

# **Medical Access Study (LC 5307.2)**

**Invited Report to the Commission on  
Health and Safety and Workers'  
Compensation of Research in Progress**

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# Outline

- LC 5307.2
- Study Context
- Study Questions to be Addressed
- Study Teams
- Study Design
- Project Timeline

## LC 5307.2

- AD shall contract ...(an independent research consultant) ... to perform an **annual** study of access to medical treatment for injured workers.

The study shall:

- Analyze whether there is **adequate** access to **quality** health care and products
- Make recommendations to ensure continued access

## LC 5307.2

- If the AD determines ... there is insufficient access ... AD may make appropriate adjustments to medical and facilities' fees
- If substantial access problems exist, AD may ... adopt fees in excess of 120 percent of the applicable Medicare payment system fee for the applicable services or products

# **Study Context: SB228 and SB899 introduced major changes into the WC system**

As of January 1, 2004

- repeal of the treating physician's presumption of correctness
- adoption of peer-reviewed, nationally recognized evidence-based medical treatment guidelines (ACOEM guidelines)
- establishment of a mandatory utilization review process by employers
- 24 visit limit on chiropractic and physical therapy for the life of a claim
- 5% reduction in fees for most physician services

# **Study Context: SB228 and SB899 introduced major changes into the WC system**

As of January 1, 2005

- Employers may establish Medical Provider Networks (MPNs)
- And other changes

# **Study Context: SB228 and SB899 introduced major changes into the WC system**

These changes potentially affect access to medical care at many levels:

- whether and how much physicians are willing and able to participate in the WC system and treat injured workers
- the nature, quantity, and quality of medical care an injured worker receives
- who controls access to medical care

# Study questions to be addressed

- What is the current nature of **access** to health care and health care products?
- Is there access to **quality** health care and health care products?
- If access problems exist, are they **substantial**?

# Study Teams

- **Division of Workers' Compensation**  
Dr. Lisa Dasinger, Project Director  
Dr. Anne Searcy, Associate Medical Director  
Suzanne Marria, Legal Counsel  
Kathy Dervin, Manager  
Dr. Glenn Shor, Research Program Specialist II
- **UCLA Center for Health Policy Research**  
Dr. Dylan Roby, Project Director  
Dr. Gerald Kominski, PI  
Dr. Nady Pourat, Co-PI  
Dr. E. Richard Brown, Co-PI
- **SFSU Public Research Institute**  
Dr. John Rogers, Project Director  
Dr. James Wiley, PI

# Study Teams: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

- One of the nation's leading health policy research centers
- Premier source of health policy information in California
- Studies on:
  - access to health care among vulnerable populations
  - workers' compensation managed care
  - physicians and physician fee schedules
- Conducts California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) - largest continuing state health survey in the country and important source of information on health and access to health care services

# Study Teams: SFSU Public Research Institute

- Provides high quality research, data collection, and analysis to government agencies, non-profits, and academic researchers in California
- Conducted hundreds of surveys in its 21 year history
- State-of-the-art survey research center
- Multilingual capabilities
- PRI's Director conducted 1998 DWC study on injured workers

# Study Design

## Four surveys

- Physician Survey – Current and Past Workers' Compensation Providers
- Physician Survey – California Physicians
- Injured Worker Survey
- Claims Administrator Survey

# Project Timeline

- July 2005 to February 2006
  - Literature and survey instrument review
  - Survey development
  - Sample design and selection
  - IRB applications (UCLA, SFSU, State)
- February 2006 (*planned*)
  - Interviewer training
  - Pilot testing
- March 2006 (*planned*)
  - Begin data collection



***Questions?***

## Appendix: LC 5307.2

“The administrative director shall contract with an independent consulting firm, to the extent permitted by state law, to perform an annual study of access to medical treatment for injured workers. The study shall analyze whether there is adequate access to quality health care and products for injured workers and make recommendations to ensure continued access.

## Appendix: LC 5307.2

If the administrative director determines, based on this study, that there is insufficient access to quality health care or products for injured workers, the administrative director may make appropriate adjustments to medical and facilities' fees. When there has been a determination that substantial access problems exist, the administrative director may, in accordance with the notification and hearing requirements of Section 5307.1, adopt fees in excess of 120 percent of the applicable Medicare payment system fee for the applicable services or products.”