Mesothelioma and workers’ compensation

Numbers of compensated and uncompensated cases in BC

- Compensated cases—not in BCCR
- Compensated cases—in BCCR
- Uncompensated cases

Number of cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
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Letter intervention begins (Fall 2004)
Mesothelioma and workers’ compensation, BC

- 2007-2010 claims

- 144 of 148 mesothelioma claims were accepted (97%)

- 1 was directed to the Department of Veterans Affairs, 3 were suspended awaiting additional information

- ~4 claims per year compensated by Veterans Affairs

Mesothelioma and workers’ compensation

- Ontario, 43% filing rate over past 20 years
- Alberta, 42% filing rate over past 30 years
- Quebec, preliminary report even lower...

- France, 62% filing rate
- Australia, 65% filing rate
Why workers’ compensation matters….

• Covers cost of diagnostics, drugs, treatment, care (including palliative care), equipment; payable to the worker, spouse, dependents or estate;

• Includes funeral expenses, grief counselling and, for surviving spouses/or dependents, monthly pensions and vocational assistance;

• Surveillance of occupational disease in Canada

Compensated cases more likely to be…..

• Male (8 times less likely for females)

• (Older) working age (2 times less likely <45, 5 times >75 years)

• Cancer of the pleura (5 times less likely for peritoneum)

• Mining or other industrial regions of the province (76% BC regions)
Proportion of cases compensated by WorkSafeBC, by gender and letter status
2000-2009

Letter intervention
Proportion of cases compensated, by letter status

Partnership for Work, Health and Safety
Determinants of seeking compensation....

- Individuals with mesothelioma and their families rely heavily on physicians as trusted sources of information for both medical and compensation-related issues;

- Perceptions of complicated or bureaucratic procedures for filing a compensation claim by both physician and patients; but once they make contact a beneficial experience.....

Patient/Family Member Interviews

“So at this point I’m kind of relying on my oncologist. He’s supposed to be the specialist. And [I] buffer everything else with what he has to say.”

“that really didn’t come up until I was handed the papers to fill out ... when my doctor gave me the papers, I guess he said that it’s a workplace disease, right.”

- Not much use of other information sources
  - Internet consulted, but often too overwhelming/scary
Patient/Family Member Interviews

“Our absolute angel from WorkSafe” (sensitive claims consultant)

“The way this guy handled it, I don’t think he could have done it any better.”

• Most patients rely on an advocate to initiate the claim
  – This process seems to work most smoothly when the physician initiates the claim process

Resources

• Sensitive Claims/Occupational Disease Department
  WorkSafeBC
  Tel: (604) 276-3156
  – Dedicated resource person to help with claims

• WorkSafeBC: http://www.hiddenkiller.ca/

• Exposure Registry 2012?
Asbestosis in BC

Incidence rate per 100,000 males and number of cases, 1995-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Kootenay</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraser Valley</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Okanagan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitimat-Stikine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace River</td>
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Rate not reported due to small number of cases (<5)

Asbestos exposure sites

Burden of asbestos-related disease

Incidence of asbestosis, CWP, and silicosis, males, 1992-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Asbestosis</th>
<th>Silicosis</th>
<th>Coal Workers'</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1992</td>
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<td>2006</td>
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Asbestos and Compensation:

**Burden of disease still on the rise (in BC)**

*Workers’ compensation matters*

*Multiple determinants for filing a claim, but health care professionals/physicians matter*