Health Information Exchange – Planning underway
- Expanding COHE statewide by 2015
- Streamlining claim management based on Lean process-improvement methods
- Improving healthcare training curriculum for claim managers – 2011
- Expanding educational and outreach activities with the provider community

All Labor & Industries staff are participating in an agency-wide initiative to improve our customer service.

Need more information?

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