

After being ranked as a high priority policy item in the 2011 Policy Issue Identification process, the WCB Board of Directors approved a two stage policy consultation on Pre-Existing Conditions in Spring 2016. The first stage of the consultation took place in June 2016 and the second stage from September 2016 – January 2017. This consultation produced extensive feedback, significantly more than is typically received throughout the course of a policy consultation.

The submissions were very thoughtful and well researched. It is clear from reviewing them that stakeholders put significant time and effort into understanding the WCB's issue papers, as well as the relevant legislation and policy. This level of involvement in the policy development process is indicative of the commitment of stakeholder groups and system partners in improving the workers compensation system in Nova Scotia, and in ensuring safe and healthy workplaces for all Nova Scotians.

The feedback indicates that while there are concrete concerns with how claims involving pre-existing conditions are adjudicated, stakeholders generally feel the draft policy is not the desired solution to address these concerns. Both worker and employer stakeholders urge the WCB not to proceed with the draft policy.

In March 2017, considering stakeholder input, the Board of Directors decided that policy development was not the best way to provide clarity on this issue. Instead, as stakeholders suggest, efforts will be undertaken to provide WCB decision makers with additional tools and training regarding the adjudication of claims involving pre-existing conditions. This concludes policy development for pre-existing conditions at this time.

The Board of Directors thanks all stakeholders for taking the time to prepare feedback and participate in the policy consultation process. Stakeholder involvement is essential to a strong Workplace Safety and Insurance System, and helps to inform balanced policy development agenda.

Sincerely,

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