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2	Office of Workers' Compensation
3	District 03
4	State of Louisiana
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8	Original
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11	The same treated and
12	Town Hall Meeting
13	Honorable Judge Kellar Presiding
14	Gantania 27 2016
15	September 27, 2016
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20	TIM RUNNING, R.M.R.
21	305 W. Lagrange Street
22	LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA 70605
23	(337) 477-733 5
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1 (Preedings underway. The following was transcribed):
2 JUDGE KELLAR:

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Both for the staff of the OWCA and mainly for the persns that have atter.ded. The purpose in having these meetings is to let you tell us what problems you are having with the medical treatment guidelines and to help us to s !ve some of the problems that we have seer.. We know that y u guys working Lhe trenches see there are things that happen but that we are not aware of and so we want you to tell us \vhat you Lhink \ve can d0 hetter, what you think are the problems as you see them, and what we might just tweak with the medical treatment quidelines. We want you to be part of the solution to helping us to fi:-: some things that we are aware are wrong but others that we don't know until you tel us. I want to introduce you to, first off, some of the staff of the OWt"A. I have to my irrunediate right Dr. Picard, who is the medical director of the office, and he is the gent, eman who makes the decisions on your 1009 appeals. Walking toward me is Diane Lundeen. She is the current rhief workers' compensation judge and I have Brenda, who is with the medical services section. Brenda helps Dr. Picard put your 1009 files together before they're.submitted to him and we have scatterings of the staff of District 3 here. You see Diane Lundeen, the Division Judge, walking toward me and Charlotte Bushnell, the Division Judge, as well. And

1	then we have some other members of the District 3 staff. I
2	know you guys recognize all of them from sitting in the
3	back. So, what we are going to do, this is for you to tell
4	us what your problems are with the medical treatment
5	guidelines and what you think we can do better, so ■open up
6	the floor for that purpose and please feel free to speak
7	candidly. Just a second. I have couple of rules before we
8	begin. We have a court reporter here, so we need you to
9	speak clearly and to speak slowly and we need you to
10	identify yourself and who you represent here today. In
11	deference to everyone else in the room who would like an
12	opportunity to speak, \-Je as}:you to keep your comments to
13	three minutes but you may speak multiple times if you would
14	like. We would ask you not to speak about specific cases
15	but just generalities or hypothet , and we want you to know
16	that we're not going to solve problems here today but we are
17	going to take your comments; and after we complete the
18	medica = treatment guideline town hall meetings this Friday,
19	we are going to go back to our office with all of the
20	transcripts from these meetings and see if we can solve some
21	of the problems that you identify for us. I would also ask
22	you to put your telephones on silent, vibrate, or stun.
23	Okay. Thank you.
24	MR. TOWNSLEY:
25	Thomas Townsley. I represent claimants. Judge, what

is the current standing on opening evidence to further the record beyond what the medical directors gets, because wh n you have a 15-day limit -- it's hard enough to get the medical records and write an appeal to the medical director, then when you receive a negative opinion, you ought to be allowed to develop the record, which would include taking a doctor's deposition, like we were able to do prior to the medical treatment guidelines. The concept that you can on!y present what is presented in front of the medical director is completely unfair because of time restraints and you don't have litigation so you can't go take depositions prior to that, so there's no development of the record.

JUDGE KELLAR:

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You want to respond, Diane?

JUDGE LUNDEEN:

That's an excellens question. We don't see in all of the jurisdictions which we visited -- the answer is not simple because the appellate courts are split right now in that decision. So, what is appropriate in this appellate court area is not going to be appropriate in another one. We are going to let Supremes decide or certainly it's something that is fodder for legislature amendments down the road so that we all have a definitive answer to that question. But right now, you need to follow your circuit. There have been recorr endations and we are listening to

people. One has been some type of request for
reconsiderations of medical treacment guidelines at the 1009
appeal level so that if suddenly new evidence comes in after
you get a denial, that the person from whom you are taking
an appeal is actually going to get a chance to review stuff,
like a motion for a new trial, but with fresh eyes and with
additional evidence. But as it stands right now, with the
split in the circuits, you have to follow what your circuit
is saying.

MR. TOWNSLEY:

11 All right.

JUDGE KELLAR:

Thank you. It is a very valid issue and valid problem that we need to get addressed. Any further comments? ItJe are here for you. We are listening. Yowon't get this opportunity often to take pot shots at us so go for it.

What are some of the issues that all of you are facing or the frustrations that you are facing? We are here to listen. Some of them may have nothing to do with us. Some of them may, but we cQn't make your system better without you and because you have the day-to-day interaction with it, you know what your issues are on your end. We are learning and we know what our issues are on our end, so we need your voice to approve it. Don't be bashfu: We won't be angry.

- 1 There won't be repercussions. Please talk to us. 2 MR. TOWNSLEY: 3 Do you really think 1S days is fair, though? 4 JUDGE KELLAR: 5 Hold on just a moment. Go ahead, ■ couldn't hear you. MR. TOWNSLEY: Do you really think 15 days is fair for the -- I mean, to me, the medical providers may need more than 15 days. And it's just very difficult that you have now placed on the medical providers who are not as sophisticated with regard 10 11 to the appeal process that we used to do and now we have to 12 try and come in and quickly obtain information, and the 13 problem is they will say -- let's say a neurosurgeon says, 14 "well, the claimant has tried physical therapy and the 15 claimant has tried injections and they have failed so now I'm recommending surgery", and then I will get a denial 16 saying, "you haven't. proved that they did physical therapy 17 18 and injections." Well, that's a difficult task to try to 19 get therapy notes and injections within 15 days when the 20 surgeon himself has already outlined that it failed but they won't accept the surgeon's records as to wht happened 21 without further proof. That's not a fair way to do it when 22 23 you are limiting it to 15 days. 24 JUDGE KELLAR: 25 Tis has been a repeated thing. We are aware that the
 - TIM RUNNING, R.M.R.

1 15 days for most people was a very short period of time 2 within wtlich to file an appeal. There have been suggestions 3 from the audiences at these town llall meetings to extend the 4 delay to 30 days, and that's one of the things that we are 5 considering as we try to rectify some of the problems with 6 the medical treatment guidelines. But thank you for that 7 observation. Yes, sir?

8 MR. PIAS:

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I'm Scott Pias. I, like Thomas, represent injured employees. I think we are all concerned with fairness to these people. We always have the business side and the employee side, and I think employees are losing the ldst few years, especially with the medical guideli es. The concept is good and it eliminates some problems we had with some physicians that were going -- they were oriented too much toward the employer, I believe. Physicians - and we are mainly dealing with neuros and orthods in these situations don't want to do this work. It's lawyer work. They hire some person new out of school that may be a nurse or it may -- usually it's not a nurse; it's going to be a medical worker. I have offered -- I'm sure every one sitting here that represents the employees has offered doctors, ''call us. We will help you. " And we do that regularly. These people are indigent, aren't they? Do yoll have any that are wealthy that come in? Very few. So, the cost of obtaining medical

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         records -- when you go look at the ffiedical records, the
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         ffiedical people all kn0w there's a deadline. There's no
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         accident involved. This is not like the large ases that
         Tom Filo does for those -- that level of law practice, so
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         they see green and they say, "you \vant medica records?"
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         They cost t\-Jo or $300. 1 won't either. We can't, as
 7
         pra ti ing lawyers, put that sort of mo ey into these cases
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         because it isn't there. If we run up a thousand dollar
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         bill, then these peope don't eat. If we are forced to go
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         get those things, we have to do it usually by requiring Bob
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         Foley and those people to go get it and discovery pays for
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         it and then they give us a copy. That takes time. Is it
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         fair to subject these people to this system? I don't think
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         s0. We should all be looking for fairness. If we don't
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         have fairness, ■ think ultimately we \-Jill have anarchy. No\v
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         I sound political. Time-- and you can't put it together in
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         a timeline you are looking at. It doesn't seem to-- lav1
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         school, ■ quess the word is due process. But it doesn't
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         seem to be fair to not give people an opportunity to put
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         together cases. Are you guys getting information about
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         this? Because I'm usually not in the loop when a 1009 is
22
         involved.
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        MR. TOWNSLEY:
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               I have to call them and say copy ffie.
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        MR. PIA:
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And then you may or may not get it, sq you may have the 15 days expired before your client walks in the office and tells you that they're trying to get into physical therapy, trying to get surgery. So, you don't even know it before the timeline goes by. The doctors shouldn't be doing this work. I don't know how to get it done without them but --so, that's another problem that somehow ought to be resolved. It's lawyer work, don't you think?

