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From the Editor

In this issue of the *Journal of Back and Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation*, we present a report from the State of Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) on the impact of low-back practice guidelines on workers' compensation.

In a 1-year period, from 1993 to 1994, Florida employers reported 34 563 new work-related back injuries to the Department of Labor and Employment Security Division of Workers' Compensation.

As we all know, however, this high number of cases is not restricted to the state of Florida and has resulted in significant lost work time and high medical costs. To exacerbate the problem, there is a wide spectrum of diagnostic and treatment methods for low back pain or injury, many of which are not yet scientifically proven to be effective.

To address this problem, the State of Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration has developed guidelines in an effort to standardize medical practice patterns in the area of low-back injuries. Under these new guidelines, as many as two-thirds of the state's workers' compensation low back pain patients receive procedures or therapies that are deemed medically unnecessary by guideline standards, thus demonstrating the problem at hand.

The report presented in this issue is the first of a series that will include guidelines recently developed by the AHCA for low-back pain or injury and neck pain.

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