



Policy: ***Medical Services Travel Fund***
Date of Implementation: October 2023

PURPOSE:

On occasion Members of the Association may be required to travel outside of their Prince George or regional campus communities (as applicable) to seek medical treatment. The Parties agreed through collective bargaining to create a Medical Services Travel Fund (herein called the “Fund”) administered by the Association to assist Members of the Association in offsetting costs associated with required medical travel.

FUND VALUE:

Subject to the Fund remaining in the Collective Agreement, and subject to negotiated changes to the Fund through collective bargaining, the Employer will contribute twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) on July 1, 2023, and twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000) annually to the Fund in each subsequent year of the Agreement.

SCOPE:

Only the Member’s personal expenses are eligible for reimbursement provided the Member is also the patient, or the Member is required to travel where the Member is the attendant of a patient. If the Member is travelling as the attendant, the patient must be an immediate family member. If the Member is required to be the attendant, there is no age limit for a patient requiring an attendant but the reason for the attendant must be of a medical and not a personal nature.

This benefit is not available for expenses incurred for dependents or other family members.

ELIGIBILITY:

Subject to the available Fund amounts and criteria, all employees eligible for membership in the Association shall be eligible to access the Fund. The maximum yearly benefit for a Full-time Member is \$5,000 and for a Part-time Member is \$1,000, pro-rated based on months employed during the claim period.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Expenses eligible for consideration under the Fund include:

- Reasonable transportation costs incurred by private vehicle, bus, rail, ferry or scheduled air for the Member;
- If a private automobile is used instead of commercial transportation, reimbursement will be at the current UNBC-FA rate in effect at the time to a maximum of return economy airfare;

- Airport Improvement fees may be included as reimbursable expenses;
- Airport limousine service and taxi fees may be included as reimbursable expenses to a maximum of sixty-five dollars (\$65) per claim;
- If a Member chooses to rent a car at the destination, a maximum of sixty-five dollars (\$65) per claim will be reimbursed;
- Accommodation and meals in a commercial establishment for the Member (whether the Member is the patient or attendant) before and after medical treatment is reimbursable up to a maximum of one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125) per night for accommodation and as per the current UNBC-FA per diem rates for meals. The length of pre and post treatment accommodation stays shall be consistent with direction from the attending physician; and
- The most economical mode of transportation must be used in keeping with the attending physician's medical advice and patient's comfort.
- Transportation within the provinces of British Columbia or Alberta.
- Transportation outside of the provinces of British Columbia or Alberta where pre-approval of the Faculty Association (see "Appeals") is obtained before travel commences.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Expenses that would be ineligible for reimbursement under the Fund include:

- Dental treatments or services except for dental surgery performed by a member of the College of Dental surgeons;
- Procedures considered not medically necessary by the Medical Services Plan of BC;
- Cosmetic treatments;
- Transportation to a destination outside British Columbia or Alberta where pre-approval has not been obtained before travel commences;
- Expenses without receipts except for automobile mileage reimbursement and meal per diems;
- Expenses that are reimbursed from any other source; and
- Expenses which are not specifically listed as being covered.

CRITERIA:

In order for expenses to be reimbursable, the following criteria must be met:

1. The attending physician or dentist believes that medically necessary treatment is not available locally;
2. The referral is to the nearest major center equipped to provide the required and recommended treatment;
3. The treatment is performed by an M.D., a licensed chiropractor or physiotherapist, or a member of the Provincial College of Dental Surgeons;
4. Expenses associated with the medical service travel are incurred as soon as is practical from the referral date; and
5. The attending physician or dentist has provided a written referral note for the Member. If the Member is the Attendant, the attending physician's or dentist's note must include the requirement for the patient to have an Attendant.

CLAIMS AND FUND DISTRIBUTION:

Claim forms are available on request from the Faculty Association Office. Claims may be submitted either electronically or by mail directly to the Faculty Association Office. Partial claim forms or claim forms submitted without the required supporting documentation will not be accepted.

Claim forms must be accompanied by supporting receipts and the physician's or dentist's referral note.

Claims submitted after the deadline will not be eligible for reimbursement and cannot be carried forward to another claim period.

The Fund will be distributed once annually at the end of each claim period. Should the total amount of approved claims exceed the annual amount available in the Fund, the claims will be pro-rated. For example, if fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) is available and claims total thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000), then each claim would be reimbursed at fifty cents (\$0.50) on the dollar ($\$15,000/\$30,000 = \0.50).

As Fund reimbursements are considered taxable benefits, the Association may be required to withhold applicable deductions from the payments and issue a T4 to the Member in the appropriate year.

APPEALS:

Should a Member wish to appeal an amended or rejected claim, or make a request for benefits based on unique or unforeseeable circumstances, the Member may present an appeal directly to the Treasurer and President within five days of being notified of an amended or rejected claim. The decision of the Treasurer and President shall be final.

REPORTING:

Upon request from the Employer, the Association will provide the Employer with a copy of this policy, and/or an annual report of expenditures under the Fund aggregated to protect personal confidential information.

RESPONSIBILITY:

The staff of the Association will be responsible to administer annual claims under the Fund, and these activities will align with the reporting requirements for issuing annual T4 notices to claimants. Once claims have been reviewed and approved by at least two (2) staff members of the Association, payments will be prepared and signed by at least two (2) designated signatories of the Association, with one (1) of the two (2) designated signatories being the Treasurer. The staff of the Association will ensure appropriate and regulatory tracking and record keeping of claims and the Fund balance.

AUTHORITY:

The Executive Committee has the authority to approve or amend this policy.