



MINISTERIAL POLICY

Department of Health and Social Services

Medical Travel – Eligibility Criteria

1. Statement of Policy

The Department of Health and Social Services will provide medical travel assistance to persons who meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this Ministerial Policy (Policy).

2. Principles

The Department of Health and Social Services will adhere to the following principles when implementing this Policy:

- (1) Residents of the Northwest Territories (NWT) should have access to the necessary and appropriate Insured Health Services.
- (2) The cost of medical travel should not be an economic barrier to access Insured Health Services.
- (3) The Medical Travel program should be transparent and accountable.
- (4) The Medical Travel program is complementary to other medical travel benefit plans and is considered the payor of last resort.

3. Scope

The criteria outlined in this Policy are to be used to determine eligibility for medical travel assistance as referenced in the Government of the Northwest Territories' *Medical Travel Policy*.

4. Definitions

Client – could be an Eligible Person, a parent or Guardian.

Eligible Persons – NWT residents with a valid health care card who have a Valid Medical Referral to access necessary and appropriate Insured Health Services.

Guardian - A person who is lawfully entitled to make decisions on behalf of another.

Health Care Provider – a physician, nurse practitioner, registered midwife or community health nurse licensed to practice in the NWT.

Insured Health Services – services covered by the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act* and the *Medical Care Act*.

Low Income – Eligible Persons who can demonstrate being:

- Individuals with an income of \$70,000 a year or less; or
- Individuals who are married or common-law with a combined income of \$85,000 a year or less; or,
- Individuals with one or more minor children living within their household with a combined income of \$100,000 a year or less.

Nearest Centre – the nearest approved facility that is available to provide the necessary and appropriate Insured Health Service required for the patient.

Valid Medical Referral – written authorization from a Health Care Provider to a patient to the Nearest Centre necessary and appropriate Insured Health Services from any community in the Northwest Territories.

5. Authority and Accountability

(1) General

a) Minister

The Minister of Health and Social Services (the Minister) is accountable to the Executive Council for the implementation of this Policy.

b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services (the Deputy Minister) is accountable and responsible to the Minister for the administration of this Policy.

(2) Specific

a) The Minister:

- (i) may approve changes to this Policy.

- b) The Deputy Minister or designate:
 - (i) may make recommendations to the Minister regarding the implementation of this Policy;
 - (ii) may delegate the administration and implementation of this Policy;
 - (iii) will monitor the administration and implementation of this Policy; and
 - (iv) will evaluate the Policy periodically and make recommendations to the Minister for revisions to the Policy as necessary.

6. Provisions

1. Eligibility

Eligibility is restricted to NWT residents who require medical travel to the Nearest Centre to access necessary and appropriate Insured Health Services and meet the following criteria:

- a) The patient must have a valid NWT health care card; and,
- b) The reason for travel is a Valid Medical Referral; and,
- c) The patient (parent or guardian) must obtain prior approval for the applicable medical travel benefits from the Medical Travel office; and,
- d) The patient (or parent, Guardian or spouse of a patient) does not have medical travel benefits through an employer or other third party insurance plan.

Note: If the employer or other third party insurance plan has been fully exhausted, the patient may be eligible for assistance under the Medical Travel Policy.

7. Financial Resources

Financial resources required under this Policy are conditional on approval of funds in the Main Estimates by the Legislative Assembly and there being a sufficient unencumbered balance in the appropriate activity for the fiscal year for which the funds would be required.

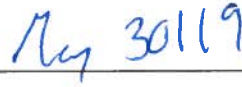
8. Right to Appeal

Clients have the right to appeal medical travel decisions.



Glen Abernethy

Minister



Date