

Alaska Division of Workers' Compensation Medical Services Review Committee Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2025

Friday, July 18, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Director Charles Collins called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Participation was via video conference only.

II. ROLL CALL

The following Members were present:

Dr. Mary Ann Foland	Jeff Gilbert	Susan Kosinski	Valerie Mittelstead
Dr. Jeff Moore	Pam Scott	Misty Steed	

Member Mason McCloskey was excused; a quorum was established.

III. APPROVAL OF JUNE 27, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Member Foland moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Steed. The minutes were adopted without objection.

IV. FEE SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Director Collins proposed the following dates for the 2026 MSRC meeting season: June 5, June 26, July 17, and August 7, with the Joint MSRC-Board meeting scheduled for August 28. The Committee approved the proposed dates.

The Committee reviewed a state-by-state comparison of IME reimbursement practices, noting that many states do not use CPT codes 99455/99456 and instead bill by report, time, or documentation volume. Members expressed concern that Alaska's current fee schedule does not reflect the complexity of IMEs and noted that subjecting IMEs to the medical fee schedule may disincentivize provider participation.

The Committee agreed that IMEs and SIMEs should be excluded from the medical fee schedule, clarifying that their costs are determined by report and arranged by the payer at a reasonable time and place. Following public comment, this item was tabled pending data from Memoree Polleys.

The Committee revisited home health. Members noted limited provider availability and emphasized that these services are typically arranged through direct agreements between the payer and the agency or caregiver. The Committee supported including general language in the fee schedule indicating that home health services are not subject to standard fee schedule rates and are reimbursed based on negotiated agreements.

The Committee discussed ambulance services. Members expressed concern about the current reimbursement of 85% of billed charges, particularly for ground transport. The Committee discussed potential alternatives, including adopting CMS ambulance rates with a multiplier or

establishing flat rates. Carla Gee and Misty Steed agreed to analyze additional NCCI data and CMS benchmarks to inform potential revisions. Further discussion and recommendations are expected at a future meeting.

Break 10:07 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: 10:15 AM- 11:15 AM

- Memoree Polleys – Claims Director for Penser, TPA for the State of Alaska
 - Provided public comment regarding the rising costs of IMEs and SIMEs. Stated that Alaska is paying significantly more than other states, citing average IME charges of at least \$3,300 and SIME costs ranging from \$20,000 to \$86,000. Expressed concern that the high costs are becoming normalized and suggested the Division consider caps or hourly rate limits to contain expenses.
 - Director Collins invited Ms. Polleys to share additional data for analysis, and she agreed to coordinate with the State’s risk manager to provide supporting documentation. The Committee expressed interest in continuing the discussion.

VI. FEE SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION CONTINUED

Carla Gee provided a follow-up to the June meeting discussion on inpatient hospital reimbursement. She noted that most states, including those using CMS or Medicare-based systems, exclude critical access hospitals (CAHs) from the fee schedule and negotiate directly with those facilities. The Committee generally agreed that the current model is unsustainable. Member Kosinski noted that 85% of billed charges incentivizes facilities to inflate their prices and suggested aligning with CMS methods using a multiplier. Carla will draft rate proposals using a CMS-based approach with multipliers for inpatient and outpatient services, excluding CAHs.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Director Collins reminded the Committee that the next meeting is scheduled for August 8, 2025.

Motion to adjourn by Member Gilbert, seconded by Member Mittlestead. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.