



Ministry
of
Health

bulletin

Bulletin number	Date	Direct inquiries to
4222	December 19, 1989	Ministry of Health Office Medical Consultant
Distribution	Physicians, Clinics, Hospitals and Laboratories	
	(address below)	

Subject MEDICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Medical Review Committee (MRC) has been functioning in its present format since 1972. Although it is a Committee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, its legislative authority derives from the Health Insurance Act and its members are appointed by the Minister of Health. Its main function is to examine accounts of physicians referred to it by the General Manager and then decide whether there is any reason to alter the accounts in question.

The MRC is composed of eight members: six physicians appointed by the Minister of Health from among those nominated by the College and two lay members appointed by the Minister of Health. No member of the MRC can be a civil servant or an employee of any agency of the Crown.

Examination of a physician's accounts is initiated by the Health Insurance Division when unusual billing patterns are identified. Identification may be made by computer screening or be noted by assessors in the course of processing claims. In some cases, unusual billing patterns are identified during the investigation of responses to random audit letters or on direct complaints from the public. If the information gives sufficient reason for the General Manager to believe that:

- (a) all or part of the insured services were not in fact rendered;
- (b) all or part of the services were not medically necessary;
- (c) all or part of the services were not provided in accordance with accepted professional standards and practice; or
- (d) the nature of the services is misrepresented,

then the matter is referred to the MRC for its review and recommendation.

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Office locations

Barrie
30 Poyntz St.
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Hamilton
119 King St. W
P.O. Box 2280, Stn. A
L8N 4C8

Kenora
100 Main St. S.
P9N 1S9

Kingston
1055 Princess St.
P.O. Box 9000
K7L 5A9

Kitchener
Canada Life Square
Main Floor
235 King St. E.
N2G 4N5

London
227 Queens Ave.
P.O. Box 5700
Terminal A
N6A 4L6

Mississauga
201 City Centre Dr.
P.O. Box 7020, Stn. A
L5A 3M1

Oshawa
Exec. Tower, Osh. Ctre.
419 King St. W
P.O. Box 635, L1H 8L4

Ottawa
Fuller Building
75 Albert Street
K1P 5Y9

Owen Sound
981 2nd Avenue E.
N4K 2H5

Peterborough
Park Lane Plaza
815 High Street
K9J 8J9

St. Catharines
59 Church St.
3rd Floor
L2R 3C3

Sarnia
452 Christina St. N.
N7T 5W4

Sault Ste. Marie
205 McNabb St.
2nd Floor, Ste. 205
P6B 1Y3

Sudbury
199 Larch St., 8th Floor
P3E 5R1

Thunder Bay
435 James St. S.
P.O. Box 5000 P7C 5G6

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38 Pine St. N., 101 Mall.
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A referral to the MRC does not automatically lead to a full scale investigation. The Committee first reviews the information sent with the referral and then decides whether there is sufficient reason for further investigation and what form that investigation should take. If the investigation is to proceed, in the majority of cases the Committee selects a medical inspector (usually a licensed physician, not a civil servant) who will conduct the inspection. The inspector, acting under the direction of the MRC, has authority to examine the clinical records.

The inspector's report is reviewed by the Committee and, depending on the information at hand, the Committee may decide at that stage that there is no reason to modify the physician's accounts. On the other hand, if any concerns remain, the physician is invited for an interview and given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Committee. Only after the physician has had the opportunity to respond, which may involve a second interview, does the Committee make its final decision whether or not to modify the accounts in question.

The final decision of the Committee is sent to the General Manager in the form of a "recommendation" and the General Manager, in turn, is required by law to carry out that recommendation. If the Committee decided that there had been overbilling and ordered recovery of any overpayment, then the General Manager is obliged to recover that overpayment.

The physician may appeal the General Manager's decision to recover by requesting a hearing before the Health Services Appeal Board, which is a tribunal constituted under the Health Insurance Act and is composed of nine members, two of which are physicians. The decision of the Appeal Board is subject to further appeal to the Supreme Court.