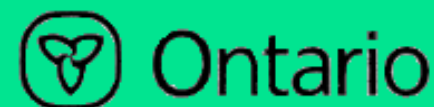


Bulletin



Bulletin Number 4376	Date November 1, 2001	Direct inquiries to Ministry of Health Processing Office <i>(address below)</i>
Distribution Physicians, Hospitals, Clinics, Laboratories		

Subject **Northern Health Travel Grant Program**

The Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) Program helps to defray some of the travel costs for residents of Northern Ontario who must travel long distances to receive medically necessary physician specialist services unavailable in their local community.

On October 11, 2001, the ministry announced major enhancements to the NHTG program. The enhancements will be in effect on November 1, 2001, and will significantly increase reimbursements to northern residents for travel expenses incurred in order to access necessary medical specialist services.

Three changes will be effective November 1, 2001:

- Travel grants to the nearest medical specialist or designated health facility that is capable of providing the service will be based on the two-way road distance.
- The amount of the grant will be based on payment of 34.25 cents per kilometre based on the two-way road distance between the area where the insured person lives and the location of the nearest medical specialist or health facility that can provide the service.
- A deductible of 100 kilometres on the trip will be applied.

The enhanced NHTG will help ensure northerners can access the quality health care they deserve.

Please note that to be eligible for a grant, the actual one-way distance between the area in which the insured person lives in Northern Ontario and the area where the nearest specialist/facility that can provide the service is located in Ontario or Manitoba must be at least 100 kilometre.

Also note that the completion of all letters, documents and records pertaining to the Northern Health Travel Grant is considered to be a common element of the insured services, and is not billable to the patient. Please refer to the General Preamble in the Schedule of Benefits for Physician Services, Section B-1, Common Elements, #8, on Page iv.

Office locations

Barrie 30 Poyntz St. L4M 3P2	Hamilton 119 King St. W P.O. Box 2280, Str. A L8N 4C8	Kenora 220-808 Robertson St. P9N 1X9	Kingston 1055 Princess St. P.O. Box 9000 K7L 5A9	Kitchener 1400 Weber St. E. Unit B2 N2A 3Z8
London 217 York St., 5th Floor P.O. Box 5700 Terminal A N6A 1B7	Mississauga 201 City Centre Dr. P.O. Box 7020, Str. A L5A 3M1	North Bay 101-447 McKeown St. P1B 9S9	Oshawa Exec. Tower, Oshawa Centre. 419 King St. W. P.O. Box 635 L1H 8L4	Ottawa Fuller Building 75 Albert Street K1P 5Y9
Owen Sound 981 2nd Avenue E. N4K 2H5	Peterborough 550 Lansdowne St. W. K9J 8J8	St. Catharines 59 Church St 3rd Floor L2R 3C3	Sarnia 452 Christina St. N. N7T 5W4	Sault Ste. Marie Roberta Bondar Place 70 Foster Dr., Ste. 100 P6A 6V4
Sudbury 199 Larch St., Suite 801 P3E 5R1	Thunder Bay 435 James St. S. , Suite 113 P7E 6T1	Timmins 38 Pine St. N., Ste. 110 P4N 6K6	Toronto 2195 Yonge St. P.O Box 1700 Str. A M5W 1G9	Windsor 1427 Ouellette Ave. N8X 1K1
		Head Office P.O. Box 48 Kingston, ON K7L 5J3		

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

NHTG INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY BULLETIN # 4376

Q1. What changes with the Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) program?

A. The NHTG program is designed to help defray part of the travel costs (i.e. travel, meals, accommodation) of northern Ontario residents who must travel at least 100 km to receive medically necessary insured specialized care not available in their local area. The ministry will enhance the Northern Health Travel Grant to provide a grant based on the total distance a patient must travel, minus a 100 km deductible. The rate increases to 34.25¢/km.

Q2. How does this change the current program?

A. The old program offered a rate of 30.5¢/km based on one-way travel. The new program offers a rate of 34.25¢/km based on two-way travel with a 100 km deductible -- a higher reimbursement rate.

Q3. When are these changes effective?

A. These changes will take effect on November 1, 2001.

Q4. Who is eligible for the NHTG program with the new changes?

A. The NHTG program is designed to help defray part of the travel costs (i.e., travel, meals, accommodation) of northern Ontario residents who must travel at least 100 km to receive medically necessary insured specialized care not available in their local area. For purposes of the NHTG, a northern resident is a person who lives in Northern Ontario which is defined as the territorial Districts of Algoma,

Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Timiskaming.

Q5. How is the distance calculated for the two-way travel?

A. The distance is calculated by taking the two-way distance between the patient's area of residence and the location of the nearest medical specialist or health facility and then subtracting 100 km. If you travel 200 km one-way for medical services, your grant would be based on $200 \text{ km} \times 2 = 400 \text{ km}$, minus 100 km deductible = 300 km.

Q6. How is the distance calculated on the one-way travel?

A. If a patient travels one-way by ambulance and travels back 200 km by commercial or personal vehicle, the one-way grant would be based on 200 km, minus 100 km deductible = 100 km.

[...Previous page](#)

[Bulletin Menu](#)

[Next page...](#)

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-2-

Q7. Why is a 100 km deductible being applied?

A. The government recognizes that some patients must travel a significant distance for specialist medical services and need some help in defraying the travel cost.

The new reimbursement rate of 34.25¢/km is now based on two-way travel, with a 100 km deductible. While this does not cover the total cost, it will help to ensure that people with the highest travel costs receive the greatest amount of assistance.

Q8. Is there a minimum distance that I must travel?

A. Yes, the patient must travel at least 100 km one-way to be eligible for a travel grant.

Q9. I have an application for a trip in September I have not yet submitted. Can I submit it now and get paid for the extra km?

A. No, the new reimbursement rate will be available to northern Ontario residents who must travel to receive medically necessary insured specialized care not available in their local area and receive services on or after November 1, 2001.

Q10. I live in the district of Muskoka. Do I qualify?

A. Yes, for purposes of the NHTG, a northern resident is a person who lives in Northern Ontario which is defined as the territorial Districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Timiskaming.

Q11. Where do I get information about the NHTG program?

A. We have a Fact Sheet describing the program. It is listed on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's web site (www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ohip/northern.html).

Q12. Where do I get a copy of the NHTG application form?

A. As before, application forms can be obtained from your referring provider, or your local Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care O.H.I.P. office (for office locations see the government pages of the telephone book under Health and then OHIP).

[...Previous page](#)

[Bulletin Menu](#)

[Next page...](#)

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-3-

Q13. Do the NHTG enhancements apply for companions who travel with the patient?

A. Yes, the current rules apply for companion travel, with the enhancement of 34.25 cents/km for two-way travel with a 100 km deductible.

Q14. What financial support is available for patients transported by ambulance?

A. The Northern Health Travel Grant is not available for patients transported by land or air ambulance both ways.

[...Previous page](#)

[Bulletin Menu](#)

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