

Physician's guide to expedited services

WCB can help your patient access surgery within 15 days of a surgical consultation for a work-related injury

WCB-Alberta has an expedited surgical network (orthopedic, plastic and general surgeons) to ensure quick access to surgical consultations and procedures for Alberta's workers.

WCB has partnered with the Visiting Specialist Clinic (VSC) to ensure timely access for injured workers to specialist consultations and surgical procedures. The VSC also provides non-surgical consultations that can provide specialist opinion regarding a patient's diagnosis and ongoing treatment.

The VSC makes it easier for you to support your patients with a WCB-related claim by providing them with quick access to treatment and support via a network of community experts for a positive recovery experience that leads to a safe and timely return to work.

About VSC

Our VSC network provides best-practice medical and disability management interventions, while supporting a safe, timely and sustainable injury recovery and return to work. WCB-Alberta currently has contracts with various VSC clinics and surgeons in Edmonton and Calgary.

Assessments typically occur within 14 days of a referral. In most cases, the specialist that performs the assessment will also provide the treatment or procedure, when required.

Available specialties include:

- Orthopedic – foot/ankle, knee, hip, spine, shoulder, elbow, and hand/wrist.
- Plastics – hand/wrist and carpal tunnel syndrome.
- General surgery – hernia.

Types of VSC referrals

Surgical Consults (SC)

Eligibility:

- Intended for surgical cases (or querying surgical interventions).
- Can be made at any time throughout the WCB claim.
- Specialties include orthopedic, plastics and general surgery.

Non-surgical Consults (NSC)

Eligibility:

- Purpose is to assist in obtaining an opinion regarding a diagnosis and ongoing treatment recommendations.
- Specialties include orthopedic, plastics, general surgery and non-fluoroscopy guided joint injections.

Refer a patient for an expedited surgical consult

To access these expedited services for your patient, select the services you would like to request on your physician report in electronic reporting (C050, C151) within the "treatment plan details" section.

Please see Appendix A for detailed reporting information.

Alternatively, an expedited surgical consult recommendation can be made from one of our return-to-work centers for workers who have completed a Medical Status Examination (MSE), Back Medical Examination (BME) or Shoulder Medical Examination (SME).

Expedited surgical consultation timeline

Once a recommendation is made for your patient to access our specialized expedited surgical network, a WCB claim owner will review the relevant medical information on the claim file and complete the VSC referral (if medically indicated). A minimum of five business days is required to process an expedited referral.

What can you expect from the VSC?

A consultation report will be submitted within two business days following completion of the appointment.

If surgical intervention is recommended, the surgery date will be scheduled within 15 calendar days from the consultation date.

WCB can help you

We provide easy access to a WCB physician to discuss your patient's case. The Physician Help Line is available at 1-855-498-4919.

Appendix A: Sample Report Information

Please see below for detailed information on how to fill out the "treatment plan details" section when an expedited surgical consultation is recommended.

Consultations/Referrals/Investigations

Category	Type	Details	Expedite	
Please Choose... <input type="button" value="v"/>	Please Choose... <input type="button" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Please Choose... <input type="button" value="v"/>	Please Choose... <input type="button" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>

Your request for expedited service will be reviewed by WCB and your patient will be advised accordingly.

Please attach the appropriate diagnostic requisition form when requesting an Investigation.

WCB assisted services required?

- Case conference with WCB case manager
- Case conference with WCB physician
- Referral to Return To Work Provider

Category dropdown

Indicate the category of the treatment plan activity.

Options:

- Consultation/Referral
- Investigation

When the investigation category is selected, a message of "Please attach the appropriate diagnostic requisition form when requesting an Investigation" will appear at the bottom of the Consultations/Referrals/Investigations grid table.

Type dropdown

Indicate the type of the treatment plan activity.

Examples include:

- Orthopedic
- Cardiologist

Details

Describe additional information pertaining to the consultation, referral or investigation service being requested.

Expedite check box

Indicate if the practitioner is requesting to expedite a service. If the request is accepted, WCB will action the service within a shorter response time compared to a standard response time.

If a service is selected to be expedited, a message will appear at the bottom of the Consultations/Referrals/Investigations grid table informing the user of the implications of expediting the service. The message will say "Your request for expedited service will be reviewed by WCB and your patient will be advised accordingly."

