

Maryland Workers' Compensation Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday April 25, 2024

**Call to Order:** Chairwoman Maureen Quinn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**Present:** Chairwoman Maureen Quinn and Commissioners James Forrester, Asha Joseph Jefferson, Allan Kittleman, Morrisann Martin, Howard Metz, Ju Oh, Delia Schadt, and Tracey Parker Warren.

**Staff Members Present:** Mary Ahearn, Chief Executive Officer, Theresa Cornish, Chief Operating Officer, Amy Lackington, Administrator, Jerome Reichmister, Medical Director, and Elizabeth Fletcher, Secretary of the Commission.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Minutes of the Commission meeting on April 11, 2024, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Upon motion of Commissioner Kittleman and seconded by Commissioner Forrester, the Minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

**Chair's Report:** Chairwoman Quinn announced the completion of renovations at the Comfort Inn and Suites in LaVale, with hearings set to resume on July 1, 2024. She inquired about the Commissioners' plans to attend the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC) conference in Toronto, Canada, in September 2024. Chairwoman Quinn reminded the Commissioners that this conference is the Sunday after the Maryland Workers Compensation Education Association Conference in September. She noted that the Department of Budget and Management's travel procedures necessitate special approval for international travel, so the travel paperwork needs to be submitted earlier than usual. Additionally, Chairwoman Quinn reminded the Commissioners that their ethics filings are due by the end of April 2024.

**Old Business:** There was no old business.

**New Business:** Commissioners Kittleman and Metz presented a document titled "CPT Codes Not Valued by CMS," to the Commissioners addressing Independent Medical Examinations. Commissioner Kittleman explained the formula for calculating IME fees. Commissioner Metz emphasized the inaccuracies in some claimant doctors' special reports and their failure to establish causality, highlighting the need of IMEs in claim validation. Commissioner Schadt inquired about the Commission's need to reimburse amounts differing from the CPT Codes to which Commissioner Metz responded that claimant consent is required. Chairwoman Quinn asked Commissioner Kittleman to schedule a meeting with the Medical Fee Guide Committee to discuss increasing the reimbursement amounts of the IMEs and a percent change in the increase of Medicare Economic Index. She suggested providing the Committee with approximately five factual scenarios which may help them in the decision-making process and noted that tackling the low IME fees might also settle issues concerning special reports.

The Commissioners discussed ongoing issues with CompHub. Mary Ahearn reassured the Commissioners that these issues are being addressed and asked them to email her if the problems persist. The Commissioners are also preparing to present at the Maryland State Bar Association's event "What's Trending at the Commission?" today, where they will explore a range of topics. Commissioner Metz urged all Commissioners to remind attorneys to submit exhibits in chronological order, giving precedence to special, diagnostic, and rating reports.

**Medical Alerts:** Dr. Jerome Reichmister briefed the Commissioners on a recent study published in the February 2024 issue of the Journal of American Medical Association, which discussed Radio Frequency Ablation for the knee. This outpatient procedure targets the genicular nerves to treat chronic knee pain resulting from osteoarthritis, degenerative joint disease, or for patients who are not candidates for knee replacement surgery. Dr. Reichmister also highlighted the future role of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare, particularly in interpreting MRIs, and noted that AI employs predictive analytics in this field.

**Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and seconded by Commissioner Schadt and upon a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

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Maureen Quinn, Chairwoman

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Elizabeth Fletcher, Secretary