



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”) 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. Any excess funds at the end of each claim period will be transferred to the Post-Retirement Benefit Fund.

SCOPE:

Only the Member’s personal expenses are eligible for reimbursement provided the Member is required to travel where the Member is either the patient requiring medical treatment or is the attendant of a patient requiring medical treatment. If the Member is travelling as the attendant, the patient must be an immediate family member. (Note: For the purpose of this Fund, an immediate family member is defined as a spouse, child or parent of the Member in accordance with the *Family Law Act* of BC.)

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;
- Reimbursement of kms at the current UNBC-FA km rate equivalent to the cost of a return economy airfare, if a private vehicle is used instead of commercial transportation;
- Airport Improvement fees;
- Airport limousine service and taxi fees 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 day;
- Hotel accommodation up to a maximum of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) per night. The length of pre and post treatment accommodation stays is reimbursable and shall be consistent with direction from the attending physician;
- Private accommodation provided by a family or friend at forty dollars (\$40) per night;
- Meals as per the current UNBC-FA per diem rates;
- 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. Claim forms and receipts must be submitted directly to the Faculty Association Office either electronically or by mail, and must be received by the Faculty Association no later than the third Friday in January for expenses incurred in the previous calendar year. Incomplete claim forms or claim forms submitted without the accompanying receipts will not be accepted. Claims submitted after the deadline will not be eligible for reimbursement and cannot be carried forward to another claim period.

Members must submit separate claim forms for each travel incident.

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

Claim reimbursements will be processed once annually within sixty (60) days of the deadline for submission of claims. 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, applicable deductions will be withheld from the payment.

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.

RESPONSIBILITY:

The staff of the Association will be responsible to oversee the administration of annual claims under the Fund. Once claims have been received, reviewed and approved by at least two (2) staff members of the Association, a summary report of claims will be provided to the Treasurer for approval, and then claims will be forwarded to the University for final payment processing. The staff of the Association will ensure appropriate tracking and record keeping of claims and any Fund transfers to the Post-Retirement Benefit Fund.

AUTHORITY:

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