MR. filo:

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Yes. I'm Tom filo. Now that Scott drug me into it, I guess I will say my -- say my two cents worth. You know, the Advisory Council this year should consider doing something with these guidelines that makes it incumbent upon the payor to seek review if they want to deny something because you have got a treating physician who's recommending something. The whole idea of workers' comp is not that the defendant doesn't have to pay. They have co pay or, you I mean, it's not like an auto accident. We don't know have to wait and prove your case to get our benefits. The benefits are supposed to be automatic. It's supposed to be paid unless there's a reason not to pay them, not that we have got to go out and show why the doctor says he wants to have an MRI. It makes absolutely no sense if they want to have a director review a denial when they send the information to, you know, the director. Let them justify a

1	denial rather than us trying to somehow justify approval.
2	It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. They have got it
3	completely backward and so I'm think you are probabiy
4	going to have to amend the statute, but the Advisory Council
5	shJuld take that up this year by who has the burden of
6	seeking review when a doctor has actually prescribed
7	something.
8	MR. PIAS:
9	Most doctors are pretty well trained and thought of.
10	If they ask for something, they usually have a pretty good
11	reason for it. I join with you in that suggestion.
12	(Mr. Pias and Mr. Filo were talking amongst
13	themselves).
14	JUDGE KELLAR:
15	Hold on please. We need you guys, just like when you
16	are in court, to speak one at time so that Tim can get a
17	good recording of what you're saying.
18	JUDGE LUNDEEN:
19	This isn't in response directly to your comment,
20	Mr. Filo, but as for the medical records, that is a problem
21	and I have heard it from plaintiff's lawyers for years.
22	What you have to look at, and I know that most doctors give
23	you the eye and maybe if you you should send the statute
24	with it but under Titae 23, Section 1127 (B) they are
25	obligated, so if they choose to accept workers' compensation

1	payment, money for providing their services, they are
2	obl gated, "shall release any requested medical information
3	records relative to the employee's injury to any of the
4	following persons: The employee, his agent, or his
5	representative." That's Subser:tion (8)(1)(A). And they
6	have to at this point, as ■ understand it, with a lot of the
7	new federal requirements, they are handling-the treatment
8	notes now, it might not be the in-depth notes, and
9	certainly there's the whole issue of charging when you write
10	a letter that says, "please answer these questions."
11	They're charging you for their professional services to
12	answer those questions, which is a different set of facts.
13	But they are obligated to provide, and this does not seem to
14	indicate that there should be any cost associated with those
15	records, but it's silent on that issue. So, again, that's
16	something that we might want to look at.
17	MR. PIAS:
18	That's not realistic.
19	JUDGE LUNDEEN:
20	$NO\v$, I'm not suggesting that's realistic. I'm
21	suggesting that's what the law states, so the question is:
22	How do we enforce this in a meaningful way so that doctors
23	don't spend all of their time compensating providers for
24	records; also, plaintiffs that are indigent often times can

get the records that they need Or you can get those records

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         for Lhem so you can du the best job to assist them in moving
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         forward and getting
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        MR. PIAS:
               I have 44 years of doing this. I don't think it's --
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         that rule is ever going to help us.
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         JUDGE LUNDEEN:
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              NJt without eeth.
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         JUDGE KELLAR:
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              Tom, you have another --
        MR. PIAS:
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               You want to bite a doctor in the rear-end and you want
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         him to w ite something favorable? Get at it. But I don't
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         think any of us are in a position to -- you don't want to
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         alienate those people and it's a cost to them to have to
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         generate these things. It's reasonable for them to ask
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         something for it.
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         JUDGE LUNDEEN:
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              Right.
        MR. PTAS:
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              You're paying a lot more than what is reasonable but
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        we want to pay something.
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        JUDGE LUNDEEN:
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              That's what I'm suggesting. You have to come up with
         some type of compromise that works for everybody because it
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         is a cost to them and we can't expect them to provide
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1 sOmething that costs them something for free.

2 MR. PIAS:

Even if it's a minor amount, these indigent people

can't pay for it. If you've got a lawyer to pay for it, it

comes out of theirs at the end or out of our pocket if we

are not successful; and you can't run a practice that way,

the litte pay you get out of workers' comp.

JUDGE KELLAR:

9 Thank you for your comments.

MR. FILO:

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Judge Lundeen, I'm not sure that's the exact issue. I mean, it's true that when a healthcare provider takes workers' comp, they have to agree to release their records to all kind of folks, including getting subpoenaed and, you know -- but here, under the way that this works now, they have got to actually go out and file a workers' comp form to try to say, "hey, please approve this" when I have been asking for it and I have got to go now to the director and they have to know how to do and they have got to know what has got to be included and they have got to have somebody in their staff do it. It's not that they're being asked for anything. They have got to try to figure out what they're supposed to voluntarily, you know, provide themselves and then, of course, usually if -- if an insurance company wants records from a doctor, they have got to pay, what, fifty

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cents a page or something like that, a dollar a page under
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         the fee schedule. But they're being asked to provide extra
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         information and they don't know what, you know, the director
         is gointo want to look at th t.s necessary because they're
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        not lawyers and they're not the director and it puts the
        burden on the doctor to play lawyer, I think, is what we are
 7
         complaining about.
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         JUDGE LUNDEEN:
              And we have heard that repetitively.
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        MR. TOWNSLEY:
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              And, again, Thomas Townsley. And, Judge, the problem
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               ■ generally don't run into a problem with the medical
         is
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         provider refusing to provide the records. What they want is
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         they want us to pay for them, and here's the problem.
         to tell them - like that Jerry McGuire movie, you know, "I
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         am trying to help you. You need to help me, so why would
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         pay you $50 for records to help you get a shot at approval?
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         I'm not making any money off of it. I'm trying to help the
         claimant. I'm trying to help you." And so( what we are
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        getting is we are getting --
        MR. FILO:
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              The doctor says, "show me the money."
        MR. TOWNSLEY:
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              Right, and the doctor is saying, "show me the money."
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         But \vhat we re getting is the doctors offices are doing one
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of two things. One thing is they're saying, "look, it's an added burden and cosL for us to have to get a staff member 3 to do this so we are getting out of it. I'm not going to take company more." And so you have good physicians that 4 5 we are now losing from the system because they don't want to 6 have that extra burden and that extra cost to do the 1010, 7 1009s and stuff. I mean, we have a doctor, Dr. Rubino and 8 They have hired some private agency to attempt to 9 do the appeal process for them and there are some offices 10 that are much better at it than others. I mean, I think Dr. 11 Gunderson's office was involved in some of the drafting and 12 so his office is very good about dppeals and doing it 13 themselves. You know, Lafayette Plastic Surgery Associates 14 - Dr. Henderson is very good about providing records, even 15 chapters that show how -- they say you have to show some 16 standard because it's not in the law. And, therefore, he 17 provides book and chapter for you. But the problem is you 18 can't do that in 15 days, but some offices are much better 19 prepared at helping you than others and some are willing to 20 do it at no cost, where others are like, "well, you have to 21 take me -- get the record'', and then we are like, "well, 22 you're not going to get your treatment." And who suffers 23 there? It's not yes, the doctor ultimately doesn't get 24 the funds, but it's the claimant that suffe s. The claimant 25 doesn't get the medical treatment and in the old system --

