



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

Division of Workers' Compensation - Medical Fee Dispute Resolution (MS-48)

7551 Metro Center Drive, Suite 100, Austin, Texas 78744-1645

(512) 804-4000 | F: (512) 804-4811 | (800) 252-7031 | TDI.texas.gov | @TexasTDI

MEDICAL FEE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FINDINGS AND DECISION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Requestor Name

ORTHOPAEDIC ASSOCIATES OF CENTRAL TX

MFDR Tracking Number

M4-17-0103-01

MFDR Date Received

September 14, 2016

Respondent Name

TASB RISK MANAGEMENT FUND

Carrier's Austin Representative

Box Number 47

REQUESTOR'S POSITION SUMMARY

Requestor's Position Summary: "All other visits related to her [injury] have been paid. We just want them to compensate the doctor for his surgery on her."

Amount in Dispute: \$3,187.44

RESPONDENT'S POSITION SUMMARY

Respondent's Position Summary: "Please note this provider is a member of the Political Subdivision Workers' Compensation Alliance (the Alliance) that was formed pursuant to the labor code 504.053...This provider has been a member since June 5, 2009 and according to contract shall abide by all standards, conditions and procedures as outline in the Alliance Provider Manual...The Fund respectfully requests TDI-DWC dismiss the MFDR since the provider is a member of the Political Subdivision Workers' Compensation Alliance and shall abide by the procedures as outline above."

Response Submitted by: TASB Risk Management Fund

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Date(s) of Service	Disputed Service(s)	Amount In Dispute	Amount Due
January 18, 2016	29848 and 29999	\$3,187.44	\$0.00

FINDINGS AND DECISION

This medical fee dispute is decided pursuant to Texas Labor Code §413.031 and all-applicable, adopted rules of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation.

Background

1. Texas Labor Code Chapter 504 sets out the rights and responsibilities related to *Workers' Compensation Insurance Coverage for Employees of Political Subdivisions*.
2. Texas Labor Code Chapter 413 sets out the rights and responsibilities related to *Medical Dispute Resolution*.
3. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307 sets out the requirements for medical fee dispute resolution.
4. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.305 sets out the procedure for Medical Fee Dispute Resolution.
5. 28 Texas Administrative Code §141.1 sets out the procedures for Requesting and Setting a Benefit Review Conference.

Issues

1. Does the requestor have the right to file for medical fee dispute resolution?
2. Did the requestor support its request for reimbursement?
3. Does the medical fee dispute referenced above contain information/documentation to support that date(s) of service January 18, 2016 contains an unresolved extent-of-injury issue?

Findings

1. The respondent in this case asserts that the requestor is contracted with an intergovernmental risk pool (pool) named The Alliance. According to The Alliance's public webpage, *The Alliance* is the trade name for a group of five Texas intergovernmental risk pools ("Pools") that have joined together to exercise the option to directly contract with health care providers for the provision of workers' compensation medical benefits to the injured employees that are members of a political subdivision. Texas Labor Code Chapter 504 titled *Workers' Compensation Insurance Coverage for Employees of Political Subdivisions* authorizes health care providers to contract with intergovernmental risk pools, such as The Alliance. Specifically, Texas Labor Code Sec. 504.053(b) (2) states, in pertinent part:

If a political subdivision or a **pool** [emphasis added] determines that a workers' compensation health care network certified under Chapter 1305, Insurance Code, is not available or practical for the political subdivision or pool, the political subdivision or pool may provide medical benefits to its employees or to the injured employees of the members of the pool...(2) by directly contracting with health care providers or by contracting through a health benefits pool established under Chapter 172, Local Government Code.

A search through the health care provider directory on The Alliance's public web page at <http://www.pswca.org/> finds that the requestor is listed as a contracted provider. The Division finds that the respondent's assertion that the requestor is contracted with The Alliance is supported.

The Division now considers whether the requestor has the right to file for medical fee dispute resolution in this case. The Division concluded above that a contract authorized under Sec. 504.053(b) (2) exists between the requestor and the respondent. For this reason, Sec. 504.053 (c) (3) applies and states, in pertinent part:

If the political subdivision or **pool** [emphasis added] provides medical benefits in the manner authorized under Subsection (b) (2), the following do not apply... (3) Chapter 413, except for Section 413.042.

That is, rights granted or provisions contained within Texas Labor Code Chapter 413 titled *Medical Dispute Resolution*, with the exception of 413.042, **do not apply** to health care providers contracted with an intergovernmental risk pool such as The Alliance. Therefore, Sec. 413.031 (c) which is the section that grants health care provider's the right to file for medical fee dispute resolution does not apply. Consequently, the administrative process outlined in 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307 titled *MDR of Fee Disputes*, established pursuant to Texas Labor Code Sec. 413.031(c), is not available to health care providers contracted with a risk pool as authorized by Sec. 504.053(b)(2).

2. No documentation was found to support that the requestor had the right to file a medical fee dispute in this case. The Division finds that the requestor, has failed to demonstrate that it has the right to medical fee dispute pursuant to Texas Labor Code Sec. 413.031(c) and 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307.
3. The requestor seeks reimbursement services rendered on January 18, 2016. Review of the submitted documentation finds that the medical fee dispute referenced above contains an unresolved issues of extent-of-injury for the same service(s) for which there is a medical fee dispute. The insurance carrier notified the requestor of such issues in its explanation of benefits (EOB) response(s) during the medical bill review process. The insurance carrier denied/reduced the disputed service(s) with denial reason code(s), "219 – Based on extent of injury. Current complaints and treatment are not due to, nor directly related to, the compensable injury, per a review of documentation by a peer review physician. Applies to both lines denied per dispute on file. Applies to both lines."

28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307(f) (3) (C) provides for dismissal of a medical fee dispute if the request for the medical fee dispute contains an unresolved extent-of-injury issue. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307(c) (2) (K) provides that a request for a medical fee dispute must contain a copy of each EOB related to the dispute. The Division finds that the dispute contains an unresolved extent-of-injury issue for this dispute. As a result, the dispute is not eligible for review by MFDR.

The Division hereby notifies the requestor that the appropriate process to resolve the extent-of-injury issue may be found in Chapter 410 of the Texas Labor Code, and 28 Texas Administrative Code §141.1.

Conclusion

The requestor failed to support its request for reimbursement; as a result, the amount ordered is \$0.00. The Division emphasizes that individual medical fee dispute outcomes rely upon the evidence presented by the requestor and respondent during dispute resolution. Even though not all the evidence was discussed, it was considered.

ORDER

Based upon the documentation submitted by the parties, the Division has determined that the requestor does not have the right to medical fee dispute resolution pursuant to 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307. For that reason, the amount ordered is \$0.00.

Authorized Signature

Signature	Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Officer	October 7, 2016 Date
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YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL

Either party to this medical fee dispute has a right to seek review of this decision in accordance with 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307, effective May 31, 2012, 37 Texas Register 3833, applicable to disputes filed on or after June 1, 2012.

A party seeking review must submit a Request to Schedule a Benefit Review Conference to Appeal a Medical Fee Dispute Decision (form DWC045M) in accordance with the instructions on the form. The request must be received by the Division within twenty days of your receipt of this decision. The request may be faxed, mailed or personally delivered to the Division using the contact information listed on the form or to the field office handling the claim.

The party seeking review of the MDR decision shall deliver a copy of the request to all other parties involved in the dispute at the same time the request is filed with the Division. Please include a copy of the *Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision* together with any other required information specified in 28 Texas Administrative Code §141.1(d).

Si prefiere hablar con una persona en español acerca de ésta correspondencia, favor de llamar a 512-804-4812.