 Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board	Part:	Health Care Services		
	Board Approval:	<i>Original Signed by Chair</i>	Effective Date:	July 1, 2008
	Number:	HC-01	Last Revised:	
	Board Order:		Review Date:	

COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Section 14 of the *Workers' Compensation Act* S.Y. 2008 (the "Act") states that injured workers have a duty to mitigate their injuries by seeking out and co-operating in health care assistance or treatment that promotes their recovery or early and safe return to work. At the same time, the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (YWCHSB) encourages a process in which workers have choices over treatment. Differences in cultural belief practices will be respected. The YWCHSB enables a wholistic approach to the recovery of injured workers.

PREVENTION

Preventing workplace injuries is the responsibility of everyone in the workplace. When injuries do occur, it is important for workers, employers and the YWCHSB to try to minimize the impacts by focusing on returning the worker to safe, suitable and available work as soon as it is medically possible for the worker to do so during the recovery process.

PURPOSE

This policy provides principles and guidelines to decision-makers, injured workers, employers and health care providers on the use of complementary treatments. This policy is to be used in conjunction with YWCHSB Policy, "Return to Work – Overview".

The YWCHSB recognizes that the basic goal of health care assistance is to restore the injured worker to all possible functional activities, for the purpose of returning to work as soon as possible. The YWCHSB may provide access to such treatment as is necessary to overcome the effects of work-related injuries as much as possible.

Definitions

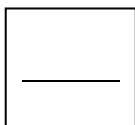
1. Acupuncture: a technique for treating certain painful conditions and for producing regional anaesthesia by passing long thin needles through the skin to specific points.

- 2. Complementary Treatment:** a treatment that is used together with conventional health care.
- 3. Case Management Team:** includes the following: the injured worker, the employer, a representative of the injured worker (as desired by the injured worker), the YWCHSB and the health care community. This may include the attending physician. Other members may be added. (For a full description of the team, see YWCHSB policy, “Return to Work – Overview”.)
- 4. Chiropractic:** a system of health care based on the premise that the relationship between structure and function in the human body is a significant health factor, and that such relationships between the spinal column and the nervous system are important because the normal transmission and expression of nerve energy are essential to the restoration and maintenance of health.
- 5. Functional Restoration:** the process of restoring activities of daily living, work-related activities, and family and social functions to the pre-accident state or to maximum medical improvement.
- 6. Massage Therapy:** the manipulation of muscle and connective tissue by hand to enhance function of those tissues to relieve pain and promote relaxation and well-being.
- 7. Medical Practitioner:** a practitioner who engages in the practice of medicine and is recognized under the *Medical Profession Act* or a member of an allied health profession recognized by the YWCHSB.
- 8. Non-standard Treatments and Traditional Healing:** approaches to medical diagnosis and therapy that have not been developed by use of generally accepted scientific methods.
- 9. Physiotherapy:** rehabilitation concerned with the restoration of function and the prevention of injury following disease, injury or loss of body part. The therapeutic properties of exercise, heat, cold, electricity, ultraviolet radiation and massage are used to improve circulation, strengthen muscles, encourage return of motion, and train or retrain an individual to perform the activities of daily living.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Qualifications

The YWCHSB has a duty to the injured worker to ensure that the medical practitioners meet minimum standards of care. Accordingly, the YWCHSB authorizes payments to only certified medical practitioners.



2. Treatments

Acupuncture

Treatment must be part of an approved overall comprehensive recovery plan.

The YWCHSB will accept up to 10 acupuncture treatments. If, after 10 treatments, the decision-maker, in consultation with the worker and the treating practitioner, feels the treatment is beneficial, the decision-maker may approve an extension of treatments.

Chiropractic Treatment

Treatment in excess of 12 treatments must be referred to the YWCHSB decision-maker. If, after 12 treatments, the decision-maker, in consultation with the worker and the treating practitioner, feels the treatment is beneficial, the decision-maker may approve further treatments. Requests for daily treatment or house visits require prior approval by the decision-maker.

An injured worker may contact a chiropractor directly for diagnosis and treatment or may be referred by a physician. If the injured worker chooses a chiropractor as the primary care giver, and there is little or no improvement in the worker's condition after 21 days, the injured worker must have a medical evaluation and diagnosis, as determined by the YWCHSB decision-maker.