1	and then I will shut up. In the old system, we could file
2	suit and then we could get paid back if we won in a trial
3	for obt ining those records and obtaining testimony. And if
4	we are allowed to have further opening of the evidence to do
5	that, then we will be back to where we can do that. But
6	trying to continue to run back to the medical director it
7	kind of reminds me, when you are talking about this
8	reconsideration level - I'm not for that because that's kind
9	of like Social Security and the reconsideration. The
10	reconsideration in Social Security was about a 98 percent
11	denial rate, so what it did was it added a further layer of
12	bureaucracy and fail rate and delay so you couldn't get to
13	the court system. The court system is supposed to be a
14	separation of power over the legislative branch so that we
15	can get things done; and for the legislative branch to
16	handcuff the Court system and say, "you car.'t hear all the
17	evidence, only hear certain evidence", it's just not it's
18	just patently unfair.
19	JUDGE KELLAR:
20	Tom, can I have the mic for a minute, please? Thank
21	you.
22	MR. PIAS:
23	GPt that mic away from that table.
24	JUDGE KELLAR:
25	Okay, we are o here because the medical treatment

1	guidelines are flawless. We are here because the medical
2	treatment guidelines and the implementation of those
3	guideines have problems. We are aware of those problems.
4	We have heard that 1days is not long enough. We have
5	heard a suggestion that it be extended to 30 days to give
6	you an opportunity to respond. We are aware that when a
7	healthcare provider s nds a 1009 appeal to Dr. Picard, that
8	often the employee's attorney is not aware of that appeal
9	until after Dr. Picard has made a decision. We are aware
10	that, on occasion, the healthcare provider does not submit
11	the kind of documents that Dr. Picard needs to approve a
12	request for a particular treatment. We are aware of all
13	those things; and as I said, we are not going to solve hose
14	problems today but we want to hear from you, your
15	constructive criticisms of the system. But everything you
16	have said thus far we are aware of. We know that the
17	medical treatment guidelines are fraught with problems and
18	that's why we're here. We want you to be a part of the
19	solution. The vast majority of the time, I believe that the
20	medical treatment guidelines work. I think the vast
21	majority of the time vlhen treatment is recommended by a
22	healthcare provider, it is approved at the U.R. level or at
23	the third party administrator level, at the payor level.
24	The problems that you are talking about are the ones that
25	are not approved, and I don't think that's the majority of

the requests for treatment. So we know we have to fix the medical treatment guidelines, and we want you to tell us what you think we can do better. Yes, ma'am?

4 MS. GTBSON:

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I'm Delilah Gibson. I work for Mark Zimmerman as his paralegal and I have been doing this over 25 years, probably. I would like to know statistically how many of the medical treatment quidelines, when it's submitted, are approved, because I find that everything is denied pretty much until it goes to he MTG, and nine out of ten of those are denied. Back in the old days, we used to have jurisproldence that said, "we don't want piecemeal litigation in our courts." This is piecemeal litigation; and on top of that, it clogs the Court system up with prematurity issues from defense attorneys that say we have to get an MTG for a medical referral to another doctor when it's not necessary from what I understand, or we have to go foexceptions on things that are no even under the MTG. For instance, myoneural injections dre not covered, but I know Mark would join with Tom in what he said that the whole system is backwards from the way comp is supposed to work. If we have it in your hand that the treating physician is ordering a procedure, it is on the payor, the insurance adjusters and the employeto show why it should not be approved. it has turned completely around and everything is being

1	denied and the whole system is being clogged up.
2	JUDGE KELLAR:
3	To answer your question, at the medical director
4	leve, 70 percent of requests for appeals are being
5	approved. 30 percent are being denied by Dr. Picard. One
6	of the reasons we have the medical treatment guidelines
7	and $\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \$
8	is because in the vast majority of cases, injured workers
9	are able to get their medical treatment quicker than they
10	did under the old system. Under the old system, you know,
11	we had an independent medical evaluation, a doctor's
12	treating physician's deposition or employer's deposition.
13	And sometimes you had to wait almost a year before you could
14	get a trial on the merits of whether or not the judge
15	thought the treatment recommended was reasonable and
16	necessary medical treatment. With the medical treatment
17	guidelines, it intended that the injured worker will get
18	their recommended treatment quicker, faster. understand
19	that in many cases that does net happen but in the vast
20	majority of cases it does, and it is much better than the
21	old system where you had to wait a year sometimes to get the
22	treatment recommended by a physician. Yes, sir?
23	MR. TOWNSLEY:
24	Judge, let me ask you this. It doesn't have anything
25	to do with the medical treatment guidelines per se but on

our IOOB forms, you have space for insurer and we list who it is, like CMI for Wal-Mart. There's got to be a better system because when we list them, even if we circle that it's an agency, they're served and then we get an exception of no cause of action against them; that causes paperwork. That causes a bogging of the system down. We never asked for that and then they want to charge us now \$5 to serve them when they're going to get out. It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. Can you guys address that, too?

JUDGE KELLAR:

Are you talking about the 1008 appeal of a 1009?
MR. TOWNSLEY:

No, when you file a 1008 appeal, it— let's say F.A. Richard is handling the claim but they're not the insurance carrier. Incircle that they're the agency, but they get served and then I get an exception of no case of action from a defense atLorney saying agree to dismiss them. This is causing more pleadings, paperwork. It's from something that — I didn't even ask them to be sued. You asked me in the 1008 who the agent is and I tell you and I circle it and then I'm told that I sued them when I didn't sue them but now I have got to let them out, and so that's extra paperwork you have to tlave your udges sign. It makes no sense t) me.

