



Evolving our Claims Service Delivery Model

WorkSafeNB

April 2023



















FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

WorkSafeNB is transforming to provide more value and better results for our clients – the workers and employers of New Brunswick. We are on a comprehensive modernization journey and our claims service delivery model is a priority.

In recent years, the organization has been conducting in-depth analyses to determine whether there are more effective and modern ways to support our injured workers as they navigate their recovery. And, we have found better ways.

We have been enthusiastically building our future service models, from adjudication to case management to rehabilitation, with the client at the heart of our decision-making. We know that maintaining a connection to the workplace and co-workers, as well as the support of family and friends, is critical to a safe recovery and our clients must feel supported and cared for throughout the process by their entire team. WorkSafeNB's goal is to be by our client's side every step of the way supporting their recovery.

MODERNIZATION INITIATIVES

- 1  Caring for Our People Program
- 2  Workplace Reimagined Program
- 3  Culture Alignment
- 4  Modernization Governance
- 5  Change Leadership Training
- 6  Decision Review Office Service Delivery Model
- 7  Front-End Client Interface
- 8  Online Forms
- 9  Data Strategy & Roadmap
- 10  Claims Service Delivery Model Program
- 11  Core Platform – Financial System
- 12  Core Platform – Human Resource Information System
- 13  Core Platform – New Case Management System
- 14  Core Platform – Procurement & Contract Administration
- 15  Core Platform – Employer Management Strategy
- 16  Document Management Strategy
- 17  Business Analytics Platform / Business Intelligence Program
- 18  ITD Business Model
- 19  Technology Foundations Program

OUR GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING THE MODEL

- 1 **What is our purpose?**
Supporting injured workers throughout their recovery with the ultimate goal of a safe return to work.
- 2 **What outcomes do we want for our clients?**
Proactive prevention, timely access to care, stay at work while recovering, and successful return to work.
- 3 **What is the ideal client journey that achieves these outcomes?**
Evolve the client journey from reactive and impersonal to client-centered proactive care.
- 4 **What are the best ways to provide the necessary services to support the client journey?**
We must ensure services best meet the needs of the client: they are suitable, and accessible.

BUILDING A STRONGER CLAIMS SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: OUR GOALS AND INPUTS

Our goal: quality care and service for our clients

- 1** | Better define customer needs and align our services, quality and delivery cycles accordingly.
- 2** | Leverage the capabilities and expertise of our service provider network to meet client needs while we focus on proactive prevention and early intervention.
- 3** | Evolve the client journey by improving the identification of individual needs and triage throughout the claims process.
- 4** | Focus on a culture of safety, early intervention and support stay-at-work.

Key inputs

MARKET SCAN:

A deep-dive into how WorkSafeNB's peers and proxies are responding to changing market conditions, organized by six macro client service and operational trends.

CLIENT JOURNEY:

Taking an in-depth look at the current client journey and the ideal future state journey to identify where needs can be filled by partners, technology enhancements and process improvements.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The service delivery model was influenced by the goals and initiatives outlined in WorkSafeNB's 2022-24 strategic plan.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT:

Feedback from workers, employers and healthcare providers shapes how we deliver services.

BENCHMARKING:

A thorough examination of national and global workers' compensation boards and how they are delivering claims services and the innovative initiatives they have underway.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION EXPERTISE:

Working closely with strategic WorkSafeNB employees to identify pain points and what interventions and supports are needed to address them through a client-centred approach.

INDUSTRY EXPERTISE:

A third party, MNP, was brought in to support the development of the future state claims service delivery model. They bring a range of industry knowledge and consulting expertise.

AUDITOR-GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General is improving our claims management framework.

BUILDING A STRONGER CLAIMS SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: HOW WE'LL GET THERE



EMPOWERING CLIENTS

Strengthening accountability by creating transparency and visibility into the client journey, allowing clients to take ownership over their journey.



EMPOWERING EMPLOYEES

Enabling high-quality, efficient delivery by empowering WorkSafeNB employees with technology, advanced care maps and improved processes, allowing them to focus on client support.



