



Neskonlith Indian Band

www.neskonlith.net

Cwelwe'lt Wellness Centre
5973 Old Highway
Box 318, Chase, BC V0E 1M0
T: 250.679.3295 F: 250.679.3288

Melamen Health Center
461 First Nations Rd.
Salmon Arm, BC V1E 2Z6
T: 250.833.0202 F: 250.833.0990



Patient Travel Policy

The Patient Travel Program provides supplementary benefits intended to ensure that eligible clients have access to medically- required services. It is not intended to cover all costs associated with a client's medical condition and travel requirements.

Types of Patient Travel

All of the following Requests are considered Benefit Exemptions. They require Appropriate Documentation and Prior Approval from the NIHB Office before Patient Travel can be processed. Our Wellness Department requires extra time to process these Benefit Exemptions.

Dental Travel

Travel to access eligible dental benefits under the Non- Insured Health Benefits (NIBH) program is a Patient Travel benefit. The NIHB Dental Policy defines eligibility to receive dental benefits. Patient Travel covered is to the closest appropriate provider, by most economical mean.

If Dental Services are not available within our local area prior approval from the NIHB Regional Office can be sent in as an exception. Dental travel will only be approved when outside local travel services have been approved by the NIHB Regional Office.

All Orthodontic travel, due to being outside our local area, may be sent in as an exception through the NIHB Regional office. Orthodontic travel will only be approved when the orthodontic services have been approved by the national Orthodontic Review Committee.

Patient Travel is NOT provided for dental services that are:

- Dental Provider in local area willing to work with the NIHB Dental program
- Not an NIHB Benefit
- Any missed appointments with local or non-local provider
- Any charges owing due to missed appointments
- Client choosing to go to another provider outside of local area.

Detox Travel

Travel to access Detox Services may be considered a Benefit. A referral is submitted by a Community Health Professional, Community Health Representative, or an Alcohol and Drug Counsellor (NNADAP Worker) so services provided are covered under BC Medical Services Plan. All travel for detox must be submitted to the NIHB Regional Office as a benefit exception.

NNADAP Treatment Travel

Travel to access an Alcohol and Drug treatment programs can be funded. Travel can only be covered to the closest NNADAP funded/ referred facility. Travel outside of BC will only be considered if required treatment is not available in BC or when a neighboring province's treatment center is the closest center. All NNADAP Travel requests must be submitted and approved by the Regional NNADAP Treatment Manager.

Clients are required to meet all treatment center entry requirements prior to Patient Travel being authorized. *Physical exams are billed to the NNADAP Regional Office.*

Travel to return to NNADAP treatment centers may be arranged; however, NIHB may not fund return costs if the client is discharges him/herself before treatment has been completed. Exceptions may be considered for clients who are minors or proper justification is provided and approved by the NIHB Regional Office.

Vision Travel

Travel to access regular/routine vision care services may be provided when coordinated with other medical appointment(s). Travel to see a vision care specialist may be provided with a submission of a referral from a physician or optometrist. Travel to pick up vision care products will NOT be covered under Patient Travel Policy.

Methadone Travel

Travel for clients to get to a pharmacy for pharmacist- supervised methadone ingestion may be covered as a benefit exception and travel may be provided for up to four months. Extensions may be considered with justification. Methadone travel should be submitted to the NIHB Regional Office as a benefit exception.

Traditional Healers

Travel to access a traditional healer may be provided for clients or, where economical, travel for traditional healer to come to community. Patient Travel to access traditional healer services is a benefit exception and should be submitted to the NIHB Regional Office for approval.

The following criteria must be considered prior to approving medical transportation benefits for traditional healer services. The Traditional Healer is:

- Recognized as such by the local Band or Tribal Council
- Is located in the client's region of residence
- Confirmed Client has a Medical Condition, by a licensed physician or a community health professional

Long Term or Extended Stays

For Patient Travel that require staying more than 5 day's in a row. Prior approval is required by the NIHB Regional Office. Where possible accommodation on these extended Patient Travel will be made in establishments that have self-catering or cooking facilities.

Long term or extended stays for medical services may be approved up to three months. Long term or extended stays that are more than 30 days, need to be submitted as an exception. If approved, and by request from Neskonlith, NIHB will make arrangements to pay for accommodations. Neskonlith would pay for the remaining meals and travel costs.

Where a client is required to remain in an urban setting to access medically required services for an extended period of time, travel back to the home community during the treatment period is not a medical transportation benefit.

If upon medical advice, a client is required to relocate to an urban center to be close to a health care facility they may receive on-going medical care/ treatment for an undetermined but extended amount of time. Patient Travel benefits may be provided for up to a three month, this covers a transition period to help client to make their own living arrangements. An example: A client is a transplant recipients, and must stay near the health care facility for operation, or after a transplant recipient cannot return back to their community for medical reasons.

After the three month transition period FNIH/First Nations Medical Transportation Program does not provide financial assistance with on-going expenses. Examples are meals, accommodation or in- city transportation. Benefit exceptions may be considered on a case by case basis and would require the appropriate Exception Form to again be submitted to the NIHB Regional Office. All of these type of requests are to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the end of the initial 3 month period.

