

October 22 2022

Good Morning

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft “State Insurance and Care Governance Amendment Regulation 2022”. The ACA is the peak body representing chiropractors in Australia. With over 2600 practitioner members, we are the largest chiropractic association in Australia. The Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA) recognises the vital role SIRA plays regulating the workers compensation and motor accident CTP schemes in New South Wales.

The ACA recognises the need for SIRA to have the ability to monitor and respond to inappropriate conduct from certain outlier practitioners, within the scheme, and agree billing compliance issues should be managed by SIRA. However, there has been no data presented by SIRA identifying the professional groups these outliers occur and as such, all healthcare practitioners are being targeted. The ACA suggests SIRA provide annual, transparent data on these outliers. This will allow for behaviours to be monitored by Ahpra and respective associations, and implementation of further education where required.

We have concerns with the document containing ambiguous descriptions and we are seeking further clarification. The term “internal reviews” is referenced throughout the document without any clear identification of who these parties are, and what criteria they will implement.

The ACA is requesting SIRA provide an independent expert, “profession appropriate” panel to review cases where insurers have refused treatment. These panels could also be used to review outlier cases, rather than by the insurers who may have a conflict of interest in the case.

The ACA has concerns with insurance companies deciding who can provide service and when a service can be cancelled. All allied healthcare practitioners working within the scheme have SIRA approval. It is reasonable to expect that these healthcare providers are qualified to determine what care and treatment is required for an injured worker.

ACA members participating in the workers compensation scheme have highlighted occasions where all required documentations and processes have been in place, only to have a claims officer reject and recommend the injured worker see another allied health practitioner, a physiotherapist for example. This is personal choice, not SIRA or insurer policy. The ACA have worked closely with SIRA and previously NSW WorkCover over many years to ensure chiropractors are appropriately represented. This collaboration resulted in the introduction of Bulletin 31. Introducing preapproval where a worker remained at work during recovery, produced cost effective and better outcomes for workers.

Return to work should be the goal of all claims and all participating parties. Positive interactions between providers and insurance claims officers is in the best interests of the injured worker. The ACA recommends insurance claims officers be educated on the role of chiropractic and other allied health professions, as well as the roles and responsibilities of all interested parties. Education based on up to date is essential for the smooth and efficient

functioning of all parties. This will result in all interested parties collectively working together for better clinical and administrative outcomes.

The ACA thanks SIRA for this opportunity to provide feedback and look forward to further collaboration.