CUSTOMIZATION

Moving away from a linear one-size-fits-all client journey to a personalized client service experience, improving segmentation and triage throughout the client journey.



LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

Implementing technology that will allow for increased productivity, refocusing WorkSafeNB team members onto client value-add workstreams while technology takes on tactical work.


We have made significant advancements already that are proving successful:

- Introduced a new triage procedure into our intake process to ensure claims from simple to complex are properly routed to enhance the efficacy of our decision making, resulting in faster decisions for our clients.
- Created specialized case management teams focused on working with clients in specific industries, including health care, construction and manufacturing and public administration.
- Built a team dedicated to supporting clients with traumatic psychological injuries (TPIs) and launching our SUCCEED program, which offers immediate treatment to provide a strong foundation for recovery, preparing clients for in-depth trauma work if necessary. The program even provides this service before the clients' application for benefits is adjudicated.
- Launched a new service to help clients who are recovering while at work to ensure their accommodation plans are

meeting their needs and they have the right support. WorkSafeNB's stay-at-work team rapidly responds to clients if their needs change.

- Increased the identification and customization of support for workers at high-risk of disability. By leveraging medical best practices, we now proactively identify clients who are at risk of delayed recovery (early identification). These clients, who typically would have attended WorkSafeNB's Rehabilitation Centre (WRC) in Grand Bay-Westfield nearly 290 days after their injury, are now supported by an early intervention unit with specialized approach to help these clients overcome barriers and safely return to work much smoother than ever before. Early intervention allows the client to stay closer to home and maintain connections critical to recovery.

We encourage you to read further to learn more about the evolution of our claims service delivery model!

A physical therapist is shown from the side, focused on applying blue kinesiology tape to the lower back of a patient. The patient is lying on their side on a light-colored treatment table, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The therapist, wearing a white long-sleeved button-down shirt, has her hands positioned to carefully place the tape. The background is a soft-focus clinical or office setting with a large mirror on the wall.

A Deeper Dive into WorkSafeNB's Rehabilitation Model

Although WorkSafeNB began reviewing its rehabilitation services several years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the implementation of changes. Due to restrictions, injured workers could no longer access outpatient treatment at the rehabilitation centre in Grand Bay-Westfield. WorkSafeNB responded by leveraging technology and partnering with healthcare providers, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and multidisciplinary providers, in all corners of the province. This has allowed clients to stay closer to home and their

support networks, including families, friends, co-workers and workplaces. This option for rehabilitation minimizes disruption to clients' lives and eliminates the need for them to leave their homes for six to eight weeks of treatment.

At WorkSafeNB's Rehabilitation Centre, we've always been committed to providing top-quality care and service to our clients. However, we have heard from clients that the traditional model of requiring them to travel to our central location for weeks at a time was disruptive to their routines.

Today, we identify each client's needs and risk level right from the start of their journey and create a more tailored care plan. This has led to a drop in the number of clients requiring multidisciplinary treatment.

Of the WorkSafeNB clients treated at the WRC, 42% had a soft-tissue injury and 25% had either a back or shoulder injury.

WORKSAFE NB'S REHABILITATION CENTRE TIMELINE



WorkSafeNB has been supporting rehabilitative services to New Brunswick's workers since 1946.



In 1977, the current WRC building was completed as an in-patient facility for New Brunswick's injured workers. At the time, the WRC was a trailblazer, providing unique rehabilitation services. Physiotherapy and occupational therapy and private health care providers were not available as they are today. Workplace injuries were far more frequent 50 years ago and were often more severe due to the nature of work at the time.



In the 1990s, WorkSafeNB stopped providing lodging at the rehabilitation centre. Instead we moved to having workers travel to the Saint John region for treatment at the centre but stay in hotels during their treatment. The centre began providing multidisciplinary services at this time as physio and OT services grew in the local communities. Workers stayed for 6 to 8 weeks for treatment programs.



