

MEDICAL SERVICES

PROVIDED BY SEMA GROUP ON BEHALF OF THE BENEFITS AGENCY

Update to Standard – Issue 5/2000

Subject: Audio or Video Taping of Examinations

Effective from: Immediate

Target Audience: Medical Team Leaders for issue to all doctors and
Operational staff for information

Guides effected: IB Handbook

Contact: Wendy Patterson, Process Design

This Communication Extra is to inform all Medical staff of Sema Group Medical Services policy on the Audio or Video recording of examinations. The attached Statement of Policy Intent was written by Medical Policy Group and is fully endorsed by Medical Services.

Any requests by claimants to tape an examination should not be directly refused, but our policy in these circumstances should be fully explained to them. Further information regarding refusal of examination is included in the Statement of Policy Intent which is attached.

Date of Issue: 07/06/00

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The attached letter should be sent by the Medical Team Leaders to all doctors who undertake examinations, whether they be sessional or Domiciliary Visits. This will ensure that our medical staff are fully informed.

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Audio and Video taping of examinations.

Requirement

The DSS never requires that a medical assessment for the purpose of advising on entitlement to state sickness or disability benefits be recorded on audio or videotape.

Claimant requests for audio or videotaping

Claimants may request that their interview and assessment by a Medical Services doctor in respect of a benefit claim be recorded either on audio or videotape.

Such a request can only be agreed with the prior consent of the examining doctor, and then only if stringent safeguards are in place to ensure that the recording is complete, accurate, and that the facility is available for simultaneous copies to be made available to all parties present. The recording must be made by a professional operator, on equipment of a high standard, properly calibrated by a qualified engineer immediately prior to the recording being made. The equipment must have facility for reproduction so that a copy of the tape can be retained by all parties

The responsibility for meeting the cost of the above requirement rest with the claimant.

Any request by a claimant for an assessment to be audio or videotaped must be declined unless the above safeguards are in place. The claimant must instead be offered the opportunity of a rescheduled assessment in the presence of a companion or other witness. If the claimant refuses to avail him/her self of this opportunity, and refuses to proceed with the assessment, the doctor should return the file to the Benefits Agency with a note explaining the situation.

Unauthorised taping

It is for Medical Services, in conjunction with their legal advisers, to determine the action to be taken in the event of a claimant making an audio or video recording without the prior knowledge and consent of the

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examining doctor, or without ensuring that the safeguards defined above are in place.

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Dear Doctor,

The Statement of Policy Intent below is to inform you of Medical Services/DSS policy in the event of a request to Audio or Video Tape an examination. This was written by Medical Policy Group.

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Unauthorised taping

It is for Medical Services, in conjunction with their legal advisers, to determine the action to be taken in the event of a claimant making an audio or video recording without the prior knowledge and consent of the examining doctor, or without ensuring that the safeguards defined above are in place. Medical Services view unauthorised and secret recording to be an invasion of privacy. If this guidance presents you with any difficulties, please contact me so that we can discuss alternative action.

Sincerely,

Medical Team Leader