JUDGF. KELLAR:

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               Can we talk about it
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         MR. TOWNSLEY:
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               Yes.
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         JUDGE KELLAR:
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               -- afterward?
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         MR. TOWNSLEY:
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               Yes.
         JUDGE KELLAR:
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              Thank you. This gent! mar. Gver here.
                                                      You can talk to
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         them.
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         MR. WELDON:
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               I guess I'm a victim. As you say, I'm on workers'
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         comp, and my question is: My case is almost 13 years old
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         and back when I got hurt I got X amount of dollars, which is
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         never enough. But as time goes on, the cost of living goes
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         up, and I have done spent everything I have had saved for a
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         retirement and there's nO end to my case. I just don't see
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         it happning any time soon. I have been to so many doctors
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         and talking about the way they're talking about, you know,
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         you go to these docturs. I have been to my doctors. I have
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         been to their doctors. I have been to the judge's doctors,
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         and they keep taking me to court wanting to modify judgment,
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         modify iudgment. How many times can you go to court and
24
         modify a judgment when hey've a:ready been ruled on? And I
25
         guess the thing is two months age at least they took me back
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1 tO court to go to another doctr. I haven't even been to 2 that doctor yet. They haven't made me an appointment. I 3 have gone -- I have called the people, the doctor I'm 4 supposed to be going to. I say, "have you all heard from 5 workers' comp to go back to work?" You kno , I mean, when 6 does it end is my question. How long can this just keep 7 dragging on? My case has been proved. Every doctor I have gone to has proved my case but yet I'm just sitting here 8 9 every -- every month going to my doctor and medication on top of medications and I'm tired of taking all this 10 11 medication. I'm ready to be over this. It's like I've got 12 to look over my shoulder all the time and, I mean, come on. 13 Almost 13 years? That's too long. And I guess my guestion is how long can this get drug out? You know, I just -- I am 14 at my end and they want to do surgery. I'm not-- I'm not a 15 16 fan of foreign objects being in my neck, but they just 17 they don't call me. I don't get no letters saying what is 18 going on. I have an attorney. He talks to them. They 19 don't respond. So, to me there ought to be a timeline, 20 especially ones going on for as long as mine. The cost of 21 living goes up. I am getting \$34 a day, and that don't 22 work; that don't pay my bills. I have done sold everything 23 I have t,ad to sell, fixing to start going down to the places 24 that -- things I don't want to dG. I mean, just --can this 25 go on f<\r 20 years? Can it go on for 30 years? I -- I

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         don't knn\v. I don't know enough about it. My attorney says
 2
         udges can't force the case to be over with.
                                                       They can't
 3
         force them to settle with you and ■ guess
                                                      ■ don't know.
         ■ am just here to spill my guts. ■ don't k ow. But it is
 5
         getting old and, like ■ said, every doctor ■ have gone to
         ■ have done so many MRI's. I have done so many X-rays, I
 7
         think I glow in the dark. But that's where ▮ am at and I
         hear them talking about people who's fighting cases. I have
 8
 9
         a judge that -- ■ had a, whatever you call it, a court order
10
         to pay for a certain drug. Every month | bring it to the
        drugstore and they say, "well, you want to wait for it?"
11
12
         say, "they ain't going to fill it. You are going to have to
13
         call them. They're going to have to okay it." ■ said, "it
14
        will take about three for four days." Sure enough, they
15
        will call back in three or four days. "It's ready", but
16
        with the court order they should just fill it. But, huh-uh,
17
         you still have to go through them and there's a lot of stuff
18
         screwed up, I think. But that's just where I'm at.
19
         t.ired.  ■\...rant my ife back. ■ haven't had a-- ■ used to
20
        be the Santa Claus for Christmas. ■ give my suit away. ■
21
        don't know. I'm a prime example of something that's been
22
         going on too long, so I might be out of order saying all of
23
         this but that's what ■ had to say. And ■ thank you al for
24
         allowing me to be able to say this.
25
        JUDGE KELLAR:
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1
               Thank you, sir. Can you give us your name, please?
 2
        MR. WELDON:
 3
              Kirk Weldon. I'm sure he knows me.
 4
         JUDGE KELLAR:
 5
               Okay, Mr. Weldo , thank you for coming this afternoon
 6
         and thank you for telling us what your difficulties have
 7
        been and I'm sorry that you have had to go through all of
 8
        · this and it's because you are having such difficulties that
 9
         we are here today. Without claimants, we would not have our
10
         jobs. We are public servants, and we are trying to make the
11
         system better for you.
        MR. WELDON:
12
13
               I understand, but maybe what I had to say would help
14
         one person somewhere is wha I -- I just hato unload, I
15
         guess.
16
         JUDGE KELLAR:
17
               Thank you, sir.
18
         MR. WELDON:
19
               Thank you.
20
         JUDGE KELLAR:
21
              We appreciate your coming.
22
        MR. WELDON:
23
              Thank you.
24
         JUDGE KELLAR:
25
              Yes, Tom.
```

```
1
         MR. fiLO:
 2
               Yes, I have there's somebody back there and then we
 3
         will come back to my
         MR. BROWN:
 5
               My question concerns the --
 6
         JUDGE KELLAR:
 7
               What is your name, sir?
 8
         MR. BROWN:
 9
               My name is Jackson Brown and --
10
         JUDGE KELLAR:
11
               And who do you represent?
12
         MR. BROWN:
13
               I work with the Townsley law firm.
14
         JUDGE KELLAR:
15
               Okay.
16
         MR. BROWN:
17
               My question concerns the 1009 process and it may have
18
         been addressed earlier when you were talking to these
19
         gentlemen. I was a little late. I under. "st9nd the 15-day
20
         appeal process that you have to appeal a denial. But my
21
         question concerns the event of a tacit denial and, to my
22
         understanding, the process is when a 1010 goes five days
23
         without being responded to, then you have 15 days from that
24
         non-response -- day of non-responding to file a 1009. Well,
25
         of course, most things that -- most of the time what happens
```

1	is that these the treatment healthcare provider
2	doesn't tell you \whert they submit 1010s and when they have
3	done them and when they have not heard from "the comp
4	adjusters, so I guess my question is: Would it be
5	appropriate when, at the time I find out that a comp
6	adjuster has not responded to a 1010 request, instead of
7	and realizing that that's tacit denial and 1S days have
8	passed, instead of trying to call the healthcare provider
9	and getting everyLhing straight, you know, to resubmit that
10	and then wait and agaifor the appeal, would it be
11	appropriate just when I find that no one has responded to
12	just file a 1008 insLead?
13	MR. fiLO:
14	I always do that. That's what we do. Always file
15	your just file suit. They can't stop you from doing it.
16	MR. BROWN:
17	Would that would that be appropriate?
18	JUDGE KELLAR:
19	Can I ask you again to turn your cel phones off?
20	Tacit denial is one of the biggest problems with the 1009
21	process because if the payor or U.R. or T.P.A. doesn't
22	respond in a timely fashion, most of the time yoare not
23	going to be aware of that until after Dr. Picard has
24	rendered a decision. So, what we have thou ht about is
25	making the 15-day delay begin from the perid of actual

