



**Commonwealth
Medicine**

CWM Advantage

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CWM Disability Recommendation Model



IME/IPE Guiding Principles and Best Practice

In over two decades of providing disability evaluation services to public agencies and retirement systems, CWM has developed guiding principles and best practices for medical evidence development including the use of IME/IPE's.

- CWM relies, whenever possible, on objective evidence from the member's own treating sources to inform our independent disability recommendations.
- A member's own treating source who has evaluated, examined, or treated a member is usually the best source of medical evidence about the nature and severity of a member's impairment(s).

Member's Treating Source Medical Evidence

Advantages of Member's treating source information for disability recommendations

- Most often produces the symptoms, signs, diagnostic and laboratory tests, x-rays, hospital records, and specialist reports required to assess disability
- Longitudinal history characterized by multiple patient contacts
- Most likely to describe the patient's day to day functioning
- Records in context of treatment
- More accepted by applicants as basis for decision-making
- Provides the most complete picture compared to a one-time exam

Independent Medical/Independent Psychological Exams (IME/IPE)

IME/IPEs are useful when:

- Treating source evidence is unavailable or does not exist
- Treating source is uncooperative
- The member does not have a treating source(s) or has not been seen/treated in a year or more
- Treating source information is ambiguous, inconsistent or conflicting and can't be resolved
- When specialized or highly technical testing is required; e.g.-audiological testing

CWM Advantage



Multidisciplinary physician specialties



Knowledgeable, experienced and trained staff in disability determination



Internal resources construct functionality capacity reports and recommendations on disability



Trained in the multiple definitions of disability



Peer to peer consultation for questions and second opinions



Consider and weigh medical evidence from all sources



Assess the ability to adjust to work based on functional capacity along with vocational factors of age, education, and past work experience*



Objective and unbiased



Use of treating source medical evidence alleviates the burden on the member to attend an IME/IPE at an unknown location and with an unknown physician

* SSA - POMS: DI 25025.001 - The Medical-Vocational Guidelines - 08/04/2014

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