

BULLETIN

Reporting injuries

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I am a lab technologist at a hospital. Two years ago I had problems with my right arm. It was diagnosed as a strain originally, and then my doctor told me it was tendonitis. I mentioned it to a co-worker, but I never reported it to my employer or to the WCB because I'm so busy at work.

It resolved fairly quickly and I had lots of sick time in my bank. I didn't think it was worth bothering about. But this year I am having problems again. I applied to the WCB but they turned me down as they say I have a "pre-existing condition" in my right arm.

I realize now that I should have filled in the WCB forms two years ago. Is there anything I can do about it now?



I am an imaging technologist. Last November I was trying to assist a patient onto the table when she started to fall. I caught her and felt a slight twinge in my back, but never thought anything more about it.

The next day my back was very sore, but I had a pre-arranged two week vacation starting and I thought the rest would be enough to allow me to get better. Unfortunately, the pain got worse and worse, and by the time I got back to Vancouver from vacation, I went straight to my doctor and was diagnosed with a severe back strain and a possible herniated disc.

I informed my employer and applied to the WCB. I just got a letter from the WCB telling me that my claim is denied because I did not report to my employer immediately, and did not go to see my doctor right away. They say that they don't dispute that I have an injured back, but there is no proof that it comes from the incident with the falling patient. I would like to appeal.



I am a child care worker at a child development centre. Last year I hurt my back when I was trying to restrain a difficult child. I applied to the WCB, but I was turned down. I only lost three days of work and so it didn't seem like a big deal. I know I should have appealed, but I didn't. But my back never recovered 100 per cent and now I occasionally get flare-ups where the pain is quite intense. Is there any way I can appeal now?



Do any of these situations sound familiar? They are all too common with HSA members, whose natural tendency to put patients and clients first is compounded by extremely heavy workloads.

Go to see the doctor: documenting your injury is extremely important, no matter how minor it may seem at the time. Remember that a small injury now may come back to haunt you in later years. And if you don't file a report with the WCB at the time of the injury, your chances for compensation are very slim.

With recent cuts to WCB, it takes very little to be shut out of the system. Late applications and failure to appeal is likely to mean the end of the road if you have a lingering injury. Don't let this happen to you. It is

always worthwhile to appeal, and HSA provides legal counsel to represent you at appeal. You have one year to report to the WCB ... but you must report your injury to the employer as soon as practicable.

Dont get shut out in the cold when you have a work-related injury. Report those injuries ... dont wait. 

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