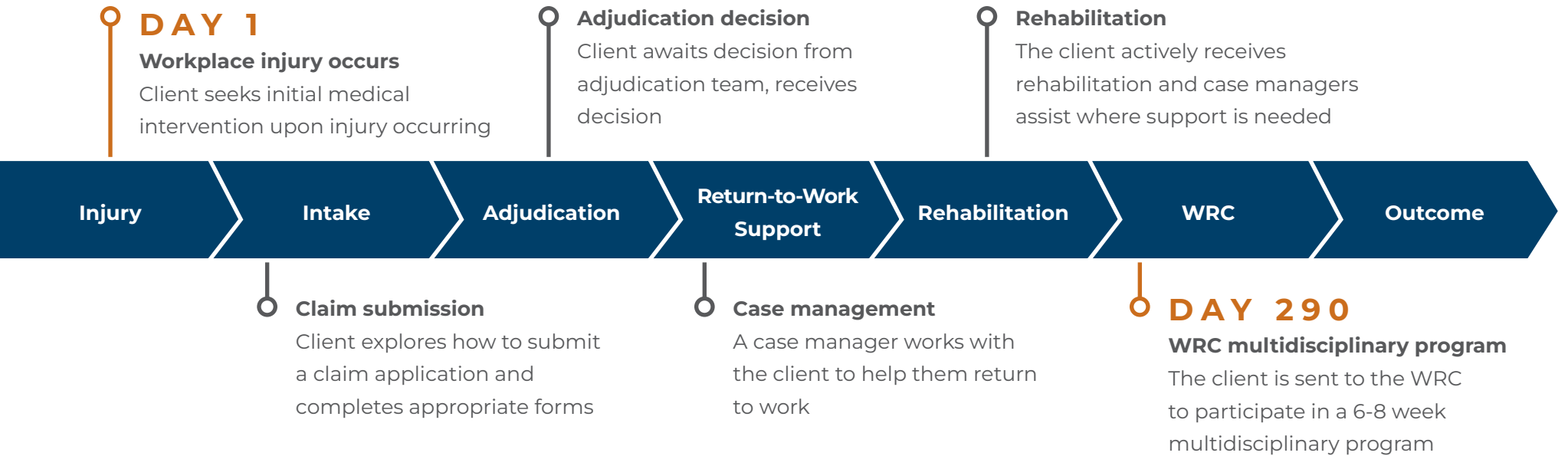
In 2008, a report, *Strengthening the System*, was published after an independent review of WorkSafeNB recommended that a 'value for money' audit should be undertaken at the WRC to determine if the services could be provided more cost effectively by other parties. The WRC's financial model is dependent on approximately 700 clients per year receiving treatment at this location.



The Task Force on WorkSafeNB, released a report in 2018, which stated regarding the WRC that: "These injured workers experienced language barriers, lack of reasonable accommodations, and social stressors relating to dislocation from their families and communities. What is certain is that rehabilitation services require restructuring to the benefit of those injured workers currently served."

THE TRADITIONAL CLIENT JOURNEY TO THE WRC

Improving the client experience is a key driver in our modernization journey.



About 1-2 percent of all WorkSafeNB clients attended the WRC.



