
The President's Letter

Dr. Darryl D. LaBuick



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January 10, 2008

Dear Member:

I am pleased to begin 2008 by announcing good news on the financial front regarding payments for the Business Costs Program (BCP).

Business Costs Program payments

Starting January 18, Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW) expects to begin processing BCP payments for **all eligible fee-for-service claims**. As you will recall, BCP payments provide an additional payment on top of 59 eligible health service codes for services provided in an office-based setting, including office visits, consultations and the current complexity modifiers associated with these services. Depending on the location, the BCP will add an extra \$2.75 or \$3.25 payment to eligible health service codes.

When you submit your fee-for-service claims, AHW will process them as usual. Claims which include BCP-eligible services will then be automatically forwarded for processing through a separate payment stream. Therefore, BCP payments will be issued separately, one week after the regular claims submission has been processed and paid.

BCP claim details will be reported in the new *Clinical Stabilization Business Costs Program Details*, issued at the same time as your regular Statement of Assessment. This means you will receive your claim report details dated two weeks prior to your BCP payment.

Retroactive BCP payments

This Friday, AHW will issue retroactive payments for all eligible fee-for-service claims with dates of service starting September 1, 2007 (the date the BCP became effective) up to and including claims processed January 3, 2008. Physicians will receive these payments January 18.

The week of January 14, physicians will receive their Statement of Account for retroactive claims, along with the *Clinical Stabilization Business Costs Program Details* report that will identify each eligible BCP claim. As the retroactive payments will be issued in a single payment, the report could contain a substantial number of records. This may require considerable reconciliation for some physicians.

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Retroactive payments for alternate relationship plan physicians will occur at a later date.

The Business Costs Program was developed in the 2006 financial amending agreement to address escalating practice costs for physicians in community-based practices. The program is available across the province - all physicians who provide eligible services in an office setting are eligible to receive BCP payments.

The AMA website at <http://www.albertadoctors.org/FeesNegotiations/BusinessCostsProgram> has further details about the BCP and eligible services.

Implementation of this program has taken longer than any of the three parties to the agreement would have preferred, but we are pleased that physicians will soon receive Business Costs Program payments.

Yours truly,

Darryl D. LaBuick, MD, CCFP
President