```
1
         written notice, or constructive notice, instead of making
 2
         you count five artifical days before you begin your 15 days
 3
         to file your appeal. That's under consideration.
 4
         MR. BROWN:
 5
               Wr.at do you mean by, "constructive notice"?
 6
         JUDGE KELLAR:
 7
               Well, your claimant goes back to the doctor and asks
         if his MRI was approved and he finds out that day that it
 8
         was not approved. Your 15 days would start from that time.
 9
10
         MR. BROWN:
11
               And would you just include that in the 1009?
12
         JUDGE KELLAR:
13
               Excuse me?
14
         MR. BROWN:
15
               Would you just include it in the 1009 when filing --
         saying that claimant didn't --
16
17
         JUDGE KELLAR:
               Your 15 days would start from when he received notice
18
19
         as opposed to an artificial five-day delay that's currently
         written into the rules for the tacit denial.
20
21
         MR. BROWN:
22
               Okay, I understand.
23
        . JUDGE KELLAR:
24
               It's under consideration. Yes, ma'am?
25
         MS. TOUCHET:
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```
It it's just verbal notice, then how do we prove that
 1
 2
         they received notice? I'm with James Morris' office.
 3
         JUDGE KELLAR:
               And your name?
 5
         MS. TOUCHET:
               Robin Touchet.
         JUDGE KELLAR:
               Okay. The 1010 has been submitted to the payor and
 8
         the payor gives you verbal notice that your request for
10
         treatment has been denied, is that what you're saying?
         MS. TOUCHET:
11
12
               If the claimant just receives verbal notice from the
13
         medical provider, then how do we -- I mean, does it have to
         be in writing?
14
15
         JUDGE KELLAR:
16
               No, it doesn't have to be in writing. Are you within
17
         the five days? Because the tacit denial is if you don't
18
         receive any notice at all --
19
         MS. TOUCHET:
20
               No, when you were talking about the 1S days would
         start from -- if the claimant went to the medical provider
21
22
         and they were told, ''your MRI was denied", then the 15 days
23
         would start?
24
         JUDGE KELLAR:
25
               The 15 days would start from then but --
```

1 MS. TOUCHET:

2 R ght.

3 JUDGE Kt.LLAR:

Okay, but the problem is if it's outside of the 15
days to appeal, then it would be prescribed. That is not
written into the law at this time. We are considering
making it a part of the law so that when the claimant is
told that the treatment recommended by his physician has
been denied, the 15 days for appeal will start then. It is
not currently a part of the law.

MS. TOUCHET:

Okay. I understand what you're saying. And I just want to" make a comment to Mr. Kirk. We at the attorney's Offices know how hard it is for you guys. We hear it every day. We had one client maybe six months ago, every time she came in Jim kept saying, "she is <i oing to end up killing herself. She is goirtg to end up killing herself." She was that just -- had hiL rock bottom. Sure enough, that's what happened. And part of the problem was medical treatment not being approved and it going on for years and years and years. Her marriage was ruined. Her family was ruined. Her husband had left right before she committed suicide, and I'm not saying that the medical director and everybody else involvei has no sympathy for these people, but it is a reality, I think, that is being overlooked.

JUDGE KELLAR:

Thank yo. Tom?

MR. PIAS:

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The way you describe tacit denial doesn't seem like it will work. Employees have no concept of these time delays and the effect that they have got notice that this begins the timeline to file an appeal. They don't know anything ablut that. So if you are going to take your tacit denial to the emp oyee, the injured worker, getting some sort of verbal notice, it's a waste of time. We are back to the same argument you ought to make it actual n tice so it gets to he people that can do something about it; namely, the lawyers. You have got some minimum wage -- or \$20 an hour man that's worked labor all his life and you expect him to know the in's and out's and time delays of workers' comp? That's not realistic. So, if you play it as you have described it, I think you have done nothing to solve the probleffi. What we are all describing is, in my mind, what should be a judicial process is an administrative and we need to move it back to the judicial where there's a full fleshing out of the facts and an opportunity for everybody Lo present their side and a fair ruling. Right now, it's not happening that way. The 1010s that are filed are not, in my experience -- you describe a doctor doing a real good job. My experience is -- like Rubino, he struggled with it

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1
         and he fi!lally got some outside help. The doctors weren't
 2
         filing these. They had a staff person filing it and
 3
         generally it was just a dump of the medical records.
         doctors weren't watching their person -- what went on inside
 5
         their head. Even though their thought process probably met
         the guidelines, that doesn'get put into the 1009
 7
         application because they don't have time to do that and
 8
         trying to see other patients in there, so it needs to come
 9
         back into the judicial arena where it belongs.
10
         JUDGE KELLAR:
11
              Thank you.
12
         MR. PIAS:
13
              And all this administrative stuff is going to cause
         problems for us.
14
15
         JUDGE KELLAR:
16
              Thank you. Tom, do you have something?
17
         MR. FILO:
18
                    With respect to -- you know, I'm not real clear
19
         on what can be done by rule under the statute versus what
20
         has to be amended in the statute but, for example, would
21
         there b.e anything that would keep you from changing the
22
         timelines just to have when this claim is disputed and
23
         there's a 1010 filed at that time that the cost of that is
24
        borne by the insurer whJ denied the claim in the first
25
         place? Could you actually put it there without having to go
```

back to the legislature? Can you do that because -- and
then can you also, by rule, make it incumbent upon the
insurer to provide to the medical director all the records
that they used in order to say why they didn't pay for it
and so that all of the records that would support what they
did is available to the director? I think you can do that
without having to go back to legislature.

JUDGE KELLAR:

The medical treatment guidelines are 1203.1. They're statutory, but the precess by which we limit the medical treatment guidelines, that's Rule 2715. Actually, we are in litigation right now in the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge over 2715, and so we will be making some changes to it. It's subject to the Administrative Procedures Act, so we can do it that way. It does not have to go back to the legislature. But I want you to hear, Tom, in response to your comment from Dr. Picard about the problems he sees with regard to making decisions on the 1009s that he receives and why he rendered the decisions that he does on occasion.

DR. PICARD:

Thank you, Judge. So, basically from my standpoint as the medical director -- there's obviously two sides in the 1009 process. The claim has been denied and the 1010 -- and it comes to me, usually from a claimant's representative,

and they're asking for some relief; in other words, for me
to overturn that decision and approve the procedure or
therapy or whatever has been ordered. So, you know, from
insurance companies they want to know from me,what is
the best way that we can get your denial to stay because we
think it's appropriate and it meets the guidelines'' and the
claimant and claimant's representatives want to know the
same question, "how do we get it approved? From the
insurance company's standpoint, one of the big problems we
do see is tacit denial, in which case the insurance company
has failed to respond to the 1010 request and, therefore,
everything that I have is simply from the provider or
claimant's representative, in which case most of these are
going to be approved, unless there's someth ng that's far
outside of the guidelnes because I have nothing from the
insurance company saying why they even denied it, so I have
nothing from the other side to compare it to. There's no
argument for why it was denied. The other thing from the
insurance company's standpoint that I see is that they are
sometims having people look at these cases, other
providers, and they are giving their opinions as to what
they think is the appropriate thing to do and it should be
denied based on their experience and what they think is the
right thing to do rather than based on what the actual
guidelines say, in which case what I go by is not the

1 guidelines. Excuse me, what I go by is the guidelines, not 2 their opinion. So, they have to have correct information. 3 They have to have a reasonable cause for denial or otherwise I'm goi g to approve it unless it's outside of the 5 guidelines. rrom your standpoint -- or claimant's representative's standpoint, what ■ need to see is simply 6 7 documentation. The documentation has to be there; chat is 8 required by the quidelines for the procedure or therapy is 9 ■ assume that most providers are acting in the requested. 10 best interest of the injured worker and looking to approve 11 what they want done, unless it does not meet the guidelines criteria. See, if a surgical procedure requires certain 12 13 therapy to be done, injections or certain other criteria to 14 be satisfied, then you have to have that documented in order 15 for me to approve it. It's less than a third of the denials that I stay with and say it is denied. So, the majority of 16 17 them we are approving; and when they are denied, there is reasonable cause for that, and there's an explanation on 18 19 that form that says what is missing and why.the denial was 20 made and why it doesn't meet the criteria. 21 MR. TOWNSLEY: 22 Dr. Picard, what is your background, medical license? 23 DR. PICARD: 24 Prior to this, I was doing occupational medicine, so 25 dealing with injured workers is scmething I have experience

with. And what we are trying to do, what all of us are
trying to do is basically everything we can to get injured
workers back to work as quickly as possible in this process.

