IME Updates

IME Education Program

Development of our new IME Education Program is under way. Module #1 of IME Basics, which mirrors the material in the Medical Examiner’s Handbook, is in production and Modules #2 and #3 are in the works. Questions for the quizzes at the end of each module are also being generated.

The modules are as follows:

- Module 1. IMEs & WA Workers’ Compensation System
- Module 2. Before the IME
- Module 3. Performing the IME
- Module 4. Impairment Rating: Detailed Instructions
- Module 5. After the IME
- Module 6. Billing Information
- Module 7. Special Topics

The Annual IME Seminar is tentatively set for September 29, 2018. It is being produced in co-sponsorship with IAIME (formerly AADEP). The theme is The Spine, and will include presentations on proper examination techniques for general examination as well as impairment ratings, interpretation of imaging studies, and an interactive case review session featuring a multi-disciplinary panel of experts.

Impairment Rating Tools

The Dorso-Lumbar and Lumbo-Sacral Impairment Rating Tool ("lumbar rating tool") is in the final stages of evaluation. Feedback from internal and external workgroup members is being compiled for review and response. A cervical spine impairment rating tool is also being developed; once the lumbar rating tool is finalized, training on how to use both of these new optional tools when interpreting the WACs will be provided prior to release.

Fifth Edition AMA Guides Worksheets

Last year, digital versions of Figures 16-1a and 16-1b (the upper extremity worksheets) from the Fifth Edition AMA Guides were developed to make it easier for examiners to use the worksheets and incorporate them into their reports and electronic records. Those digital worksheets are available in the updated version of the Medical Examiner’s Handbook, slated to be released this month. Work is underway for a digital version of Figure 17-10 (the lower extremity worksheet).

Other IME Quality Improvements

Other current efforts to improve IME quality include the development of specific criteria for a high-quality IME report, as well as an IME Report Quality Review Tool for the IME ONC to use when reviewing IME reports either proactively or in response to a complaint. The criteria and tools are being developed in alignment with the IME Best Practices work of Dr. Christopher Brigham, senior editor of the AMA Guides. A quarterly newsletter – the L&I IME Examiner Bulletin – is also in the works; the purpose is to disseminate information regarding quality-related topics, make announcements, and stay directly engaged with our examiners. The first edition will be released this summer.