

## Alternatives to IMEs



### If You Can't Decide What To Do:

- ❖ Do a file review.
- ❖ Identify unresolved issues and get more information about those issues.
- ❖ Staff the claim with a coach or more experienced claim adjudicator.

### Attending Physician (AP)

- ❖ Ask the AP for the medical records.
- ❖ If the AP does not have all the medical records, send a copy of the medical records for review.
- ❖ Give the AP a summary of the claim actions and ask the questions that need to be answered to manage the claim. You can ask the AP the same questions you would ask of an IME examiner.
- ❖ If the AP is not qualified to answer the medical questions, ask the AP to refer the worker for a second medical opinion.
- ❖ When you have an IME that is over 6 months old ask the AP for current medical information instead of a repeat IME. If the worker has not seen the AP recently, ask the AP to schedule a visit to decide if the old IME results are still appropriate.
- ❖ Ask the AP to conduct an impairment rating. Billing codes (1190M, 1191M, and 1192M) for AP rating are in the fee schedule. Payment is the same as an IME. A sample short report is in the *Medical Examiner's Handbook* (B 7-8).
- ❖ If the AP is not willing or qualified to rate (chiropractors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners) ask them to refer the worker for a consultant rating evaluation.

## Consultant

- ❖ Send a letter to the consulting doctor. You can ask the same questions you would ask of an IME examiner. Be sure the consulting doctor has all the medical information necessary to make an informed decision.
- ❖ When the worker is referred for an impairment rating, you may need to send the consultant a letter confirming the rating request.
- ❖ Billing codes (1194M, 1195M, and 1198M) for consultant rating are in the fee schedule. Payment is the same as an IME. A sample short report is in the *Medical Examiner's Handbook* (B 7-8).

Ask for an impairment rating only when a rating is all that is needed to close the claim. Pain Programs may rate when asked (1122M). Approved IME examiners can conduct an abbreviated IME and use the rating only sample report form in the *Medical Examiner's Handbook* (B 7-8).