

**WAC 284-43A-060 Expert reviewers.** (1) Each IRO shall maintain an adequate number and range of qualified expert reviewers in order to:

(a) Make determinations regarding the full range of independent review cases occurring in Washington state under RCW 48.43.535; and

(b) Meet timelines specified in WAC 284-43A-070(3) including those for expedited review.

(2) All reviewers must be health care providers with the exception of contract specialists.

(3) IROs shall maintain policies and practices that assure that all clinical reviewers:

(a) Hold a current, unrestricted license, certification, or registration in Washington state, or current, unrestricted credentials from another state with substantially comparable requirements, as determined by the department of health and outlined in the current edition of the department of health publication, *Health Care Professional Credentialing Requirements*;

(b) Have at least five years of recent clinical experience;

(c) Are board-certified in the case of a medical doctor, a doctor of osteopathy, a podiatrist, or a member of another profession in which board certification exists as determined by the department of health; and

(d) Have the ability to apply scientific standards of evidence in judging research literature pertinent to review issues, as demonstrated through relevant training or professional experience.

(4) Contract specialists must be knowledgeable in health insurance contract law, as evidenced by training and experience, but do not need to be an attorney or have any state credential.

(5) Assignment of appropriate reviewers to a case.

(a) An IRO shall assign one or more expert reviewers to each case, as necessary to meet requirements of this subsection.

(b) Any reviewer assigned to a case shall comply with the conflict of interest provisions in WAC 284-43A-050.

(c) The IRO shall assign one or more clinical reviewers to each case. All clinical reviewers assigned to a case shall each meet the following requirements:

(i) A clinical peer as defined in WAC 284-43A-010;

(ii) An expert in the treatment of the enrollee's medical condition that is the subject of the external review;

(iii) Knowledgeable about the recommended health care service or treatment through five years of recent or current actual clinical experience treating patients with the same or similar medical condition of the enrollee. Exceptions may be made to this requirement in unusual situations when the only experts available for a highly specialized review are in academic or research life and do not meet the clinical experience requirement; and

(iv) Have the ability to evaluate alternatives to the proposed treatment.

(d) If contract interpretation issues must be addressed, a contract specialist must be assigned to the review.

(e) Each IRO shall have a policy specifying the number and qualifications of reviewers to be assigned to each case. The number of expert reviewers should be dictated by what it takes to meet the requirements of this subsection.

(i) The number of expert reviewers should reflect the complexity of the case, the goal of avoiding unnecessary cost, and the need to avoid tie votes.

- (ii) The IRO may consider, but shall not be bound by, recommendations regarding complexity from the carrier or attending provider.
- (iii) Special attention should be given to situations such as review of experimental and investigational treatments that may benefit from an expanded panel.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 48.02.060, 48.43.535, and 48.43.537. WSR 16-23-168 (Matter No. R 2016-17), § 284-43A-060, filed 11/23/16, effective 1/1/17.]