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Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* iuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

# **Government of Nunavut Department of Health**

## **2015/2016 Annual Report on the Operation of the Medical Care Plan**

**From the Director of Medical Insurance**





and palliative care), surgical services, laboratory services, diagnostic imaging, and respiratory therapy.

Nunavut's primary health care providers are predominantly family physicians and community health nurses. The Department recruits and hires its own nurses and physicians. Specialist services are accessed primarily from the Territory's main referral centres in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Yellowknife and Edmonton.

More than one third of the Department's total operational budget is spent on costs associated with medical travel (\$64,793,100) and physician and hospital services (\$58,092,294) outside the Territory. Due to the Territory's very low population density and limited health infrastructure (i.e. diagnostic equipment and health human resources), access to a range of hospital and specialist services often requires residents to travel outside the Territory. The two regional health facilities (Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay), as well as the Qikiqtani General Hospital, are enabling Nunavut to build internal capacity and enhance the range of services that can be provided within the Territory.

### **Nunavut Health Insurance Plan**

The Act governs who is covered by Nunavut's Health Insurance Plan and the payment of benefits for insured medical services. The Nunavut Health Insurance Plan is administered by the Department on a non-profit basis. Insured hospital services are provided in Nunavut under separate legislative authority - the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*.

### **Users**

As of March 31, 2016, there were 37,764 individuals registered under Nunavut's Health Insurance Plan, which is an increase of 1097 from the previous year.

### **Insured Physician Services**

The Act, Section 3(1), and Medical Care Regulations, Section 3, provide for insured physician services in Nunavut. The term "insured physician services" refers to all services rendered by medical practitioners that are





### **Uninsured Physician Services**

Only services prescribed by, and rendered in accordance with, the Act and regulations, and the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act* and regulations, are insured.

All other services, including physician services that are not medically necessary, are considered uninsured. Services provided under the Workers Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) and any other federal or territorial legislation are not insured under the Nunavut Health Insurance Plan.

### **Insured Services Provided in Canada (Outside of Nunavut)**

The Act, Section 4(2), prescribes the benefits payable when insured medical services are provided outside Nunavut, but within Canada.

Nunavut has physician reciprocal billing agreements with all provinces and territories (with the exception of Quebec, where physicians bill directly for fee for service). These agreements provide payment of insured services on behalf of eligible Nunavut residents receiving insured services outside of the Territory.

In 2015/2016 a total of \$8,088,273 was paid for physician services provided outside of the Territory.

### **Insured Services Provided Outside Canada**

The *Medical Care Act*, Section 4(3), prescribes the benefits payable when insured medical services are provided outside Canada. When Nunavut residents become ill and require a health service while travelling for pleasure or business, insured physician services are paid at rates equivalent to those paid had the service been provided in Nunavut.

In 2015/2016, a total of \$667.00 was paid for physician services provided outside of Canada.

In 2015/2016 there were no patients medically referred outside of the country for health services.