
NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT PROGRAM

This fact sheet provides basic information for health care providers and the public and should not be construed as legal advice. The authoritative source for OHIP eligibility is the Health Insurance Act and Reg. 552 thereunder.

What is the Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) Program?

Travel grants are funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to help defray the transportation costs for eligible residents of Northern Ontario who must travel long distances within Ontario or to Manitoba to receive medically needed insured specialty services that are not available locally.

Effective July 1, 2007, the NHTG Program mileage rate has been increased from 34.25 cents per kilometre to 41 cents per kilometre. The 41 cents per kilometre applies to patients whose treatment is provided on, or after July 1, 2007. Approved travel grants for patients whose out-of-town treatment is provided on, or after July 1, 2007, are currently paid at 41 cents per kilometre based on return road distance travel between a patient's area of residence and the location of the nearest medical specialist or health facility than can provide the service. There is a deductible of 100 kilometres on your trip. Travel grants help defray the overall cost of your travel, but do not cover all expenses, such as meals.

In addition, the NHTG Program will provide an accommodation allowance of \$100 for each eligible trip a patient makes, effective October 1, 2007. Until operational details are finalized, the current NHTG application process will remain the same, including the application for accommodation allowance.

Eligibility for accommodation allowance will apply to patients who meet both of the following criteria: (1) must apply, using the application process that has been in existence prior to recently announced changes, and become eligible for a travel grant for out-of-town medical treatment provided on, or after October 1, 2007; and (2) the one-way travel road distance from their area of residence to the location of the nearest medical specialist, or designated health care facility (e.g., hospital or regional cancer centre) able to provide the required treatment must be at least 200 kilometres.

Note:

Effective October 1, 2007, patients enrolled in Ontario sponsored Positron Emission Tomography (PET) trials, or Ontario funded PET registry studies will be eligible for travel grants and an accommodation allowance, should they meet all other NHTG Program eligibility requirements. Eligibility applies to patients whose trials are conducted on, or after October 1, 2007.

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Who can apply for a travel grant?

OHIP insured residents of Northern Ontario, who have been referred by a northern practitioner to the nearest physician specialist or health facility approved by the ministry, can apply for a travel grant. To be eligible, the one-way road distance must be at least 100 kilometres to the nearest physician specialist or health care facility (e.g., hospital, or regional cancer centre) in Ontario or Manitoba where the service can be provided.

Am I eligible for a travel grant?

You are eligible for a travel grant if:

- you are an OHIP insured person with a valid Ontario health card on the date of treatment, living in the districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Timiskaming or Thunder Bay;
- you are referred for specialty health care that is an insured service under the *Health Insurance Act*;
- a northern physician, dentist, optometrist, chiropractor, midwife or nurse practitioner has referred you before the travel takes place;
- you are referred to a medical specialist who is certified by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), or a Winnipeg (Manitoba) physician enrolled on the Manitoba Health Specialist Register and permitted to bill as a specialist; and
- the nearest specialist/health care facility able to provide the type of care you require in Ontario or Manitoba is at least 100 kilometres from your area of residence.

Note:

*You may be referred to any physician specialist, hospital or approved facility; however, the amount of the grant will be based on the distance to the nearest medical specialist who can provide the service, and not necessarily the one you went to visit. If it is necessary to travel to a physician specialist other than the nearest one, the referring practitioner **MUST** provide additional written information on your application, explaining why this was medically necessary.*

Who is not eligible for a grant?

You are not eligible for a travel grant if:

- the care is related to a Workplace Safety and Insurance Board claim.
- another government program or organization pays for your travel.
- health care service is not an OHIP insured benefit, or the travel cost is covered by an insurance company.
- you travel round trip by ambulance.
- services are provided by a non-RCPSC certified medical specialist, or non-RCPSC certified physician in Winnipeg (Manitoba) who is not enrolled on the Manitoba Health Specialist Register.
- the nearest specialist is within 100 kilometres of your area of residence.

Can a person who helps me travel apply for a grant?

Yes, if you are under 16 years of age, or the referring practitioner has indicated based on his or her professional judgment that the patient is unable to travel without a companion. If travel is by plane, train or bus, both you and the companion may receive a grant if you have both paid a fare and Section 5 of the application form is completed. If the travel is by personal car, then you and your companion can apply for an equal share of one grant.

How do I apply for a travel grant?

- The *Application for Northern Health Travel Grant* (form 0327-88) must be completed by you and the referring doctor, dentist, optometrist, chiropractor, midwife or nurse practitioner before you travel. Application forms can be obtained from the above referring providers, or your local Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care office (for office locations see the government pages of the telephone book under Health and then OHIP or access the Internet at www.health.gov.on.ca). Your travelling companion must also complete the appropriate section(s). You must complete a form for each visit you make.
- The specialist you travel to see must complete his or her section of the form.
- After your treatment, mail or take your application form to a ministry office indicated in the General Instructions section of the form. Include your **original** bus, rail or air travel receipts as well as those for any travelling companion. Do not send photocopies.
- Applications must be received by the ministry within twelve (12) months of your visit to the specialist/health care facility. Incomplete forms will be returned to the patient.

