



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



## **Welcome! Wytkp! Gilakas'la! Shhweenustham!**

Happy New Year! Journeys is now in its third year. Thank you for your readership as we strive to provide helpful content and updates for your community's Medical Transportation (MT) program. The Health Benefits and Services team appreciates your partnership in delivering and transforming the MT Benefit.

We hope you enjoyed the [December issue](#) of the Journeys bulletin. 2023 was a year of transformation, filled with many improvements across the MT Project to better serve Clients. We are excited to continue this work in 2024.

**Learn more about the MT Transformation Journey and our progress so far by watching the [YouTube video here](#).**

## **Navigating winter weather conditions**



As the winter weather persists, challenges may affect different types of travel. Supporting Client safety while travelling is of the utmost importance.

Winter weather can cause disruptions to travel routes, leading to traffic and flight delays or cancellations. Taking proactive measures is essential to minimize these disruptions.

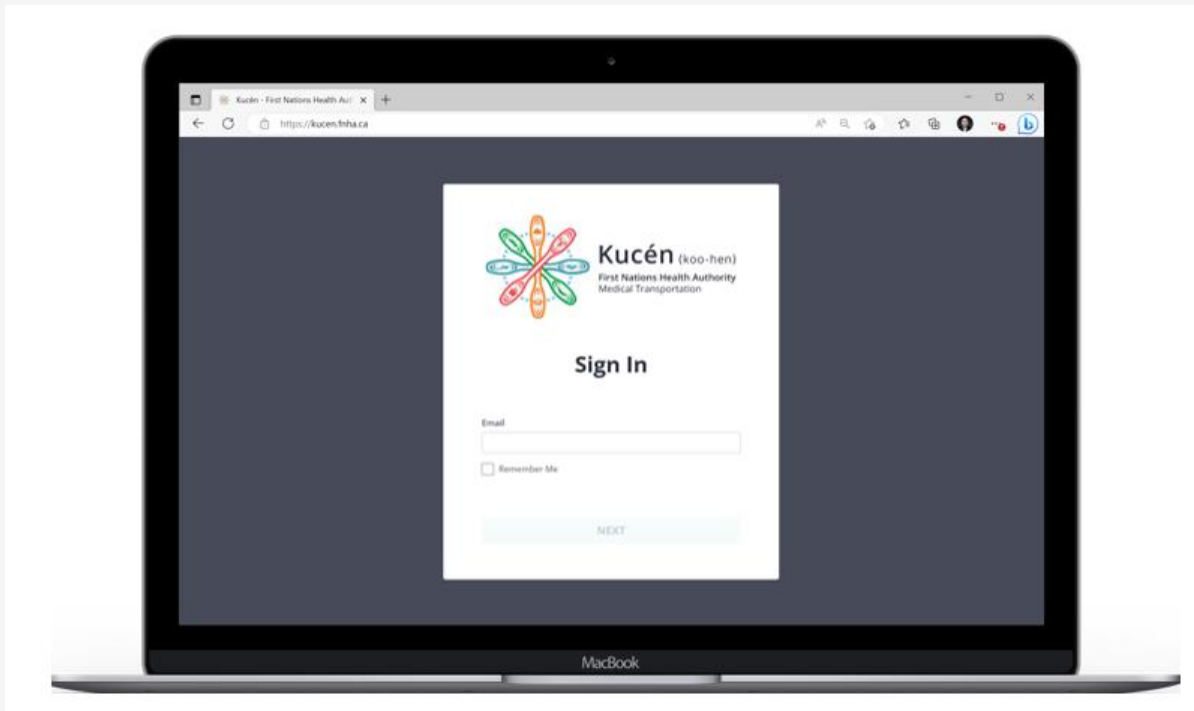
Here are some key resources that will assist you in navigating winter weather challenges:

- [DriveBC](#): Stay informed about winter road conditions, closures, and traffic delays so that you can plan alternative routes when necessary and minimize travel disruptions. Additionally, this website includes traffic cameras for certain roads, offering real-time visuals of current conditions.
- [Google Maps](#): Access live updates on travel durations, road closures and traffic delays, providing valuable insights into the current state of travel routes.
- [Environment and Natural Resources Canada](#): Stay ahead of changing weather patterns and alerts using weather applications that provide live updates on snowstorms, freezing rain, and other winter-related conditions.

After reviewing the provided resources, you may need to make necessary adjustments to travel arrangements for Clients facing difficulties returning home or following their planned routes. **Please note that trips exceeding five days due to weather-related challenges must be submitted to MT Operations as an Exception.**

We recognize that these circumstances can be challenging, but our team is here to support you throughout the process. If you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact MT Operations at 1-855-550-5454.

## ***Kucén*: making MT administration easier for your Community**



Experience enhanced benefit administration with [Kucén](#) (pronounced koo-hen from the *Secwepemctsin* language), our new travel arrangement system. MT Operations began using *Kucén* for travel arrangements in April 2023, and it has since become an essential tool for numerous communities and First Nation organizations. *Kucén* marks a significant advancement in our commitment to streamlining processes and enhancing user experiences.

