Acupuncture – Update July 2017

L&I will soon begin an acupuncture pilot program, aimed at integrating acupuncture treatment for low back pain, as well as acupuncture providers, into the workers’ compensation system. This program, lasting up to two years, will provide a structured environment for care delivery and capture of data that will inform future L&I payment and coverage methodology. While the pilot program is underway, Labor & Industries (L&I) will pay participating providers to deliver acupuncture services to injured workers with a diagnosis of low back pain. Further information will be available soon, but initial coverage will be:

- A maximum of 10 acupuncture treatments, for low back pain only, per injured worker’s claim (Other items/treatments are not covered for payment, and therefore will not be reimbursed). Acupuncture will require AP referral.

- In addition, an Oswestry Disability Index (ODI) assessment and 2-item Graded Chronic Pain Scale (GCPS) form must be completed and sent to the department, in electronic format, at the following times:
  - At the first acupuncture treatment
  - At the fifth (or midway, whichever comes first) acupuncture treatment
  - At the completion of acupuncture treatment

- Providers must also submit a final report, including the reason for discharge from acupuncture (e.g. maximum number of treatments used, treatment no longer medically necessary (goals achieved), patient discontinued)