

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.

Northern Health Travel Grant Program

Northern Health Travel Grants are funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The grants help pay some of the travel related costs for Northern Ontario residents who must travel at least 100 kilometres (km) one-way for medical specialist or designated health care facility services that are not locally available. In addition, the NHTG Program provides an accommodation allowance of \$100 per eligible trip to patients whose one-way road distance to the closest specialist or designated health care facility (e.g. hospital for MRI) able to provide the required services is at least 200km.

Effective December 1, 2012, the eligibility criteria for the accommodation allowance will change. Patients who travel at least 200km one-way to access the closest medical specialist services, or designated health care facility-based procedures must meet all of the following conditions, in order to be eligible for the \$100 accommodation allowance per treatment trip:

- (a) The patient meets the travel grant eligibility criteria items stipulated on the cover page of the Northern Health Travel Grant Application Form: Items #:1, 2, 4, 5 and 6;
- (b) The patient has travelled at least 200km one-way to access the required OHIP insured services/facility-based procedures from his/her area of residence to the location of the nearest medical specialist/designated health care facility able to render the required services;
- (c) For medical services rendered on, or after December 1, 2012, the patient submits an accommodation receipt to prove he/she incurred an accommodation expense.

Am I eligible for a travel grant?

You are eligible for a travel grant if:

- you are an OHIP insured Ontario resident on the date of treatment, and your primary place of residence is in the districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay or Timiskaming;
- you are referred to a medical specialist, or health facility-based 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; **or** you are referred to a physician who holds a specialist certificate of registration issued by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) in a recognized medical or surgical specialty other than family or general practice; **and**
- the nearest specialist/designated health care facility able to provide the type of care you require in Ontario or Manitoba is at least 100km from your area of residence.

Processing Time

A cheque will be mailed to you within approximately 4-6 weeks from the date the ministry receives your correctly completed application form. Please allow 6 weeks before making an inquiry regarding the status of your application.

What happens if an applicant is incapable of giving consent:

- **For children under 16 years of age**, a parent with custody, a children's aid society or other person lawfully entitled to give consent for a child can do so, and sign the application form on behalf of the child.
- **For incapable individuals who are 16 years of age or older**, one of the following ranked persons can act as the individual's substitute decision maker and consent or sign the application form on behalf of the incapable individual. If there is no person available and willing to act on behalf of the individual under the first category, someone in the next category can act on behalf of the individual, and so on:
 1. The patient's guardian or guardian of property, if the consent relates to the guardian's authority to make a decision on behalf of the patient.
 2. The patient's attorney for personal care or attorney for property, if the consent relates to the attorney's authority to make a decision on behalf of the patient.
 3. The patient's representative appointed by the Consent and Capacity Board, if the representative has authority to give the consent.
 4. The patient's spouse or partner.

5. A child or parent of the patient, or a children's aid society or other person who is lawfully entitled to give or refuse consent in the place of the parent. This paragraph does not include a parent who has only a right of access to the individual. If a children's aid society or other person is lawfully entitled to consent in the place of the parent, this paragraph does not include the parent.
6. A parent of the patient with only a right of access to the individual.
7. A brother or sister of the patient.
8. Any other relative of the patient.

Who is not eligible for a travel 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.
- the health care service is not an OHIP insured benefit.
- you travel round trip by ambulance.
- the health care service is provided by a non-RCPSC certified medical specialist, and/or non-RCPSC certified physician in Winnipeg (Manitoba) who is not enrolled on the Manitoba Health Specialist Register; **or** the health care service is provided by a physician who does not hold a specialist certificate of registration issued by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) in a recognized medical or surgical specialty other than family or general practice.
- the nearest specialist/designated health care facility is within 100km of your area of residence.

What costs does the NHTG program help pay?

Travel:

- Approved travel grants are currently paid at 41 cents per km based on return road distance travel between a patient's area of residence and the location of the nearest medical specialist or designated health care facility that can provide the service. There is a deductible of 100km on your trip.