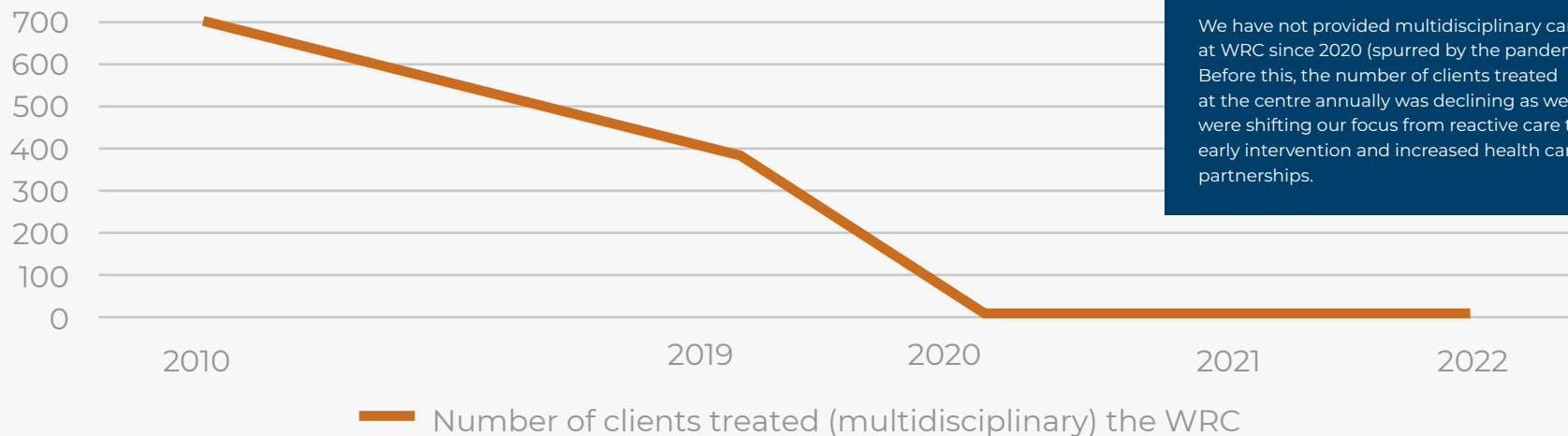
A SHIFT IN OUR REHABILITATION MODEL

In-house multidisciplinary care had been declining, with the shift in focus to prevention of workplace disability, early intervention and stay-at-work programs.

The removal of in-house multidisciplinary care has not impacted return-to-work outcomes for clients traditionally treated at the WRC (about 1-2% of WorkSafeNB clients).

The percentage of workers returning to work at 12 weeks following in-person treatment at the WRC was 44% in 2019. In 2021, following community care along with high touch-point virtual support from WorkSafeNB staff, the percentage was 43%.

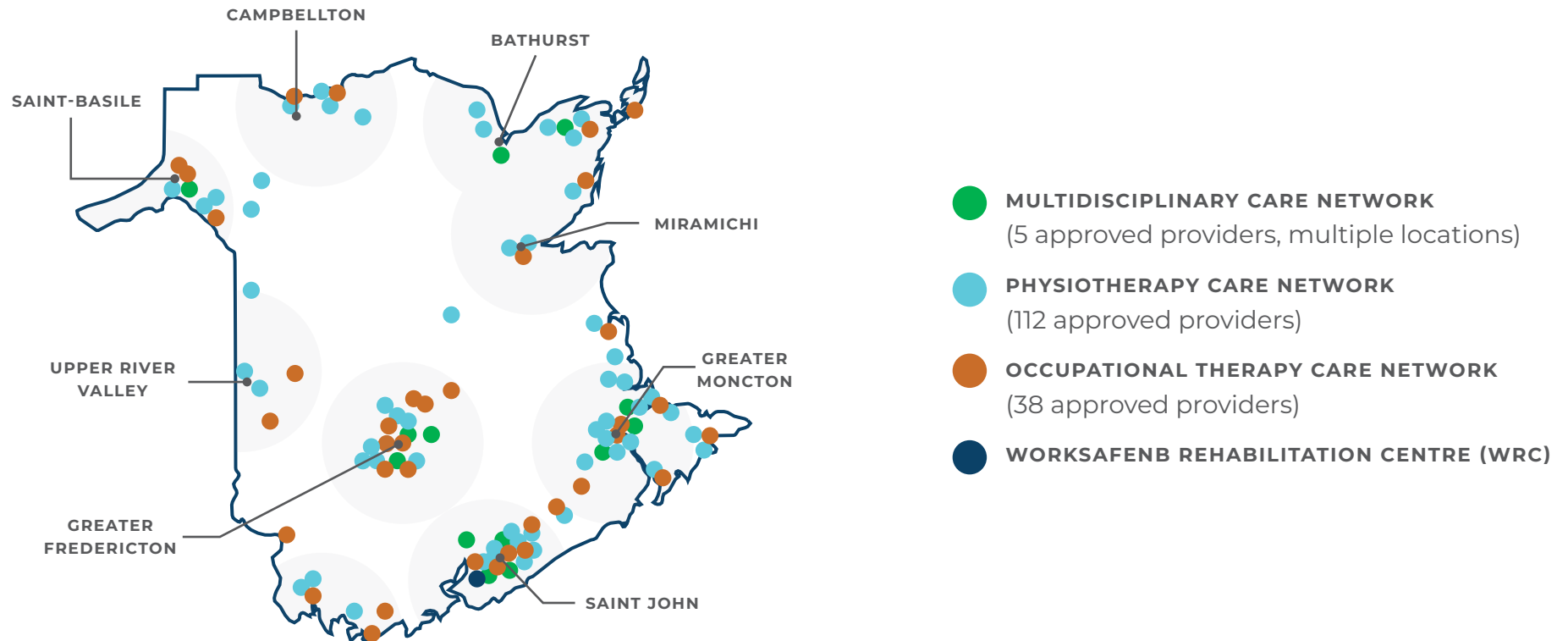
WorkSafeNB is adapting its operations and services to meet the evolving needs of injured workers and further promote its recovery and return-to-work services by redeploying skilled resources at the front end of the claim journey and aligning processes and technology accordingly.



