

**HEALTH SERVICES**  
**MEDICAL TRAVEL POLICY**



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**June 2013**

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## 1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Department of Health (Health) provides travel benefits to eligible Clients who must travel in order to access necessary Health Services that are not available in their home community.

## 2.0 PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 This Policy is based on the following principles:
- (a) Inuit Societal Values, which includes the guiding principles of Pijitsirniq – serving and providing for family and/or community; and Inuuqatigiitsiarniq – respecting others, relationships and caring for people, will be recognized and respected;
  - (b) All activities of the health system support an approach that places people first;
  - (c) The cost of travel should not be an economic barrier to individuals requiring Health Services that are not available in their home community;
  - (d) Health programs should be designed to be fair, understandable, easy to access, and consistently applied across the territory;
  - (e) The health services system should operate in a way that is accountable, sustainable, and responsive; and
  - (f) The Nunavut health care system supports the accessibility principle of the *Canada Health Act*.

## 3.0 APPLICATION

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all Clients who access Health Services outside their home community pursuant to the following legislation and programs:
- (a) *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*;
  - (b) *Medical Care Act*; and
  - (c) *Mental Health Act*
- (collectively, “the Legislation”).
- 3.2 This Policy is issued by the Minister of Health.
- 3.3 Medical travel arrangements and, in some cases, payments for accommodation, meals, ground transportation, escorts and travel can also be determined in part or in whole by a Client’s ability to access insurance or other programs which are not covered by this Policy. These include but are not limited to:
- (a) Non-Insured Health Benefits Program;
  - (b) Extended Health Benefits Program;
  - (c) Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission;
  - (d) Public Service Health Care Plan;
  - (e) Government of Nunavut Employees Dental and Health Benefits Plan; and
  - (f) Private Insurance Plans.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Adult – means a Nunavut resident 19 years of age or older.

- 4.2 Approved Centres – means a hospital, clinic, birthing centre, regional health facility, or rehabilitation centre approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister - Operations for the provision of Health Services that are not available in a Client’s home community.
- 4.3 Child – means a Nunavut resident between 2 to 18 years of age.
- 4.4 Client – means a Nunavut resident who must travel in order to access Health Services.
- 4.5 Client Escort – means an Adult authorized to accompany a Client pursuant to Guideline 2, Section 4.
- 4.6 Co-payment – means the portion of eligible Medical Travel expenses which must be paid by eligible Clients as determined in accordance with this Policy.
- 4.7 Director – means a regional Director of Health Programs, a regional Director of Health Facilities, the Director of Clinical Services at the Qikiqtani General Hospital, or their designates.
- 4.8 Director Child and Family Services – means the territorial director designated under the *Child and Family Services Act* or their designate.
- 4.9 Guardian – means a parent, a foster parent, or an individual legally responsible for a Client.
- 4.10 Health Services – means insured services, as defined by the Legislation that a Nunavut Practitioner deems medically necessary for a Client.
- 4.11 Infant – means a Nunavut resident less than 2 years of age.
- 4.12 Legislation – means
- (a) *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*;
  - (b) *Medical Care Act*; and
  - (c) *Mental Health Act*.
- 4.13 Nunavut Practitioner – means an individual who is licensed to deliver Health Services in Nunavut through employment or a contract with the Government of Nunavut, such as nurses, physicians, and midwives. For the purposes of this Policy, dental providers are not considered Nunavut Practitioners.
- 4.14 Mature Minor – means an individual 16 to 18 years of age who has reached a sufficient level of emotional and intellectual development to be able to make their own medical decisions, as determined by the Nunavut Practitioner referring the Medical Travel.
- 4.15 Medevac – means air transport of a Client requiring emergency or specialized care.
- 4.16 Medical Escort – means a health care professional, including but not limited to a physician, nurse, or paramedic, who is required to provide professional care to a Client while travelling.
- 4.17 Medical Travel – means travel between Nunavut communities and/or Approved Centres outside of Nunavut, as approved by a referring Nunavut Practitioner for a Client, for the purpose of obtaining Health Services that are not available in a Client’s home community.
- 4.18 Public Guardian – means the Public Guardian designated under the *Public Guardianship and Trusteeship Act*.
- 4.19 Regional Director – means a Regional Director of Health Services, the Executive Director of Iqaluit Health Services, or their designates.

## 5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 Minister
- (a) The Minister of Health (“the Minister”) is accountable to Executive Council for the implementation of this Policy.
  - (b) The Minister may:
    - (i) approve program provisions and Guidelines; and
    - (ii) determine the amount of Co-payment from time to time.

5.2 Deputy Minister

- (a) The Deputy Minister of Health (the Deputy Minister) is accountable to the Minister for the administration of this Policy. The Deputy Minister may delegate this responsibility; and
- (b) Amend from time to time the Guidelines and Appendixes that form part of this Policy.