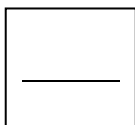
Massage Therapy

Massage therapy must be prescribed by the treating physician and approved by the YWCHSB decision-maker. Treatment must be part of an approved overall comprehensive recovery plan. Massage therapy is intended to be an adjunct to treatment in an acute stage, and may last up to six weeks. Requests for extension of treatment must be reviewed by the decision-maker in consultation with the worker and the treating practitioner.

Physiotherapy Treatment

Treatment longer than eight weeks must be referred to the YWCHSB decision-maker. If, after eight weeks of treatment, the decision-maker, in consultation with the worker and the treating practitioner, feels the treatment is beneficial, the decision-maker may approve further treatments. Requests for daily treatment or house visits require prior approval.

An injured worker may contact a physiotherapist directly for diagnosis and treatment or may be referred by a physician. If the injured worker chooses a physiotherapist as the primary care giver, and there is little or no improvement in the worker's condition after 21 days, the injured worker must have a medical evaluation and diagnosis, as determined by the YWCHSB decision-maker.



Non-standard Treatments and Traditional Healing

The YWCHSB recognizes the increasing demand for non-standard treatments.

Non-standard forms of treatment may be considered in certain circumstances. On a case-by-case basis, the YWCHSB will determine the necessity, character, sufficiency and cost-benefit of any non-standard treatments upon written submission from a medical practitioner that presents the case for the proposed treatment.

The case for the proposed non-standard treatment must meet the following criteria:

- a) the YWCHSB decision-maker, in consultation with YWCHSB medical staff when necessary, determines that there is sufficient literature evidence to indicate the treatment's expected beneficial effects on human health outweigh any possible harmful effects;
- b) there is sufficient literature evidence to indicate the treatment can be considered as part of a comprehensive return to work or recovery program; and
- c) the treatment in question can be provided legally in Canada and the practitioners are registered and licensed to practice in a Canadian jurisdiction or have prior approval from the YWCHSB.

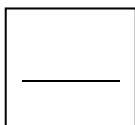
Many treatments lack research literature to establish effectiveness and to determine the risk of causing harm. In such cases, the YWCHSB decision-maker can use an individual, evidence-based (functional restoration) approach to determine effectiveness.

When establishing functional restoration plans, the medical practitioner must clearly state the goal and expectations for functional restoration. These plans will be reviewed by the decision-maker who, in consultation with YWCHSB medical staff when necessary, will make a decision regarding treatment.

The first set of non-standard treatments is limited to three weeks or six treatments. At the end of the first set of treatments, the level of functional restoration will be determined by an independent evaluation process approved by the YWCHSB. Requests for further non-standard treatments will be reviewed by the case management team, taking into account the improved level of functional restoration.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to the Board of Directors, President/CEO and staff of the YWCHSB, and to employers and workers covered by the *Act*.



EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

In situations where the individual circumstances of a case are such that the provisions of this policy cannot be applied or to do so would result in an unfair or an unintended result, the YWCHSB will decide the case based on its individual merits and justice in accordance with YWCHSB policy, “Merits & Justice of the Case”. Such a decision will be considered for that specific case only and will not be precedent setting.

APPEALS

Decisions made by the YWCHSB under this policy can be appealed directly in writing to the hearing officer of the YWCHSB in accordance with subsection 53(1) of the *Act*. Notice of the appeal must be filed within 24 months of the date of the decision by the YWCHSB, in accordance with section 52 of the *Act*.

ACT REFERENCES

Sections 14, 36, 37, 52, 53 and the Preamble
Medical Profession Act, R.S.Y 2002

POLICY REFERENCES

EN-02, “Merits and Justice of the Case”
RE-01, “Return to Work – Overview”

HISTORY

CL-55, “Complementary Treatments”, effective July 12, 2005, revoked July 1, 2008.
CL-11, “Chiropractic Treatments”, effective January 1, 1993, revoked July 12, 2005.
CL-17, “Physiotherapy Treatment”, effective January 1, 1993, revoked July 12, 2005.
CL-49, “Acupuncture”, effective May 1, 1995, revoked July 12, 2005.

