



March 23, 2010

Membership gives two thumbs down to CMS 1.1.1 release, record high claims duration levels and general system malaise

Lapse in quality service painfully alarming

Release 1.1.1 debuted on March 1, 2010 and failed to live up to its hype. In the lead-up to, and immediately following its release, we asked stewards to coordinate membership input about the changes and to produce written reports for the Ian Munroe and Trevor Alexander office tour.

The CEU executive commends the time and effort stewards and members took to document workplace successes and ongoing concerns.

Members say changes are not enough to remedy quality service problems

The CEU will continue to argue strongly that more system and staffing changes are needed to address quality service problems. We will also ensure the Board is up-to-date on your concerns by actively discussing your reports and advocating for change. The following comments are only a small sample of what you said.

- Software is not designed for complex claims, reduces job to data entry, too much administrative work effectively eliminates clinical case management work
- Wage loss (EE) remains a huge problem. Confusing, multiple screens, unclear outcomes, VR wage rates problematic
- Incorrect data must be entered to ensure a payment; creates system inefficiencies
- Experiencing a loss of hope. Feeling the trauma of the implementation of CMS on a daily basis, and have limited hope the situation will improve
- We want management to take concrete steps to recognize and address our frustration about the work
- The increase in duration is not because we are not working hard. We are working harder than ever, with overtime, sometimes at the expense of our mental health and family life
- We are concerned that the trend to allow the “complainers” to jump the queue will only result in “training” the stakeholders to escalate their negative behaviour
- Service providers are starting to withdraw services due to no payments or payment delays and this negatively effects my job efficiency
- Our jobs have changed significantly and this has affected our sense of “self” in the workplace



- We no longer feel competent, we have no idea what we are being measured against, we still need job specific training
- CMS makes many users redo work

Members appreciate employer apology but still waiting for meaningful system fixes

In some area offices the Board acknowledged the flawed CMS launch and apologized for the stress it caused. Sadly, this was not a consistent message in all meetings, but in those areas where it was given, members appreciated the acknowledgement.

To accomplish system fixes users want, the Board has finally agreed to sit down with users to review, assess and make changes to address your issues. The CEU has steadily advocated the need for this type of assessment since last August.

That is why we have continually asked you to provide us with information. We know management is taking this step now because of the ongoing and collective action of CEU executive, stewards and members alike. Thank you everyone!

Staffing needs remain acute

With management taking the all important first step of sitting with users to identify desk issues, we remain concerned about the need to address work flow problems. It is well documented that it just takes longer to do the work now, but system fixes will only address a small portion of the overall problems.

The Union has told the Board increased staffing will relieve the upward pressure on claims duration caused by these new work processes. We know increased staffing levels will cost more money but to allow the claims duration levels and system inefficiencies to continue to snowball feels like an abdication of responsibility by management.

We believe management needs to push the Board of Directors for more money to help get this new system working. By pushing for more dollars to address staffing needs, management can make sure there are enough CEU members to get the job done right.

It is good that management admits to CMS-related problems but the CEU believes they need to do more than tinker with work assignments and authorize overtime. Clearly users, workers, providers and employers deserve more than that.

In 2009, overtime for claims members in WES and Health Care Payment was in excess of \$8.5 million! That overtime clearly indicates the amount of work the Board needs you to do for workers, providers and employers and it is also work the current staffing levels cannot deliver. The stress of this staffing shortfall is causing many people to lose hope.

The CEU believes the \$8.5 million could be used to hire more staff so pre-CMS quality service levels are once again the norm. The union is advocating for more staff because we



remain concerned about the adverse effect sustained overtime and unmanageable workloads has on quality service and on our members.

The Board is aware of the problems ongoing overtime is exerting on CEU members, so if they limit the level of overtime costs, in the absence of increased staffing, then they must also accept longer timelines for first payment, longer claims duration and just plain delays as part of their business model. If on the other hand, the employer starts pushing productivity onto the backs of our members, then the CEU will push back.

Reallocation of work not the answer

Management has decided to start a redistribution of work project to address increased duration times. The redistribution of work means moving work from one office that is drowning, to another office that is just keeping afloat. It does not address the core issue; i.e. that slow downs created by CMS means the Board needs more people to do the work.

The CEU has clearly stated that the redistribution of work is not the answer. Despite that objection, management intends to go ahead with this project in an attempt to reduce the unprecedented claims duration rate of 56.06 days.

The union is meeting with management on March 30, 2010 to discuss the Board's findings and to renew our objections to this type of business plan.

The CEU wants to see increased training, more staffing and system fixes. We believe these are the right steps to resolve the issues facing our members. They will also improve quality service and help to ensure every employee feels good about the work they do for workers, providers and employers.