We have not provided multidisciplinary care at WRC since 2020 (spurred by the pandemic). Before this, the number of clients treated at the centre annually was declining as we were shifting our focus from reactive care to early intervention and increased health care partnerships.

SERVICE PROVIDER NETWORK

We're leveraging the capabilities and expertise of our service provider network and strategic alliances to better meet client needs.



Initiatives supporting timely rehabilitation service delivery:

COMPLETED INITIATIVES:

Establishment of service provider network to enable access to care closer to home

Tapping into national care providers that have locations throughout NB but are using national research and innovation teams to support best practices

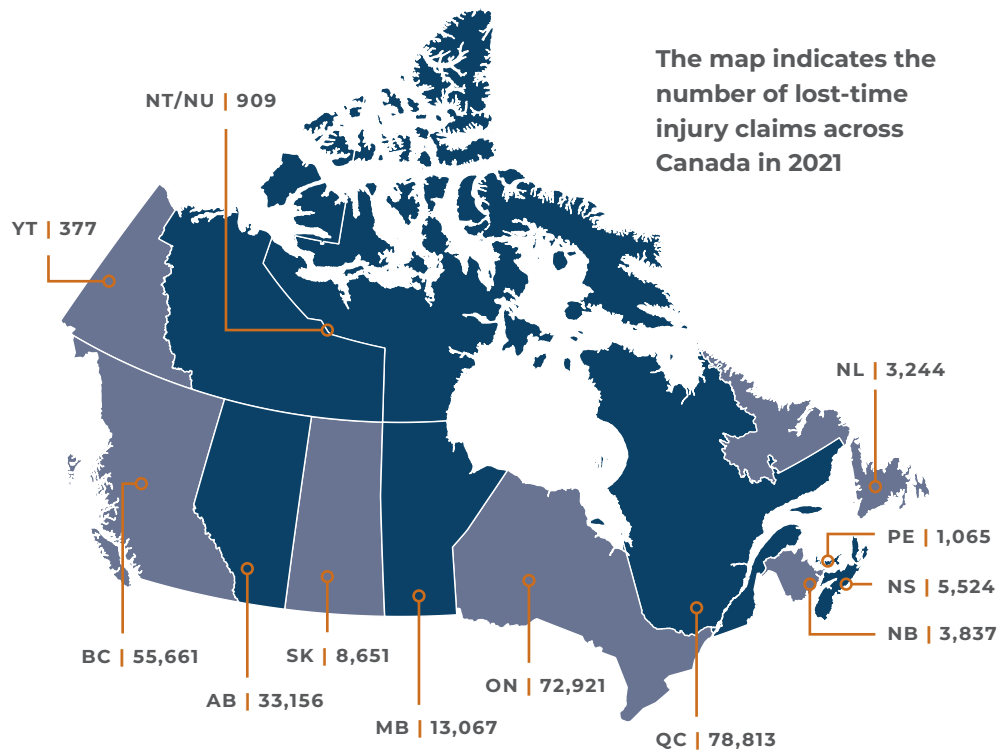
POSSIBLE FUTURE INITIATIVES:

Creation of day-of-injury assessment network, socializing with clients and employers the different rehabilitation offerings in their communities

Expanding the current use of providers to help in the delivery of workforce re-entry services

WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

A market scan across Canada indicates that most workers' compensation boards have opted for a partnership-based rehabilitation service delivery model over providing treatment in-house.



Only two of the 12 workers' compensation boards in Canada have dedicated rehab centres. Alberta has created the Millard Health Centre, a cutting-edge facility known for its success in improving workers' lives and enhancing the community through innovative services. Millard Health is sustained by its high volume of clients and the densely populated area surrounding it. These operational factors are unique to larger provinces and ensure a sustainable care model.

What about the other workers' compensation boards?

The other workers' compensation organizations across Canada have created networks of providers to offer a range of treatments to their clients. In most cases, injured workers work with their case manager and doctor to determine the best treatment option(s) offered by external providers that are easily accessible and fit their unique needs.

This aligns with WorkSafeNB's strategic plan to collaborate with all stakeholders in designing and managing an effective continuum of safety and care. By ensuring that injured workers have access to a personalized and accessible client service experience, WorkSafeNB can evolve the way that workers' compensation is delivered and experienced by clients.

KEY TAKEAWAY:

WorkSafeNB is aligning its strategic plan with the approach taken by other workers' compensation organizations across Canada by collaborating with stakeholders to design, build and manage an effective safety and care continuum. This includes providing personalized and accessible client services and working with case managers, doctors and external providers to determine the best treatment options for injured workers. By doing so, WorkSafeNB is striving to improve the way workers' compensation is delivered and experienced by clients.

IN SUMMARY

With the client journey evolving, so too does rehabilitation services at WorkSafeNB.



CLIENTS ARE RECEIVING CARE CLOSER TO HOME:

Providing care closer to home through a network of local providers aligns with the strategic goal of making health care more accessible.

By reducing the need for long-distance travel, clients receive quality care with greater convenience. This approach helps ensure clients receive timely and effective treatment, while also making it easier for them to maintain their daily routines and responsibilities. It also minimizes expenses.



LEVERAGING AN EXPANDED HEALTH CARE NETWORK:

Capable partners who can offer single and multidisciplinary services have been identified across the province. This approach means that today all multidisciplinary treatment is being provided by WorkSafeNB partners rather than on-site six-to-eight week treatment programs at the WRC. Workers receive customized care in or near their community. External partners have scale to bring research and innovation to best serve clients.



REHABILITATION SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE JURISDICTIONS:

New Brunswick is one of only two provinces to have a workers' compensation-owned and run facility for rehabilitation services. The remaining Canadian provinces have moved to a provider network system and have successfully switched their models to providing clients with care closer to home. In this model, the cost is variable: the organization pays for what is needed rather than a fixed cost regardless of demand.

Today, the WRC building is underutilized. The decision regarding the future rehabilitation model will also impact the future of the physical building.



EARLY SUPPORT AND TIMELY SERVICE DELIVERY:

This model identifies potential barriers early and offers clients the necessary support in a proactive manner. WorkSafeNB has been leveraging the skills and experience of its clinical staff in these new roles to improve client outcomes. Implementing a new front-end service delivery strategy has already resulted in enhanced timeliness of service and volumes are expected to continue to decline as early intervention continues to improve.

WE WANT TO
HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you believe we should continue this decentralized model of rehabilitation on a permanent basis? Why or why not?