MR. TOWNSLEY:

Let me ask you this: When you do deny treatment, do you outline why it's denied? The reason why I ask that is because, unfortunately, some people -- some doctors who take workers' comp may not be educated in the guidelines or their staff and then if you outline the reason why and then we receive a copy what I have done before is I have written a letter to the doctor and said, like you said, «well, you haven't tried therapy or injections yet. Try that." And then he will approve it. Do you usually outline the basis and say, "this should have been done first"?

DR. PICARD:

Yes, and it usually does not require a lengthy explanation. It's only one or two things that are missing in that regard but which are pivotal and have to be there according to the guidelines that they are asking, so it rnight be something like you didn't show evidence of therapy or it could be something that the guidelines just do not allow, so regardless of what you do, your procedure is not allowed by the guidelines; for instance, a three-level spinal fusion. The guidelines do not allow that, so I I'm not going to overturn that. It's required by the

guidelines that you only do two levels or less, so those are
the two possibilities. But, yes, to answer your question,
there is an explanation of why it was denied. Yes, ma'am?

MS. GIBSON:

Can you explain the variation requirements for medical treatment guidelines?

DR. PICARD:

We don't often get requests for that but to vary from the guidelines, what has to be done is you have to request that specifically and provide medical evidence for the justification for why you should be granted that variance, which would be a form of clinical studies or something to support what your request is. We recognize that the guidelines are only updated so often, so sometimes there might be new procedures or things that are not in the guidelines that might be requested, in which case rather than just having to say, "it's not in the guidelines'', if you submit evidence with your documentation.of -- and it has to be good evidence. Let me qualify that because I have gotten some that it's just not a reasonable study or not something that would make me change the guideline requirements.

MS. GIBSON:

Does anyone really think that it's feasible for workers' compensation clients to get clinical studies to

1 submit to prove a var ance for the medical treatment? 2. MR. FILO: 3 Of course not. 4 JUDGE KELLAR: 5 Is that a guesLion or observation? 6 MS. GIBSON: 7 Both. 8 MR. FILO: 9 The answer is, of course not. She's absolutely, a 10 thousand percent, correct. The truth of the matter is the 11 only time that we get to really vary from the guidelines; 12 namely, to the doctor, to the court, when the doctor tells 13 the judge exactly why this patient is a little bit different 14 and we always win when that happens. We go through all 15 that -- all that rigamarole just to get the treating 16 physician to explain why this particular patient has 17 something a little bit different. But, yes, he had to do 18 something a little bit out of the outside of the guidelines Lhat Mr. Juge wanted so badly. And in some cases, we agree 19 20 that's probably the best recourse because the guidelines 21 might cover 90 percent of what we see, orthopedic injuries 22 and so on. There are going to be some variances, and you 23 can't possibly have enough guidelines to account for 24 everything, so that is probably the most appropriate way to

25

do it at this time.

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1
         MR. PIAS:
 2
               Right.
 3
         JUDGE KELLAR:
               So is your suggestion that variances be removed from
 5
         the medical treatment guidelines?
         MR. FILO:
 7
               If there's a variance, I think you should go straight
 8
         to the Judge, I do.
         JUDGE KELLAR:
10
               Thank you.
11
         MS. GIBSON:
12
               And that observation goes back to the jurisprudence
13
         about the treating physician to start with, which is what we
14
         are going down to again anyway, which is why it's been
15
         jurisprudence for so long.
16
         JUDGE KELLAR:
17
               Thank you. Any further comments, questions,
18
         observations? Yes, ma'am.
19
         MS. DeWITT-KYLE:
20
               My name is Jeanette Dewitt-Kyle. I'm an attorney at
21
         Stutes and Lavergne. I have noticed this and, granted,
22
         anything I say is not an endorsement of the medical
23
         trealment guidelines in totabecause, I mean, I think it's
24
         outside Our -- if you 10ok at some of the stuff I am talking
25
         about today and how people's medical treatment works, this
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1
         is ridiculous. But I have noticed with several of my
 2
         clients that they are getting denied at the very outset for
 3
         diagnostic imaging, which is the most silly thing I can
 4
         imagine, and it is actually a type of medical treatment that
 5
         barely even reaches the threshold for having to seek that
         prior approval. I have no idea why getting an MRI requires
 6
 7
         that kind of process. I mean, I had a clienc, for example
 8
 9
         JUDGE KELLAR:
              No --
10
11
         MR. FILO:
12
               lt's not treatment.
13
         JUDGE KELLAR:
14
               Is this hypothetical, hypothetically?
15
         MS. DeWITT-KYLE:
16
               Yes. I mean, hypothetically, if I -- right, I'm
17
         saying like if you have an injury that may blow your hair
18
         back and a person has to go through the process of even
19
         getting imaging, which might ultimately be approved by the
20
         medical director, the time that they wait for that
         treatment, which is just a diagnostic image that can tell
21
22
         the doctor what to do with you neck, is too·long. It's too
23
         long. And I understand that at the utilization review level
24
         a lot of the stuff is approved. Most of it is approved, but
25
         a person by person when you have someone that isn't
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1
         approved, it sets people's treatment back enormously and it
 2
         causes health consequences. I mean, I don't know what to do
 3
         about it. But I think if somebody -- if a doctor says, "you
         need an MRI", you need an MRI; that shouldn't be a thing
         that I have to sit and fight over. I mean, there are
 5
         binders this thick (indicating) about clients who have been
 6
 7
         requested by three different doctors to have an MRI and they
 8
         eventually get approved after about two months. It's
 9
         ridiculous. I mean, if there were one thing that doesn't
         need to be covered by that -- I don't know if you just want
10
11
         to raise the threshold a little bit so that people can just
12
         get imaging? I think that would help.
         MR. FILO:
13
14
              And I agree. It's not treatment.
15
         MS. DeWITT-KYLE:
16
              Yes.
         MR. FILO:
17
18
               It's diagnostic to find out what is wrong. How can
19
         you -- how can you possibly say you don't want to find out
20
        . what is wrong? It shouldn't be corning out of the guidelines
21
         at all.
22
         JUDGE KELLAR:
23
              Thank you.
24
         MS. DeWITT-KYLE:
25
              Also -- sorry, I wanted to mention - we ta:ked a lot
```

at the beginning about enormous problems of figuring out 2 when 1010s get filed, getting medical records from doctors, 3 all that stuff. I really think probably the best way to fix it is the way federal court does it, to extend-- that's the 5 only thing I like about federal courts is somebody files 6 something, it's electronic and everybody involved gets a blast e-mail about it. It probably should work something 7 like that. Well, if a doctor files something, there's a 8 blast that goes out about it to the workers' comp insurer, the workers' comp carrier, to me, to anybody involved. It 10 11 all just works like that. We all have to be on the same 12 page. 13 JUDGE KELLAR:

Thank you, ma'am. Dr. Picard, did you want to address that? Okay.

MR. WELDON:

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17

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I am fixing to have to leave. But getting back to this lady's question, I have gone through blood pressure medicines; that started it, then I went to antidepressants, then they had to double it and now I'm on anxiety medicine, so I understand where this lady was coming trom, how time is of the essence, just keeping going. It eats at you. And, in fact, I told my actorney, "I guess they're trying to kill me with a heart attack or something.'' I don't know, but I just wanted to say that before I left. That is part of my