Note:

*Initial referral for which medical service is provided on, or after **October 1, 2006**, the Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) Program requirement for a northern referral has been changed to **one referral every twelve (12) months**. There will be no limit on the number of medically necessary follow-ups, as long as they are made within twelve months from an initial referral/service date to the same specialist or facility.*

*Effective **January 1, 2007**, for the purpose of the NHTG Program, the definition of a medical specialist (certification by the RCPSC) has been expanded to include Winnipeg (Manitoba) physicians enrolled on the Specialist Register of Manitoba Health (MH) and permitted to bill as specialists. The names on the following pages provided by Manitoba Health lists non-RCPSC certified physicians who are permitted to bill as specialists, and thus recognized for travel grant eligibility purposes. Direct any questions regarding this matter to (705) 564-7288.*

To verify a specialist's RCPSC certification using the website, follow these steps:

1. **Key:** <http://www.royalcollege.ca/>
2. **Specify** language (English/French) below "Directory of Fellows"
3. **Click:** "Confirm Status" and accept Disclaimer
4. **Enter** doctor's last name and city and click: "Search"
5. **Check** specialty/subspecialty

A physician showing under a given specialty is certified, and a certification date will be specified.

For general information:

- Refer to the *Application for Northern Health Travel Grant* (form 0327-88) cover page and General Instruction Page, **or** call:
 - (705) 675-4010 (local area)
 - 1 800 461-4006 (for service in English)
 - 1 800 461-1149 (for service in French)
- Access the ministry website at:
www.health.gov.on.ca

For more information:

- Call the ministry INFOLine at:
1 800 268-1154 (toll free in Ontario only).
In Toronto, call 416 314-5518.
For TTY service, call 1 800 387-5559.
- Visit the ministry website at:
www.health.gov.on.ca

**Non-RCPSC Certified Physicians Recognized and Permitted
by Manitoba Health to Bill as Specialists**

Field of Practice	Physician(s)
Anesthesia	Forgach, Linda Gezanne Migneault, Brigitte Parkinson, Bronwyn Leigh Strumpher, Johann Syslak, Walter Bernard
Cardiology	Ali, Jathi Idris Barac, Ivan Cohen, Jamie Neil Geddes, John Stafford Morris, Andrew Lee Mymmin, David Seifer, Colette Shaikh, Nasir Syed, Jaffer Ali
Cardiovascular Surgery	Fremes, Stephen Edward
Dermatology	Joundi, Mohamed Ghassan
Diagnostic Radiology	Brown, Ross Edward Derek Nguyen, Hanh Putnins, Rita Elwine Sawka, Sandra Elaine
Gastroenterology	Renner, Eberhard Ludwig
General Surgery	Fonger, James Douglas Saadia, Roger Zabolotny, Brent Peter
Internal Medicine	Cowden, Anne Griffin, Patrick Mary Gerard Hicks, Cynthia Darlene Anhalt Kumar, Aparna Laham, Charles Lawrence Mathew, George Nyomba, Bulangu Lukuki Rafeeq, Bushra Rubinstein, Ethan

Medical Oncology	Olweny, Charles Lwanga Mark
Nephrology	Miller, Lisa Marie
Neurology	Amir, Numan Eshghi, Esfahani, Faid Melanson, Maria Moore, David Francis Nagaria, Mohammed H. Rafay, Mubeen F. Salman, M. S.
Neurosurgery	Berrington, Neil Reginald Cristante Loris
Obstetrics and Gynecology	Rogozinska, Ludwika
Ophthalmology	Harrington, John Kinser, Jean Patricia Mahoney
Orthopedic Surgery	Nasser-Sharif, Susan Bomany
Pediatrics	Baier, Ronald John Miller, David Lloyd Sathya, Pushpa Srinivasan, Ganesh Webb, Susan Mary
Plastic Surgery	Buchel, Edward Wayne Olivier, Stephanie
Psychiatry	Joshi, Jagan Nath Lowther, Glen Harrison Seifer, Roman Stelzer, Jose
Radiation Oncology	Chowdhury, Amitava Dutta Jones, Keith Davies Leylek, Ahmet Sakir
Respirology	Anthonisen, Nicholas Rioch Mink, Steven Neil
Rheumatology	Hamideh, Fayad
Vascular Surgery	Louridas, George

Note: *The information on this chart may change on a regular basis. Direct any questions regarding this list to: (705) 564-7288.*