5.3 Assistant Deputy Minister – Operations

- (a) The Assistant Deputy Minister – Operations may:
  - (i) designate Approved Centres for the purpose of this Policy;
  - (ii) determine the nearest Approved Centre for necessary and appropriate Health Services; and
  - (iii) approve a second Client Escort for Medical Travel in rare situations.

5.4 Regional Directors

- (a) Regional Directors have the responsibility of reviewing appeals to this Policy; and
- (b) May approve Client Escort travel that originates from a community other than where the Client resides.

5.5 Director

- (a) A Director may approve Client Escort requests from a Nunavut Practitioner pursuant to Guideline 2, Section 4.

5.6 Nunavut Practitioners

- (a) A Nunavut Practitioner determines the care that a Client requires and initiates a referral to the nearest Approved Centre where the appropriate care is available.
- (b) A Nunavut Practitioner may recommend a Client Escort accompany a Client on his or her Medical Travel subject to the approval of a Director.
- (c) If the Client is a ward of the Director Child and Family Services, the Director Child and Family Services's approval is required prior to travel. If the Client is a ward of the Public Guardian, the Public Guardian's approval is required prior to travel.

5.7 Clients

- (a) Clients must be willing to attend their appointments as recommended by a Nunavut Practitioner and follow the rules outlined in the Client and Escort Travel Agreement (Appendix A).

5.8 Client Escorts

- (a) A Client Escort must agree to stay with his/her Client at all times and follow the rules outlined in the Client and Client Escort Travel Agreement (Appendix A).

**6.0 PROVISIONS**

6.1 Exclusions

- (a) Medical Travel benefits will not be authorized for Medical Travel originating outside Nunavut.
- (b) When a Client chooses to travel to a centre other than the nearest Approved Centre, travel benefits will only be provided to the nearest Approved Centre.
- (c) Medical Travel benefits will not be provided if a similar benefit is available through an employer or insuring body as set out in section 3.3.

## 6.2 Medical Travel

### (a) Eligibility

- (i) Eligibility is restricted to Nunavut residents who require Medical Travel to the nearest Approved Centre and meet the following criteria:
- The Client must hold a valid registration with the Nunavut Health Care Plan; and
  - The reason for travel is a valid referral from a Nunavut Practitioner and the travel cannot be deferred until the Client is traveling for other reasons.

### (b) Benefits

- (i) Medical Travel transportation to and from the nearest Approved Centre; and
- (ii) Medical Escort and Client Escort benefits for eligible Clients.
- (c) In emergency circumstances the cost of Medical Travel for non-residents will be paid by the Government of Nunavut. However, the individual will be billed for the full cost of the transportation provided.
- (d) Clients who have been abusive to other Clients, Client Escorts, Medical Escorts, Health staff, boarding home staff or airline staff will be requested to make their own travel arrangements and seek reimbursement.

## 6.3 Appeals

- (a) A Client or Guardian has the right to appeal a decision regarding Medical Travel.
- (b) Second Client Escort decisions are not subject to appeal.

## 6.4 Accountability

- (a) Health will submit an annual report concerning the administration of this Policy to the Minister.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

- 7.1 Financial resources required under this Policy are conditional on approval of funds in the Main Estimates by the Legislative Assembly and there being a sufficient unencumbered balance for the fiscal year for which the funds would be required.

## **8.0 GUIDELINES**

- 8.1 Client benefits, Client Escort benefits and Appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the Guidelines established in support of this Policy.

## **9.0 SUNSET**

- 8.1 This Policy will be in effect from the date of signature until March 31, 2018.

## 10.0 CONTACT

9.1 This Policy is available on the Health website or by contacting Health at:

Medical Travel Office  
P.O. Box 1000, Stn 1046  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0  
Toll Free Line 1-866-371-3305  
Phone 1-867-975-5759  
Fax 1-867-975-5964

Includes:

- Guideline 1 – Medical Travel Benefits
- Guideline 2 – Medical Escort and Client Escort Approval
- Guideline 3 – Appeals

  

- Appendix A – Client and Escort Travel Agreement
- Appendix B – Request for Client Escort Travel
- Appendix C – Appeal Request Form







**APPENDIX C**



**APPEAL REQUEST FORM**  
**Department of Health**  
**Health Services Medical Travel Policy**

Information from Client or Guardian who was denied a travel benefit:

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
HCP Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Community: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of this Request: \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment Date[s]: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date the Appointment was Booked: \_\_\_\_\_ Client's Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

This appeal must include the reason or condition for which the benefit was requested.

This is to notify Health of my intention to appeal a decision made with respect to the benefits associated with travel for the purpose of receiving a Health Service. I am appealing the decision for the following reason(s):

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Attach additional pages, if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Client or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Number

Fax to: QGH 867-975-7195; Baffin Region 867-473-2657; Kivalliq Region 867-645-2409; Kitikmeot Region 867-983-4075

To be completed by Regional Director:  
Reason for decision:

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<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
_____	Signature
_____	Date

In the event that this appeal is denied, there are no further appeal rights.