```
process, too, is these different phases of stuff and like
 1
 2
         they•re all talking about: ■ think it•s due to the time
 3
         involved with everything that •s happened, so ■ just wanted
 4
         to get that out before I had to leave. But thank you all.
 5
         JUDGE KELLAR:
 б
               Thank you, sir.
 7
         JUDGE LUNDEEN:
 8
               Thank you.
 9
         JUDGE KELLAR:
10
               Anything further? Yes, ma•am.
         MS. TOUCHET:
11
12
               When you talk about getting physical therapy approved
13
         and all that stuff before the surgery, even that kind of
14
         stuff is not getting approved, so if it's not getting
15
         approved, we sure as hell know surgery is not going to be
16
         approved or anything else.
17
         JUDGE KELLAR:
18
               So the physial lherapy is not being approved at the
         U.R. level?
19
20
         MS. TOUCHET:
21
               We have no luck getting anything approved.
22
         JUDGE: KE:LLAR:
23
              At the U.R. level?
24
         MS. TOUCHET:
25
               Yes.
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1
         UDGE KELLAR:
 2
              Hold on just a second.
         DR. PICARD:
 3
               I do see a lot of denials for physical therapy, and
 5
         it's very uncommon for me to not approve those, so you do
         have a recourse for that, which is to file the 1009. I know
 6
         it's an additional process, but it does allow you a way to
 7
 8
         get what you need by coming through us if therapy is
         capriciously denied for not a good reason and we can have it
10
         approved for you.
11
        MS. TOUCHET:
12
              How long have you been the medical director?
13
         DR. PICARD:
14
               I came on earlier this year.
15
        MS. TOUCHET:
16
              Okay, that might explain some of it.
17
        MR. TOWNSLEY:
18
              Y s, you are used to Dr. Rich's 90 percent denial.
19
        MS. TOUCHET:
               Thamight expain some of it.
20
21
         DR. PICARD:
22
              No, it's less than a third. And I know -- and they
23
         offered good reason and the reason is explained in the
24
        denial. So if you are going to get a denial, it's because
25
         it doesn't match up the guidelines. It's got to be a
```

1 reason; and if you car. rectify that, you know, then fi:e

another 1009 and say, "okay. Now we have done what you

3 asked and are we approved?"

4 JUDGE KELLAR:

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5
Yes, ma'am?

Ms. DeWITT-KYLE:

I ust wanted to build on your point just a little bit because we do find that physical therapy and other therapy is often not approved. If you look at the medical treatment quidelines, the timeline they allow for therapy and also chiropractic treatment is extremely short; and I think it's kind of funny that there are a lot of people who complain about the use of pain medication long-term but then when a patient is offered a non-medication solution to pain that actually increases their functionality and provides enormous benefits without any of the risk of addiction or side effects that they hate, they are only allowed a few weeks of that; and if they want a variance, then they have to do the variance thing. I think that probably when we talk about chiropractic treatment and physical therapy for some of these people who do have pain, you have to manage a lot of different medications. That's a solution that's being ignored by these medical treatmer.t guidelines that what we see with our clients is helping them get better. I think that's something that, you know, really causes a problem

here and also having to wait every single time you need more 1 2 physical therapy and having to wait for longer than a month 3 to go back is just taking away a lot of -- I mean, do we want these people better or not? Who waits a month and a 5 half to go back to the physical therapy for four more visits? That's ridiculous. 7 JUDGE KELLAR: Thank you. 9 MS. WILSON: Tina Wilson with the Cox law firm. I have a question 10 11 about the variance issue. Is it required that the medical 12 provider state that they are, in fact, seeking a variance, 13 because I think, once again, we are asking the doctors to be 14 lawyers if they specifically have to state that they're looking for a variance. If they're recommending something 15 that's not in the guidelines, it is per se a variance, so 16 why do they have to use that word in their report or in 17 18 their request? JUDGE KELLAR: 19 20 You want to speak --21 DR. PICARD: 22 I would say that often times -- or most of the time, 23 almost always, it's almost always the case that something is 24 being asked for that is not within the guidelines and

nothing else is being given with it, no supporting evidence

25

```
1
         or no other information1 that is required for a variation
 2
         from the guidelines, so I don't know at that time, "does the
 3
         provider not know that this procedure is not within the
         guidelines?'' And they need to know that, you know. That's
 5
         what I would assume but --
        MR. PIAS:
 6
               They're not lawyers.
 8
         DR. PICARD:
              And I can't make them lawyers, and I have what I have
         and it's incumbent upon the claimant's representative to
10
11
         work with the providers. That's the best possibility to get
         the information.
12
13
        MR. PIAS:
14
               The whole procedure thing --
15
         JUDGE KELLAR:
16
              We can't get --
         MR. PTAS:
17
              You can't get two --
18
19
         JUDGE KELLAR:
20
              Mr. Townsley
21
        MR. TOWNSLEY:
22
               No, no, no, no, no. I'm Mr. Townsley. He's Scott
23
         Pias.
24
         JUDGE KELLAR:
25
              Mr. Pias, listen, okay? Mr. Pias, we can't hear you.
```

```
1
         MR. PIAS:
              Tim doesn't want to hear me anyway.
 3
         JUDGE KF.LLAR:
              Or get your comments. I want to hear what you're
 5
         saying or get your -omments. If you are speaking while
 6
         someone else is speakir.g --
         MR. PIAS:
              Well
         JUDGE KELLAR:
10
               Please, sir, do not do that. Wait to be recognized,
11
         if you would.
12
         MR. PIAS:
13
              Well, I would like--
14
         JUDGE KELLAR:
15
               And we understand that you don't like this
16
         administrative system. You have made that perfectly clear
17
         several times this afternoon.
18
         MR. PIAS:
19
               Well, I speak out in frustration.
20
         JUDGE KELLAR:
21
               So if you will just allow the person who is speaking
22
         to complete their statement, them I would be happy to
23
         recognize you.
24
        MR. PIAS:
25
              Well, I speak out in frustration.
```

```
1
         JUDGE KELLAR:
 2
               Okay. Well, sir, we are all frustrated. You are not
 3
         the only person in this room. This is frustrating. There
         are some frustrated people in this room, but there are more
 4
 5
         people in this room than you.
 6
         MR. PIAS:
 7
               Why don't we solve the problem?
         JUDGE BUSHNELL:
 8
               For the record, let me go around --
 9
         MR. PIAS:
10
11
               Give us an opportunity to --
12
         JUDGE KELLAR:
13
               We have given you an opportunity.
14
         MR. TOWNSLEY:
15
               Let me ask you this, Your Honor, and --
16
         JUDGE KELLAR:
17
               Excuse me, were you finished, Dr. Picard?
18
         DR. PICARD:
19
               I think so. I am confused now.
20
         MR. TOWNSLEY:
21
               Has anybody suggested if Dr. Picard says, "I need
2.2.
         additional medical information", instead of denying based on
23
         that extending the time period and sending it back saying,
24
         "please submit additional evidence", that way it can be done
25
         without the whole process being started over?
```

DR. PICARD:

1

2

3

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24

It would be difficult to do because if something is missing from the documentation, there's no way of me knowing was it just not done ur is it just not documentation that was done because, typically, physicians who.do this, providers who do this, workers' comp and deal with it, they know and they can get an idea of what the guidelines say because it's not that difficult and whatever procedures they normally perform, they familiarize themselves with what are the criteria, they need to document for those procedures, then it.'s easy for them to knmv what they need to do as I understand. So, again, if therapy is not there in the record and there's no mention of it, there's no way of me knowing was it even done and they just didn't send it? We can't call every one and say, "hey, look, did you do this? Is this what you're missing?" Normally, we have to deny assuming it wasn't done because there's no documentation or even mention of it. Now, typically -- to somebody's point earlier, when a provider states that there was therapy done, I don't need to see therapy notes. I take the word of the provider that that was done and I use that in the decision. MR. TOWNSLEY:

Okay. Well, before you came on, that was the typically, the treating physician's statements were denied

and like they \veren't t.elling the truU, and they said --

