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## DIGEST

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Ivey

HB No. 450

**Abstract:** Provides alternatives for cases in which there exist conflicts with the medical director or cases in which the recommended treatment is not outlined specifically in the medical treatment guidelines.

Present law provides procedure for submitting claims for workers' compensation reimbursement.

Present law (R.S. 23:1203.1(J)) provides that if a dispute arises regarding medical care, the aggrieved party shall file an appeal with the office of workers' compensation administration (OWCA) medical director.

Proposed law retains present law but provides that if a conflict exists between any medical director and any party to the appeal, OWCA shall contract with other medical directors.

Proposed law requires that in the event of a conflict described in proposed law, the alternate medical director(s) shall render a decision within 30 calendar days.

Present law (R.S. 23:1203.1(M)) provides that all medical treatment not covered by the medical treatment schedule shall be in accordance with present law (R.S. 23:1203.1(D)).

Present law (R.S. 23:1203.1(D)) provides that medical treatment guidelines shall be based on the following criteria:

- (1) Rely on specified, comprehensive, and ongoing systematic medical literature review.
- (2) Contain published criteria for rating studies and for determining the overall strength of the medical evidence, including the size of the sample, whether the authors and researchers had any financial interest in the product or service being studied, the design of the study and identification of any bias, and the statistical significance of the study.
- (3) Are current and the most recent version produced, which shall mean that documented evidence can be produced or verified that the guideline was developed, reviewed, or revised within the previous five years.
- (4) Are interdisciplinary and address the frequency, duration, intensity, and appropriateness of treatment procedures and modalities for all disciplines commonly performing treatment of employment-related injuries and diseases.

- (5) Are, by statute or rule, adopted by any other state regarding medical treatment for workers' compensation injuries, diseases, or conditions.

Proposed law retains present law and further provides that in instances in which a treatment is not covered by the medical treatment schedule, the employer is liable to pay when it has been demonstrated by a preponderance of scientific evidence to the medical director, in accordance with present law (R.S. 23:1203.1(C), that the treatment is appropriate.

(Amends R.S. 23:1203.1(J) and (M))

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations to the original bill.

1. Provided that if there is a conflict of interest between any party to the appeal and any medical director, that OWCA shall contract with other medical directors.
2. Provided that when treatment is not covered by the medical treatment schedule, payment is due by the employer when the employee can demonstrate to the medical director, by preponderance of the scientific evidence, and in accordance with present law, which provides for best available external clinical evidence from systematic research, that treatment is appropriate.