

# **MEDICAL CONSULTANTS' COMMITTEE**

## **ACTIVITY REPORT**

**2018-2019**

# Table of Contents

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<b>1.0</b>	Message from the Chairperson.....	Page 2
<b>2.0</b>	Committee Overview.....	Page 3
	2.1 Mandate.....	Page 5
<b>3.0</b>	Report on Performance 2017-2018.....	Page 6

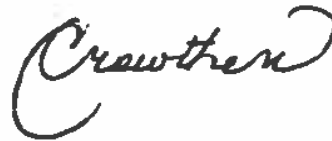
# 1.0 Message from the Chairperson

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I am pleased to provide the **2018-2019 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 April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. As Chairperson 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 that reads "Crowther". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "C".

**Colleen Crowther MD FRCPC  
Chairperson  
Medical Consultants' Committee**

## 2.0 Committee Overview

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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 2018-19 was as follows:

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

The Committee receives its authority from the **Physicians and Fee Regulations** under the **Medical Care and Hospital Insurance Act**. Members whose terms have expired will be replaced in accordance with the Independent Appointments Commission process. Subsection 15(6) of the **Physicians and Fee Regulations** outlines that when a committee member's term expires, he or she continues to be a committee member until replaced.

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 2018-19 the Committee met four times and held its meetings at 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	\$10,500.00
Travel*	\$395.59
Food/Refreshments	<u>\$580.63</u>
Total	<u>\$11,476.22</u>

\*Committee members who reside outside the Northeast Avalon are reimbursed for travel and accommodation expenses in accordance with Government travel policy.

## 2.1 Mandate

The Committee is established pursuant to Sections 14 and 15 of the **Physicians and Fee Regulations** under the **Medical Care and Hospital Insurance Act**. 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.

# 3.0 Report on Performance 2018-2019

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## Annual Objective 2018-2019

Over the course of the three-year period from the beginning of the fiscal 2017/18 to the end of fiscal 2019/20, the Medical Consultants’ Committee will meet at least once each year and review cases prepared by the Audit and Claims Integrity Division of the Department of Health and Community Services. In so doing, this Committee further extends Government’s ability to ensure the wise and prudent use of public resources.

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. This report is the second to report on progress made under the 2017-2020 Activity Plan. In compliance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, for each year covered by the plan, the Committee intends to prepare annual activity reports on the extent to which the annual objective was achieved.

By March 31, 2019, 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.

Indicators 2018-2019 Planned Activity	Actual Activity in 2018-2019
Number of cases forwarded by the Audit and Claims Integrity Division of the Department of Health and Community Services.	By the end of the 2018-2019 fiscal year the committee received eight MCP billing audits on eight 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 \$399,121.33 was identified for recovery.
Annual Activity Report prepared and tabled in the House of Assembly	In 2018-2019 the committee submitted an annual performance-based activity report for the previous fiscal year (2017-2018) year.
Annual meetings of committee (minimum)	The committee met four times in 2018-2019.

## **Discussion of Results (2018-2019)**

The Committee completed seven of the eight audits received. The Committee returned one of the eight audits received to the Audit and Claims Integrity Division seeking further clarification.

The Committee reviewed 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.