```
1
         DR. PICARD:
 2
               I see that routinely from insurance companies, but
 3
         that's not what I go by.
         MR. TOWNSLEY:
 5
              Okay, thank you.
 6
         JUDGE KELLAR:
 7
              Anyone else? Mr. Pias? Do you have something else to
 8
         say?
         MR. PIAS:
              We keep going back to expecting the d6ctors to be
10
11
         lawyers, and it just isn't going to work.
12
         JUDGE KELLAR:
13
              Okay. Thank you.
         MR. PIAS:
14
15
              You are expecting the doctors to be lawyers and
16
         they're not.
17
         DR. PICARD:
               If they're submitting a request of the insurance
18
19
         company for a procedure, they have to know it's going to be
20
         the same thing. They have to know what they have to
21
         document to get that approved. We are providing a way
22
         for -- a recourse for them to get their request taken care
23
         of in a similar fashion if the insurance company is denying
24
         it inappropriately. But the documentation still has to be
25
         the same whether it goes to the insurance company. They're
```

1 !coking for some -- some of the same things that we are. We 2 are just providing a way to take care of it when the 3 insurance company is inappropriately denying it by the quidelines. JUDGE KELLAR: 5 Brenda, can you tell them some of the things you look for when you are putting the record together? That would be 7 helpful, some of he things that you find are generally 9 missing from the documents submitted? MS. GANNUCH: 10 11 One of the issues when we are reviewing the file before we submit it to the director is we have to have 12 13 medical records. Sometimes we just have a dictation note 14 from che doctor who is just discussing the case and we actually need medical records and people ask, "what is a 15 16 medical record?" As stated on the 1010, it does say what a 17 medical record is, but it's a review of systems. It needs 18 to be an actual visit, not just a doctor's dictation note of 19 what he feels would the best treatment for the patient, so 20 we will reject them on the front end and we will not do 21 anything further. 22 MS. TOUCHET: 23 Could you explain that a little more because it 24 doesn't makes any sense to me? 25

MS. GANNUCH:

```
A medical note --
 2
         MS. TOUCHET:
              Well, I mean --
 3
         MR. TOWNSLEY:
               I can help you with that. Dr. Bernauer - who is now
 5
         retired - would never do a review of system, never talk
 7
         about reflexes, never talk about muscles, and then ask for
         things and then they would say, "where is your
 9
         justification?" And then he has none becaue he said that
10
         "claimant is complaining of X, Y and Z. They need this
         treatment." And there's no review of what is going on.
11
12
         MS. TOUCHET:
13
               You can't get both?
14
         MR. TOWNSLEY:
15
               There's no justification for it.
16
         MS. GANNUCH:
17
               What I'm saying is there's sometimes a note from the
18
         doctor saying, "I am seeing so and so. He Was injured in 19
19
         so and so. He has a back injury and I would like to do this
20
         treatment." That is not considered a medical note. A
21
         medical note is when you have a review of system. You have
22
         H & P, the chief complaint.
23
         JUDGE KELLAR:
24
              Hang on until she finishes, okay?
25
         MS. GANNUCH:
```

```
1
               On the 1010 -- I don't have a copy with me.
                                                            It just
 2
         sometimes states what is to be submitted when you submit
 3
         your records. It does talk about that under the provider
         section.
         MS. TOUCHET:
 5
               Okav.
 7
         MS. GANNUCH:
               And also some people will submit the 1009 via mail and
 8
         e-mail. We just need one method because then we have a
10
         duplicate record, so if you e-mail them to the I.G.E.T.
11
         1009, it will be received. You don't have to mail it as
12
         well.
13
         MS. TOUCHET:
14
               Okay, so instead of just say the one-page handwritten
15
         form where the doctor fills out -- where they sit down with
16
         the patient, you want that four- or five-page
17
         MS. GANNUCH:
18
               Yes.
19
         MS. TOUCHET:
20
                  document that's done after the visit, dictated and
21
         typed?
22
         MS. GANNUCH:
23
               Yes.
24
         MS. TOUCHET:
25
               Okay, so what form -- what method do you prefer, the
```

```
1
         1010 or -- yes, the 1010 to be submitted, faxed, mail,
 2.
         e-mail?
 3
        MS. GANNUCH:
               You are talking about the 1009 to the cffice?
 5
         MS. TOUCHET:
               I mean the 1009.
 7
         MS. GANNUCH:
               Whatever is convenient to you.
 9
        MS. TOUCHET:
10
               Just one or the other?
11
         MS. GANNUCH:
12
               Just one. The other is just a duplicate.
13
         JUDGE KELLAR:
14
              Yes, ma'am?
15
        MS. GIBSON:
16
               So as we see all the time in these cases, we may have
17
         a review of symptoms record. It may be two to three months
18
        has gone by and the doctor says, based on the review of
19
         symptoms or previous treatment not working, I recommend", so
20
        he then still has to go and do another three- or four-page
21
         review of symptoms or do we go back? You won't consider the
22
         ch onological
23
         JUDGE KELLAR:
24
               Is that for Dr. Picard?
25
        MS. GIBSON:
```

1 I think. 2 DR. PICARD: 3 The degree of how much is documented is going to be different from provider to provider, so it's not a specified 5 e:-:act number of things that have to be there. It's more, "are the criteria that are within the guidelines documented?" It's not as important, the format of it, than to see ·if the guidelines require therapy. ■ need to see a discussion about therapy or notes about therapy. The 10 quidelines require an injection that hasn'been tried. "What is the injection?" The result of it -- it has to be 12 documented as to what is in the quidelines. We don't have a 13 specified format that you have to go by. 14 MS. GIBSON: 15 Okay. 16 JUDGE KELLAR: 17 Yes, sir? 18 MR. TOWNSLEY: Have you found -- I think the more medical providers 19 20 s vitch to the electror, ic system, that the programs had that 21 compared t, these old school that would do the complaint and 22 then, like y u said, request and have nothing to justify. 23 But now, the new systems -- that's my exper ence. The new 24 systems, they basicaly have the requirements built into 25 their chart system.

1	GR. PICAR:
2	Again, that's not as important as what we are looking
3	at. It's just that the requirements are documented, the
4	riteria are documented. How the provider writes it is not
5	is not very important to me as long as those criteria are
6	documented in the records we get, so I get some notes that
7	are very brief but say everything that needs to be said and
8	hen some I have to go through pages to find out what I need
9	to find out; but as long as it's there, it's not important
10	JDGE KELLAR:
11	Is there anything further? Okay. If we don't have
12	any further comments or questions, then this would conclude
13	your Lake Charles town hall meeting and I thank you all for
14	coming and giving us your corr ents this afternoon.
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1	<u>CERTIFICATE</u>
2	I, TIM RUNNING, certified court reporter in and for the
3	State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom this
4	testimony was taken, do hereby certify that the transcript,
5	as hereinbefore set forth in the foregoing -pages, is
6	the proceedings and testimony as reported by me under my
7	personal direction and supervision, and is a true and
8	correct transcript to the best of my ability and
9	understanding;
10	That I am not related to counsel or to the parties herein,
11	nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.
12	In witness whereof, I have hereuntaxed.my signature at
13	Lake Charles, Louisiana, this the day of September,
14	2016.
15	
16	
17	TNI, C.S.R.
18	LOUISIANA CERT.MN : 3
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