



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

JOURNEYS

Welcome! Wytkp! Gilakas'la! Shhweenustham!

We hope you enjoyed the [September issue](#) of the Journeys bulletin. Thank you for your readership as we strive to provide helpful content and updates to The First Nations Health Benefits and Services (FNHBS) Medical Transportation (MT) Benefit. We appreciate your partnership in delivering and transforming the MT Benefit.

Watch our [YouTube video here](#) to learn more about the MT transformation journey.

Meal rate changes effective December 2, 2024



In response to community feedback and our ongoing review of food costs, the FNHBS will be increasing meal rates under the MT Benefit effective December 2, 2024. These adjustments reflect rising food costs across the province and aim to ensure Clients have access to healthy meals while receiving medical care away from home.

The daily rate will be increased to cover the cost of two meals for Clients on same-day trips and a daily rate for children will be introduced, to align with the existing nightly rates. The daily rate applies to same-day travel lasting more than six hours, including appointment time. Please note that Clients traveling for less than six hours who have a medical condition requiring regular meals, such as diabetes, may also qualify for the daily rate.

Additionally, the FNHBS is implementing inflationary increases to address the rising food prices in restaurants across BC.

The updated meal rates, effective December 2, 2024, are shown in the table below:

Fee Schedule for Meal Rates		
Rate type	Previous rate	Updated rate <i>effective December 2, 2024</i>
Daily rate for same-day trips	\$17.00 per person	\$35.50 per person (5+ years)

lasting more than six hours.		\$17.00 per person (under 5 years)
Nightly rate for trips up to six nights duration.	\$68.00 per night per person (5+ years)	\$70.50 per night per person (5+ years)
	\$29.00 per night per person (under 5 years)	\$30.00 per night per person (under 5 years)
Weekly rate for overnight trips of seven nights or more.	\$283.00 per week per Client	\$283.00 per week per Client
	\$425.00 per week per Client and approved escort*	\$425.00 per week per Client and approved escort*

Please visit our [Health Benefits News webpage](#) and [MT Landing page](#) for more information.

Tip of the month: determining the closest appropriate provider



One of the criteria for coverage of the MT Benefit is that travel must be to the closest appropriate healthcare Provider or facility. This allows the program to support low-barrier access to medically necessary services while managing program sustainability.

FNHBS recognizes that Clients may need to seek care from a provider or facility that is not the closest. In such cases, an Exception request must be submitted to Health Benefits with documentation outlining the rationale for travel to a different provider or facility. Information on how to submit an Exception request can be found in Section 7 of your MT Administrator Guide.

Situations considered during the Exceptions review include, but are not limited to:

- When there is medical documentation indicating the time sensitivity of the Client's medical condition or diagnostic test;
- When a Client reports a culturally unsafe experience with the closest health professional;
- When accessing the closest provider may not be the most efficient and economical option.

Discussing the closest appropriate provider requirement with community members ensures they understand the MT coverage and can make informed decisions about their healthcare journey. Clients may also want to discuss the closest appropriate provider consideration with their healthcare provider.

Here are some valuable resources for determining the closest appropriate provider:

- For all trips: [Google Maps](#)
- Medical appointments: [The College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC](#)
- Dental appointments: [British Columbia College of Oral Health Professionals](#)
- Optometry appointments: [College of Optometrists in British Columbia](#)
- Mental health appointments: [FNHA Mental Health Providers Map](#)
- Podiatry appointments: [BC Podiatric Medical Association](#)

Should you have any questions about this policy or the Exceptions process, please contact the MT Exceptions team at 1-855-550-5454.

***Kucén*: transforming MT Benefit administration**



Kucén (koo-hen)
First Nations Health Authority
Medical Transportation

Patient Travel (PT) clerks can now experience enhanced benefit administration with [Kucén](#) (pronounced koo-hen), meaning "to wander/travel far away/abroad" in *Secwepemctsin*.

About Kucén:

- No cost to communities and organizations;
- Replaces all existing MT systems;
- Provides a searchable directory for medical and travel providers;
- Automates MT log submissions to FNHBS;
- Streamlines the Exceptions process; and
- Generates reports on demand.

Kucén onboarding process:

The MT project team has established a three-step streamlined process:



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

Kucén rollout:

FNHBS has been implementing Kucén in communities over the last year. As of October 2024, 19 communities have been fully onboarded, while seven more are undergoing system training with the MT Project Team. Since April 2023, Kucén has streamlined the processing of over 15,000 MT requests for more than 4,600 Clients by efficiently organizing trips and automatically generating reports.

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 to sign up. One of our team members will contact you about training dates and next steps.

Thank you!