

WAC 296-20-051 Consultations. In cases presenting diagnostic or therapeutic problems to the attending doctor, consultation with a specialist will be allowed without prior authorization. The consultant must submit his findings and recommendations immediately to the attending doctor and the department or self-insurer. Refer to chapter 296-20 WAC and department policy for reporting requirements.

Whenever possible, the referring doctor should make his X-rays and records available to the consultant to avoid unnecessary duplication. The department's consultation referral form may be used to convey information to the consultant. Consultants may proceed with indicated and reasonable X-rays or laboratory work and reasonable diagnostic studies as permitted within their scope of practice.

Consultations will be held with a specialist within a reasonable geographic area. Whenever possible, consultation should be made with a doctor outside the referring doctor's office or partnership.

The attending doctor will not arrange a consultation if he has received notification that a special or commission examination is being arranged by the department or self-insurer. If he has had recent consultation and is notified that the department or self-insurer is arranging an examination, he must immediately advise the department or self-insurer of the consultation.

The consultation fee will be paid only if a consultation report is complete and contains all pathological findings as well as all pertinent negative or normal findings. The report must be received in the department within fifteen days from the date of the consultation. No fee is paid to the consultant if the worker fails the appointment.

The consultant may not order, prescribe, or provide treatment without the approval of the attending doctor and the injured worker. No transfer will be made to the consultant without the prior approval of the attending doctor and the injured worker.

Consultation services will not be reimbursed for workers who are currently, or have been under the physician's care within the last three years. Such services should be billed as follow up visits, as listed in the fee schedules.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020, 51.04.030 and 1993 c 159. WSR 93-16-072, § 296-20-051, filed 8/1/93, effective 9/1/93. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 86-06-032 (Order 86-19), § 296-20-051, filed 2/28/86, effective 4/1/86. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4), 51.04.030, and 51.16.120(3). WSR 81-01-100 (Order 80-29), § 296-20-051, filed 12/23/80, effective 3/1/81; Order 71-6, § 296-20-051, filed 6/1/71; Order 70-12, § 296-20-051, filed 12/1/70, effective 1/1/71. Formerly WAC 296-20-070.]