Second Door

Surgery Drives the MSK Cost Problem. Locally-Powered PT Changes the Story.

MSK conditions are consistently one of the top three drivers of employer healthcare spend, yet most claims begin in the wrong place—driving unnecessary surgeries, imaging, and opioid use.

By redirecting employees to conservative care first, employers can **reduce MSK claim costs by up to 75%**[1], saving thousands per episode while improving outcomes and avoiding unnecessary interventions.

What Our Analysis Shows

Our claims analyses reveal MSK accounts for an average of **$3.4M annually—or 23% of total claims**[2]. It's a top-three cost driver for nearly every employer we work with.

The Surgery Problem

58% of MSK spend comes from surgery, at an **average cost of $18,837 per case**[2]. Common procedures like knee or hip replacements routinely top $30,000—yet many can be delayed or avoided with PT.

The PT-First Advantage

Patients who begin with conservative care **cut total medical costs by 75%**. They are **87% less likely**[3] to be prescribed opioids and **28% less likely**[4] to need high-cost imaging.

Employer Impact

On average, **employers save $2,736 per patient**[5] when PT is the first step. Multiply that across hundreds of employees, and the financial upside is enormous.

Better Outcomes, Lower Spend

Conservative care doesn't just cost less, it gets people better faster, keeps them working, and reduces the chance of costly repeat interventions.

Get a Free MSK Claim Analysis

We'll review your data and show you exactly where you can save—no strings attached. See how much you could reduce spend and improve care access with Second Door.

seconddoor.app/employers

1. APTQI Study on Low Back Pain Intervention, 2017; 2. First-Party Claims Analysis by Second Door; 3. Physical Therapy as the First Point of Care to Treat Low Back Pain: An Instrumental Variables Approach to Estimate Impact on Opioid Prescription, 2018; 4. Observational retrospective study of the association of initial healthcare provider for new-onset low back pain with early and long-term opioid use, 2019; 5. Primary care referral of patients with low back pain to physical therapy, 2012.