**Communities using *Kucén* will no longer be required to complete and submit MT logs.** *Kucén* will be able to capture the necessary data to replace program reporting and automate this process!

If your community is interested in adopting the new system, please participate in our [Kucén Survey](#) or contact us at [mtproject@fnha.ca](mailto:mtproject@fnha.ca).

## **Tip of the Month: Determining Client Eligibility**



The first step to any travel request is determining the Client's eligibility.

For a Client to be eligible for MT benefits, they must be:

- Registered with a valid Indian Status number; and
- A resident of BC with a valid Personal Health Number (PHN); or
- An infant up to 24 months old, with at least one parent who is registered Status and a resident of BC.

**Note:** If you need to verify that a Client is registered Status, please get in touch with MT Operations or the HB Eligibility Department at 1-855-550-5454.

**It's important to note that a spouse of a First Nations Client who is not registered Status themselves is not eligible to receive MT benefits.**

After confirming the Client's eligibility, it's essential to identify the community responsible for providing their MT benefits. This is particularly necessary for requests involving Clients living in your community but not members of your Nation, ensuring that their home community is not responsible.

This information is available in the Provision of MT Benefits document, which you can access in your MT User Guide Appendix or by reaching out to MT Operations.

If you are ever unsure about where a Client should be accessing their MT benefits, you can always reach out to MT Operations at 1-855-550-5454 for assistance.

**Explore our New Health Benefits Factsheets!**

## MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

First Nations Health Authority  
Health Through Address

The Medical Transportation (MT) benefit is intended to supplement the cost of travel expenses to access medically necessary health services not available in your community of residence. If you are registered with First Nations Health Benefits & Services (FNHBS), you are eligible for MT benefits.

**What my plan covers** ✓

You can access MT benefits for travel to access health services, including the following:

- > Medical services covered by the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) or a public health agency (e.g., cancer-related travel);
- > Services eligible under FNHBS (e.g., dental, vision, etc.);
- > Publicly funded diagnostic tests and preventative screening programs;
- > Traditional healers, if approved as an Exception;
- > Treatment Centres for Substance Use (formerly NNADAPs); or
- > Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT).

**What my plan does not cover** ✗

Some types of travel that are not covered by your MT benefits include, but are not limited to:

- > Travel back to your community of residence if you became ill during non-medical related travel; or
- > Travel where the only purpose is to pick up items that do not need to be fitted (e.g., prescriptions, glasses/contacts and various medical supplies and equipment items).

Note: Some travel requests require additional documentation. Your Patient Travel (PT) Clerk or FNHBS can support this process.

For additional information on current MT rates, escort eligibility, documentation or required travel forms, please scan the QR code to visit our website.

MT benefits may provide funding towards the cost of travel, accommodation and meals for the following:

- > A mileage rate that supplements the cost of fuel;
- > Non-commercial accommodation (i.e., Jean C. Barber Lodge or Easter Seals);
- > Commercial accommodation at the most economical medical rate;
- > Accommodation in private homes
- > Meals at a daily rate, nightly rate or weekly rate.

**Note:** If you need someone to accompany you for medical travel, you may be eligible to travel with an Escort.

### How do I access coverage?

Where you access the program depends on what Nation and/or community you are from and where you live.

**If you live in community,** please contact your community's Patient Travel (PT) Clerk to access your MT benefits.

**If you live outside your community,** or are unsure who to contact for your travel, please call us at **1-855-550-5454**.

- 1** Submit your travel request and your written confirmation of appointment at least five days before your trip to get prior approval.
- 2** You receive your travel arrangements from your PT Clerk or FNHBS.
- 3** Attend your appointment as scheduled and get a signed confirmation of attendance slip from your provider.
- 4** Submit your Confirmation of Attendance slip to your PT Clerk or to FNHBS.

If you have any questions about your MT benefits or how to access coverage, please call FNHBS at **1-855-550-5454**.

NOVEMBER 2021

We have created brand-new factsheets for each benefit area to provide Clients with an overview of their Health Benefits plan. You can access the factsheets on the [First Nations Health Authority \(FNHA\) website](https://www.fnha.ca).

**We encourage you to share these resources with your community members,** ensuring everyone knows about their plan, who to contact for questions, and how to access their benefits.

## MT Training for PT clerks

The MT Operations team hosts regular training sessions throughout the year. If you or any member of your community would like to attend an MT training session, please contact [transportation@fnha.ca](mailto:transportation@fnha.ca) to sign up. One of our team members will be in touch about training dates and next steps.

## Print-Friendly Version of Journeys

In response to feedback from our Journeys survey, a print-friendly version of the monthly newsletter is now available. This will allow you to distribute Journeys among colleagues and other benefit administrators as needed.

All previous editions of our Journeys newsletter can be accessed on the [MT Project page](#), and each edition will now also feature a dedicated PDF link, streamlining the process for those who prefer a print format.

**Thank you**