Repeated On Going Medical Care

Patient Travel for a client who is required to travel repeatedly to access on-going medical care may be provided for up to four months, and must be in accordance with Section 1.6 of the MTPF. If repeated travel is still required after the four month period, a benefit exception may be considered. Exceptions are considered on a case by case basis and should be sent in on the appropriate Exception form to the NIHB Regional Office. These requests are to be submitted at least two weeks prior to the end of the four month initial period.

Escorts

If a client needs assistance to access Medical Services outside of their home community, Patient Travel benefits includes travel, accommodation, and meals for an escort.

The use of an escort must be preapproved by FNIH or First Nations Health Authority following the request of a doctor or community health professional.

For an escort to be considered, a request must be signed by a physician clearly describing:

- How and why the escort will be assisting the client.
- Length of time escort is needed, and may be determined by Client's medical condition or legal requirement.

Submit Request in Letter form or fill out a Physician Escort Request Form

NOTE: A letter or signed Escort Form from a Doctor does NOT automatically approve an escort. Criteria outlined in Section 5.5 of the Medical transportation Policy Framework must be met. For approval the following is required:

- Client has a physical/ mental disability
- Client requires assistance with daily living activities previously or as a result of current medical condition
Such as bathing, dressing, feeding, and decision making
- Client requires legal consent by a parent or guardian
Client is a minor, or legally dependant on parent
- Client needs a translator
Client does not speak or understand English
- Family Member requires instructions about necessary medical procedures that cannot be given to the client alone
- General Anaesthesia
Day Surgery

Escorts must meet the criteria outlined in the MTPF:

- Family Member who is required to sign consent forms or provide patient history
- A reliable member of the community
- Physically capable of taking care of themselves and others
- Does not require an escort themselves when on medical travel
- Proficient in translating from Secwepemc *local language* to English
- Able to share personal space with Client
- Interested in the client's well-being
- Able to drive when the client is unable to transport themselves to and from appointments

Medivac Escorts

Escorts who accompany' a client on medivac, where client is required to remain in the hospital for 2-3 days, may be provided accommodation and meals. Physician Escort Form must say client will be returning to community within 2-3 days and requires an escort to travel back home.

Escorts who accompany a client on medivac, where client is required to remain in hospital longer than 2-3 days then the escort should return to the home community. Individuals who wish to remain with the hospitalized client after 3 days will not be provided meals or accommodations.

Long Term Care Escorts

Escorts are not provided for clients who are in care for more than 3 days. Requests for escort longer than three days, when a client is in the hospital, is a benefit exception and should be submitted to the NHIB Regional Office with appropriate documentation.

NOTE: Written documentation by a physician or hospital professional stating that patient needs a person to act as a care attendant or to provide emotional support will not be considered as it does not fall under the MTPF criteria.

In situations where the client must travel to and remain in an urban setting to receive medical services for extended appointments/ treatments; *radiation*, or must be located close to a hospital; *pre-natal confinement*, an escort may be approved to take the client to initial appointment and assist client to return to community once able to travel.

If escort decides to remain with the client for duration of the required period, meals and accommodation costs will not be covered, unless the escort has been approved as an exception through the NIHB Regional Office.

Client Responsibility

Clients who access any type of Patient Travel through Non- Insured Health Benefits, at Neskonalith, the NIHB Regional Office, are responsible to:

-Give at least 5 days' notice prior to leaving the community

-Approval must be done before proper transportation arrangements can be made

NOTE: Clients who do not provide sufficient notice may be required to reschedule their appointment or pay for the travel and get reimbursed.

-Obtain all necessary paperwork for trip before leaving the community

Referral from Health Care Provider, confirmation of appointment with specialist.

-Get prior approval for all non-emergency trips.

Medical Emergency, not pre-booked and life or death situations

-Attend their medical appointment as scheduled.

NOTE: Clients who do not attend medical appointments may be required to pay back any benefits they have received or deduct payment from next Patient Travel.

-Get a signed confirmation of attendance from the health professional.

-Return signed confirmation to Community Health Representative

-Protect all PO's or Cheques given to you for your Patient Travel.

Patient Travel will not be reissued if lost or stolen

-Provide 24 hours' notice when cancelling an appointment prior to date of appointment

To cancel any hotel arrangements

-Retain and submit all necessary receipts required

-Do NOT damage property, abuse hotel arrangements, such as excessive noise

-Do NOT verbally abuse or threaten the Community Health Representative

Clients may be required to pay for their own travel arrangements and submit a client reimbursement form after the Travel but must have appropriate documentation or may have charges deducted off their next travel arrangements. Reimbursement will not occur if Client:

-Client is verbally or physically abusive

Client fails to provide the required medical documentation

Referral, confirmation of attendance, or receipts

-Client is no longer accepted in commercial establishments or on commercial transportation because of inappropriate behavior or intoxication.

-Client does not attend their scheduled appointment

-When FNIH or a First Nation organization is charged for damages; billed for keys; or no shows.