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Response from Heidi Mason, Director Legal Advice & Representation regarding recent BCMA increase

We've received feedback on LSS's long-standing policy of matching the British Columbia Medical Association (BCMA) rates for medical-legal reports and medical expert testimony. (Refer to [Notice to Counsel #89](#).)

Our policy of matching the external government rates extends back to the 1980s. The rationale for matching the BCMA rates is as follows:

- LSS ensures referral lawyers will have access to medical experts.
- BCMA rates provide an objective and fair rate of reimbursement to medical practitioners without the administrative burden of negotiating on a case-by-case basis.

The cost impact of matching the rates is minimal, considering LSS's overall disbursement budget — the estimated cost impact this year is \$4,000 or 0.006 percent of total tariff expenditures.

Appeals Department update

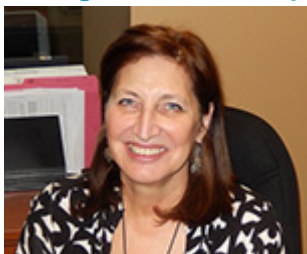


We're pleased to announce that Michael Smith has joined the Appeals Department as a managing lawyer, working with Managing Lawyer Rod Holloway. Michael articulated with LSS in 1998 and since then has continuously been one of our Appeals Assessment lawyers. He was a key part of the team that conducted an extensive review of the LSS tariff in 2005, resulting in the *Managing for Results* report. He'll be working part-time until September, when his prior commitments will permit him to join the department full-time.

We're also pleased to confirm that Camran Chaichian continues to be the managing lawyer, Criminal Law. After further consideration, Camran withdrew the resignation he had tendered earlier.



Aboriginal Services update



We're pleased to introduce Trish Kumpf as the new manager, Aboriginal Services. Trish joins us from Victoria and brings extensive legal and management experience to this position. Under Trish, the LSS Gladue disbursement pilot project is being extended for the 2014/15 fiscal year. But due to extremely limited funding, the number of reports approved monthly are minimal and approvals are discretionary and subject to available resources. Final decisions on approvals are obtained through the e-authorization process. Find out more about [the process](#), or email your questions to Gladue.Coordinator@lss.bc.ca.

On another note, we have an opening for First Nations Court duty counsel in New Westminster and the opportunity will be posted on the LSS website. Currently, we're reviewing applications for circuit counsel in the Aboriginal communities of Kwadacha and Tsay Keh Dene.

Finally, LSS produces a wide array of public legal education and information on Aboriginal legal issues such as hunting and fishing rights. We're looking for subject matter experts to assist with legal review and writing, on an ad hoc basis. If you're interested in working with our publications

team on Aboriginal areas of law, please email the supervisor, Print, Web, and Multimedia at Winnifred.Assmann@lss.bc.ca (and also see the article below).

LSS wants you (to work on our publications)!

We need your help to write and legally review our publications.

Every year, LSS publications reach hundreds of thousands of people. In 2013, we distributed more than 250,000 copies of our publications and our websites were visited more than a million times.

We're looking for more lawyers to help us make our information the best it can be so it can help people find solutions to their problems.

Why would you want to work on our publications? First and foremost, it's a chance to help people with serious legal problems. Aside from the altruism, you'll also be:

1. developing an expertise in writing about the law for ordinary people;
2. compensated at the regular tariff rate or possibly receive CPD credits; and
3. recognized for your contributions.

Our publications cover family, child protection, criminal, and some civil areas of law. As noted in the Aboriginal Services article above, we have a particular need for writers and reviewers with expertise in Aboriginal areas of law such as Gladue rights, harvesting rights, family law, and child protection.

If you're interested in helping out, email the supervisor, Print, Web, and Multimedia at Winnifred.Assmann@lss.bc.ca for more information.

Family Duty Counsel — Billing Tips and Expectations

We've prepared a [summary](#) of Family Duty Counsel billing tips and record-keeping expectations for your reference. The summary clarifies existing expectations outlined in the *Duty Counsel Tariff* and the *FDC Practices and Procedures Manual*, and it's available on the LSS website.

Billing tip

To facilitate your request for additional preparation, you must submit an up-to-date account. You can request extra fees at the conclusion of the case, once you've billed a final account.

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