Accommodation:

- The NHTG program provides an accommodation allowance of \$100 for each eligible treatment trip.
- For services rendered on, or after December 1, 2012, the patient must submit an accommodation receipt to prove he/she incurred an accommodation expense.

See Q & A for accommodation allowance at the end of this document under Accommodation Allowance Questions and Answers (Qs & AS).

Meals:

- Travel grants help pay some of the travel related costs, but do not cover all expenses, such as meals.

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 you are 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 the companion section 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. 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 round trip you make. **Only one application can be submitted for each round trip**, regardless of the number of physicians visited during that trip.
- 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** accommodation, 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/designated health care facility. Incomplete forms will be returned to the applicant.

What is a procedure provided in a designated health care facility?

The following are examples of procedures performed in a designated health facility:

1. Chemotherapy at a regional cancer centre;
2. MRI, or dialysis services performed in a hospital;
3. Ultrasound, or Pulmonary Function Testing services rendered in a hospital.

Initial referral: Only one referral is required every twelve (12) months, as long as the follow-up is to the same specialist or designated health care facility the patient was initially referred to.

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

1. **Key:** <http://www.royalcollege.ca/>
2. **Select:** Royal College Directory (i.e. under Quick Links)
3. **Select:** Begin Your Search
4. **Enter** doctor's last name and city and select: "Search"
5. **Check** doctor's certification specialty designation

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

Accommodation Allowance Questions and Answers (Qs & As):

Why is there a change in policy that now requires a receipt to qualify for the accommodation allowance?

In keeping with the government's commitment for careful spending of public funds, the NHTG Program is now requiring receipts for verification and audit purposes. Receipts must be submitted for medical services rendered on, or after December 1, 2012.

What is acceptable as a receipt? Can I submit copies?

Original itemized receipts must be submitted. "Original itemized receipt" refers to a receipt that lists the item(s) purchased and the individual price(s) for each item, for example from a hotel or motel. This is usually the same receipt that is produced by a cash register. The authorization receipt for a credit or debit card transaction is not considered an itemized receipt.

Where do I submit my receipt(s)?

Accommodation receipt(s), along with your application must be submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 199 Larch Street, Suite 801, Sudbury ON P3E 5R1.

Does one have to pay for accommodation in order to qualify for an accommodation allowance?

In order to qualify for an accommodation allowance, a patient must meet the criteria stipulated in (a) and (b) above, and must also have incurred an accommodation expense and submit a receipt as proof of payment.

Can I use reward programs, such as air miles as payment for accommodation?

Yes, use of air miles, accompanied by a receipt is an acceptable method of payment.

The receipt is not in my name as a patient, will it still be accepted?

No, the receipt has to be in the name of the patient.

I stayed with family/friends can I qualify for an accommodation allowance?

No, if you have not incurred an accommodation expense, you do not qualify for an accommodation allowance.

I had to stay more than one night will the accommodation allowance cover the duration of my stay?

Only \$100 accommodation allowance is payable per eligible treatment trip – this is not a reimbursement, and is not based on the number of lodging nights.

Are travel companions now eligible for an accommodation allowance?

No, companions are not eligible for an accommodation allowance.

Will my expenses for meals, taxi, etc. be covered if I don't stay at a hotel?

No, the NHTG Program does not cover expenses for meals and taxi.

I lost my receipt and can't get another one. Can you process my accommodation allowance?

No, an accommodation allowance will not be processed, unless a receipt is provided as proof of payment for an accommodation expense.

My one-way road distance to the specialist I was referred to is less than 200km, but I was asked by the specialist I saw not to drive and stay overnight. I have accommodation receipts for a night's stay in the hotel – do I qualify for an accommodation allowance?

No, you don't qualify for an accommodation allowance. You must meet the three conditions outlined above in order to qualify for an accommodation allowance, including the requirement for the minimum one-way road distance of at least 200km.

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)