

MEDICAL CONSULTANTS' COMMITTEE

ACTIVITY REPORT

2016-2017

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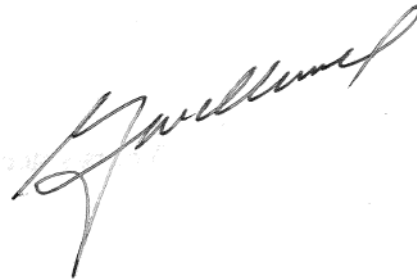
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1.0 Message from the Chairperson

I am pleased to provide the *2016-2017 Activity Report* for the Medical Consultants' Committee (the committee) in accordance with the requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* for a Category 3 Government Entity.

This Activity Report provides an overview of the committee and the extent to which planned results were met during the fiscal period covered by the report. As Chairperson (Acting) of the committee, my signature below is indicative of the entire committee's accountability for the actual results reported herein.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Williams', written in a cursive style.

**Ed Williams BSc, DDS
Chairperson (Acting)
Medical Consultants' Committee**

2.0 Committee Overview

The committee reviews the patterns of practice and billing procedures of physicians who submit claims to the Medical Care Plan (MCP) as well as the utilization of services by beneficiaries. The committee advises the Minister of Health and Community Services of its findings. The committee is a key component in the Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS) audit function. It can recommend recovery of funds billed in error and other corrective actions and serves to deter misbilling by fee-for-service physicians.

The committee consists of seven members, as follows:

- Three physicians appointed by the Minister of Health and Community Services from a list submitted by the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. These members serve for a period of up to five consecutive years;
- A chartered accountant appointed by the Minister. This member serves for a period of up to five consecutive years;
- The Department's Director of Medical Services, Assistant Medical Director and Dental Consultant are ex-officio members.

Committee membership during 2016-17 was as follows:

1. Dr. Ed Williams, Department of Health and Community Services, Director of Dental Services, Acting Chairperson
2. Dr. Larry Alteen, Medical Consultant, Department of Health and Community Services
3. Dr. Colleen Crowther, Assistant medical Director, Department of health and Community Services
4. General Practitioner (Vacant)
5. Dr. Robert Randell, Specialist
6. Dr. Richard Barter, non-salaried General Practitioner
7. Ms. Peggy Coady, Chartered Accountant

The committee meets when one or more medical billing audits have reached the stage where they are ready for review by the committee. Historically, it has met one to four times a year. During 2016-17 the committee met twice and held its meetings at the Confederation Building in St. John's and the MCP Building on Major's Path.

The committee is not required to prepare an audited financial statement. Administrative support and remuneration of the committee's members' expenses are provided by the Audit and Claims Integrity Division of the Department of Health and Community Services. Total expenses for the meetings held were as follows:

Per Diems	\$5,250.00
Travel*	\$ nil

Food/Refreshments	<u>\$ 367.12</u>
Total	<u>\$5,617.12</u>

*Committee members who reside outside the Northeast Avalon are reimbursed for travel and accommodation expenses in accordance with Government travel policy. Dr. Robert Randell was eligible in 2016-17 but did not submit travel claims

2.1 Mandate

The committee is established pursuant to Sections 14 and 15 of the Medical Care Insurance Physicians and Fee Regulations under the *Medical Care Insurance Act, 1999*. The duties and responsibilities of the committee include providing advice to the Minister as follows:

- Review the patterns of practice and billing procedures of participating physicians and the utilization of services by beneficiaries.
- Where the committee concludes that no corrective action is warranted beyond notification to the physician of a finding that a deviant pattern or unacceptable billing practice exists, that notification may be given or authorized by the committee.
- Recovery of funds or other disciplinary or investigative action may be recommended by the committee to the Minister.

2.2 Primary Client

The primary client of the committee is the Minister of Health and Community Services.

2.3 Values

The Medical Consultants' Committee has adopted the Department of Health and Community Services' values, which are reflected daily as employees fulfill their roles and responsibilities. They are a key element of the Department's culture.

CORE VALUES	
Transparency and Accountability	Each person carries out their responsibilities while contributing to a culture of openness in decision making
Collaboration	Each person will work together in a positive manner with co-workers, partners and stakeholders, sharing knowledge and resources to identify potential solutions to priority issues
Innovation	Each person actively seeks new ways to develop and implement more effective and efficient programs and services in an effort to achieve better health outcomes for the people of the province
Privacy	Each person manages and protects information related to persons/families/organizations/communities and the department appropriately while at the same time promoting an environment of openness with each other and our partners, including the public we serve
Excellence	Each person demonstrates high professional standards, takes pride in performing every task with openness and integrity and willingly supports others to fulfill their roles

3.0 Report on Performance 2016-2017

Annual Objective 2016-2017

By **March 31, 2017** the Medical Consultant’s Committee will have reviewed the patterns of practice and billing procedures of participating physicians and the utilization of services by beneficiaries in cases prepared by the Audit and Claims Integrity Division of the Department of Health and Community Services for the 2016-2017 Fiscal year.

The Committee developed the annual objective to measure its performance in auditing fee-for-service physician billing practices. The defined mandate of this Committee results in the annual objective remaining the same for each year of this Activity Plan. In compliance with the Transparency and Accountability Act, for each year covered by the plan, the Committee prepared annual activity reports on the extent to which the annual objective was achieved. This report is the third to report on the progress made under the 2014-17 Activity Plan.

Measure: Reviews completed

Indicators 2016-2017 Planned Activity	Actual Activity in 2016-2017
Number of cases forwarded by the Audit and Claims Integrity Division of the Department of Health and Community Services.	By the end of the 2016-2017 fiscal year the committee received seven MCP billing audits on seven fee-for-service physicians from the Audit and Claims Integrity Division.
Number of completed reviews of MCP billing audits on fee-for-service physicians.	The committee completed seven reviews of MCP billing audits on seven fee-for-service physicians. A total of \$641,559 was identified for recovery.
Yearly reports provided	In 2015-2016 the committee submitted an annual performance-based activity report for the previous fiscal year (2014-2015) year.
Met a minimum of once annually	The committee met two times in 2016-2017.

Discussion of Results (2016-2017)

The committee reviewed all evidence presented by the Audit and Claims Integrity Division and recommended recovery of funds billed in error and other corrective actions that served to deter misbilling by all fee-for-service physicians. This focused review contributed to the prudent use of

public resources and increased accountability and stability in the delivery of health and community services.

It should be noted that:

- Departmental representation on the Committee is being addressed to reflect changes in departmental positions and titles as a result of recent restructuring;
- Dr. Larry Alteen, Medical Consultant, has retired and is being replaced by Angela Batstone Director of Medical Services;
- The terms for Drs. Randell and Barter have expired and the process of appointment of new members is underway; and
- The process for filling the vacant salaried general practitioner is on-going.