



MOHLTC-OMA Education and Prevention Committee Interpretive Bulletin

Volume 5, No. 1

Services Relating to Travel Outside Canada

Introduction

What is the Education and Prevention Committee (EPC)?

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) have jointly established the Education and Prevention Committee (EPC). The EPC's primary goal is to educate physicians about submitting OHIP claims that accurately reflect the service provided so that the need for recovery of inappropriately submitted claims is reduced.

What is an Interpretive Bulletin?

Interpretive Bulletins are prepared jointly by the MOHLTC and the OMA to provide general advice and guidance to physicians on specific billing matters. Bulletins are provided for education and information purposes only, and express the MOHLTC'S and OMA'S understanding of the law at the time of publication. The information provided in this Bulletin is based on the October 2006 Schedule of Benefits – Physician Services (Schedule). While the OMA and MOHLTC make every effort to ensure that this Bulletin is accurate, the Health Insurance Act (HIA) and Regulations are the only authority in this regard and should be referred to by physicians. Changes in the statutes, regulations, or case law may affect the accuracy or currency of the information provided in this Bulletin. In the event of a discrepancy between this Bulletin and the HIA or its Regulations and/or Schedule under the regulations, the text of the HIA, Regulations and/or Schedule, prevail.

EPC Interpretive Bulletins and all other MOHLTC bulletins are available on the Ministry website (http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/ohip/bulletins/bulletin_mn.html).

Purpose

The purpose of this Interpretive Bulletin is to provide information on which services are, and which are not, insured services for travel outside of Canada.

Vaccines and immunization

In accordance with Regulation 552, Section 24 of the Health Insurance Act, a service or treatment, including immunization or the administration of any drug, rendered

to an insured person in connection with, and for the sole purpose of, traveling to a country outside Canada is uninsured.

However, provision of immunization services that are insured services if the patient were not traveling outside of Canada, remain insured by OHIP even if the patient is planning to travel outside of Canada. If the vaccine is recommended only for travel, but would otherwise not be rec-

ommended for an individual residing in Canada, neither the vaccine nor the injection service is insured.

Travel Advice

A visit at which advice is provided only regarding health measures to be taken when traveling outside of Canada is not insured by OHIP.

Other Uninsured Services

Laboratory services in support of travel outside Canada, such as chest X-rays, blood tests or HIV tests, to name a few, are also uninsured. The laboratory should be made aware that the services are uninsured.

Other Available Resources

Some local health units provide travel clinics, and some communities have private travel clinics, which provide both advice and immunization.

Examples

Example 1

Mr. Diplomat is being posted by his employer to India for a period of two years. He presents in your office to discuss the health precautions he and his family should take, and any immunizations that are required for himself, his wife Sarah, and their four year-old-son Mark.

On reviewing their charts, you determine that Sarah is due for her tetanus booster, and Mark is due for his Penta and MMR boosters. You discuss that it would be prudent if all three were to be immunized for hepatitis A and B. You also advise that all should be immunized against typhoid.

Which services are insured in this situation?

- Only the MMR and Penta immunizations for Mark, and the tetanus immunization for Sarah, are insured by OHIP as both patients are due for these as recommended in the immunization schedule.

Which services are not insured in this situation?

- The discussion around health precautions is for the sole purpose of travel outside of Canada, and is therefore not insured by OHIP. Similarly, if the family decides to follow through with the recommended immunization against hepatitis and/or typhoid (or any others which may be recommended for travel outside of Canada), neither the vaccine nor the injection service would be insured by OHIP.

Example 2

Mr. and Mrs. Traveler plan a vacation to a remote area of South America three months after the birth of their first child. They will be bringing their infant with them on their vacation. Mr. Traveler is a proven carrier of the hepatitis B virus. The couple presents in your office to discuss the health precautions the family should take, and any immunizations that are required for themselves and their child for their trip.

Which services are insured in this situation?

- As noted in the first example, any visit solely to provide advice, such as malaria prophylaxis, for travel outside of Canada are uninsured services, and therefore, not payable by OHIP. Further, if the family decides to proceed with immunization against other diseases, such as typhoid and/or cholera, etc., neither the vaccine nor the injection service would be covered by OHIP.

Which services are not insured in this situation?

- All the routinely recommended immunizations for the newborn are insured. Since the hepatitis B vaccine is medically necessary for the child (due to the carrier parent) it too would be insured.

Important Reminder

The MOHLTC frequently sends communications to physicians who bill OHIP. This correspondence may include the Schedule of Benefits or Schedule of Benefits updates, Bulletins, and other correspondence, such as educational information and monthly remittance advice statements. As a result of these mailings, the Ministry processes a large amount of returned mail from physicians where address information is not current.

Physicians with an OHIP billing number can ensure that they receive all Ministry communications by contacting their local District Office to report an address change. This applies to the practice address, which the physician is required by law to provide to the Ministry, and to the mailing address, which is the address that is usually used when mailings are sent to physicians.

If you have an active OHIP billing number and have recently moved, or if you have not received any correspondence by mail from the Ministry in more than six months, your address information may not be current. Please contact

your local District Office to ensure your address information is up-to-date.

District Offices:

- Hamilton — 10th Floor, Ellen Fairclough Bldg., 119 King St. W., PO Box 2280, LCD 1 Hamilton, L8P 4Y7 (Tel: 905-521-7547).
- London — 217 York St., 5th Fl, N6A 5P9 (Tel: 519-675-6700 or 519-675-6800).
- Mississauga - 201 City Centre Dr., Suite 300, L5B 2T4 (Tel: 905-896-6000).
- Oshawa — 419 King St. W., L1J 7J2 (Tel: 905-576-2870).
- Toronto — 47 Sheppard Ave. E., 4th Fl., PO Box 1700, Stn A, M5W 1G9 (Tel: 416-314-7770).
- Ottawa — 75 Albert St., 7th Fl., K1P 5Y9 (Tel: 613-237-9100).
- Kingston — 1055 Princess St., K7L 5T3 (Tel: 613-545-0656).
- Sudbury — 199 Larch St., Suite 801, P3E 5R1 (Tel: 705-675-4010 or 1-800-461-4006).
- Thunder Bay — 435 James St. S., Suite 113, P7E 6T1 (Tel: 807-475-1351).

Your feedback is welcome and appreciated!

The Education and Prevention Committee welcomes your feedback on the Bulletins in order to help ensure that these are effective educational tools. If you have comments on this Bulletin, or suggestions for future Bulletin topics, etc., please submit them in writing to:

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Education and Prevention Committee

Note: The Physician Services Committee Secretariat will anonymously forward all comments/suggestions to the Co-Chairs of the EPC for review and consideration.

For specific inquiries on Schedule interpretation, please submit your questions IN WRITING to:

Provider Services Branch
Physician Schedule Inquiries
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