



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

PT Clerk User Guide

July 2022

This document is intended to support the adjudication of travel request to: Opioid Agonist Therapy, Withdrawal Treatment and, Travel to FNHA Funded Treatment Centers.

Background: What is changing?

A part of the recent medical transportation (MT) transformation project effort has been to review the benefits that currently require an Exception.

Hence, FNHA is changing how certain benefit areas are assessed. The three benefit areas below can now be coordinated from the community, as a regular MT benefit and no longer require an Exception:

1. Medical travel to Access Opioid Agonist Therapy
2. Medical travel for withdrawal management (Detox)
3. Medical travel to an FNHA-funded treatment centre

Effective July 4th, 2022, these MT requests should be approved or denied based on the travel eligibility described in the FNHA MT Benefit Schedule.

How will these changes affect Patient Travel Clerks

Patient travel (PT) clerks will no longer need to submit an Exception request to FNHA for client requests for medical travel to access the services listed above. FNHA will still be available to support PT Clerks with assessment if required. The final decision on approval/denial of these travel requests will now be made by the patient travel clerk or assessor.

Purpose of this document

As we transition the benefits mentioned above from Exceptions to regular benefits, this document serves as a guideline for assessors and PT clerks when you receive medical requests for these kinds of travel.

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What other services are available to clients seeking support for their medical travel?

Medical Transportation supports eligible First Nations clients to access medical services outside their community. Clients may always request support through the First Nations Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Service (FNVSUPs). FNVSUPs provide individuals with access to specialists in addictions medicine and psychiatry and mental health and wellness care coordinators. These are helpful services for clients that may be requesting MT services for Opioid Agonist therapy, withdrawal management, or treatment centres.

If a client is looking for mental health and substance use virtual services but is not attached to a service provider, they can utilize the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day service to speak to a doctor about their mental health care needs and receive a referral based on the virtual doctor's assessment.

To get a referral to this service, clients can call 1.855.344.3800 to book a Virtual doctor appointment.

Medical travel to access Opioid Agonist Therapy

Opioid agonist therapy involves regular or daily methadone or suboxone medication administration. To receive opioid agonist therapy, a client must visit a doctor to obtain a prescription for methadone/suboxone. Then, the client will make recurring or daily visits to the nearest pharmacy to receive and complete the daily treatment.

Benefit Area: Medical travel to receive opioid agonist therapy

Questions to ask when clients are seeking medical travel for opioid agonist therapy (OAT):

1. Is the medical provider (the destination) considered local (the provider operates within the client's community of residence) or does the appointment require travel outside the client's community of residence?
 - If travel is considered local - it is not eligible for medical travel benefits.
 - If travel is outside the client's resident community – it is eligible for medical travel benefits.
2. Is the client requesting daily medical travel to a General Practitioner registered with the methadone program to prescribe OAT treatment or to a pharmacist for daily witness for ingestion?
 - General Practitioner - This initial appointment is needed to get a prescription for the methadone/suboxone plan. The doctor may also request that the client return for a follow-up appointment(s).
 - Pharmacist - This appointment is for on-site daily medication administration (you will need to record daily trips for the client).
3. Is the client requesting medical travel to the closest GP or Pharmacist for this benefit?
 - If this is the closest provider- it is eligible for medical travel.
 - If this is not the closest provider- it is not eligible for medical travel.
4. What is the required documentation?
 - The General Practitioner Doctor will provide a prescription notice to see a Pharmacist for Opioid Agonist therapy.
 - For all attended appointments, the client requires a signed confirmation of attendance to complete the medical benefit.

Medical travel for withdrawal management (Detox)

Travel to withdrawal management is primarily in an inpatient setting. The location is usually adjacent to the hospital. Withdrawal management can also be provided by a primary care provider or addiction medicine specialist in an outpatient setting.

Benefit Area: Medical travel for withdrawal management to a detox centre

Questions to Ask when clients are seeking medical travel for withdrawal management

1. Does the client have written confirmation of a bed at a detox centre?
 - Yes - book and record the trip.
 - No - The client must provide written confirmation from the detox centre before the travel or attending a centre.
2. What is the required documentation?

- The detox centre should confirm acceptance for in-patient treatment before starting the trip, and
 - A notice confirming attendance after the trip.
3. Is a medical escort being requested?
- Yes. For drop-off and or pick-up.
 - No – No medical escort is requested; therefore no consideration is required.

Medical travel to a treatment centre for substance use more than once in 12 months

Benefit Area: Medical travel to an FNHA Funded or Non-FNHA Funded Centre

Requests to travel for substance use treatment to an FNHA-funded treatment centre more than once in 12 months is now a regular benefit and do not require an Exception.

Travel to an FNHA Funded Treatment Centre

FNHA-funded Treatment Centres are a group of **residential treatment centres with beds funded by FNHA**. These treatment centres have funded beds available.

Questions to Ask when clients are seeking medical travel to an FNHA- funded treatment centre

1. Does the client have written confirmation of acceptance at an FNHA-funded treatment centre?
 - Yes - book and record the trip.
 - No - The client must provide written confirmation from the FNHA-funded [treatment centre](#).

The list of FNHA-funded treatment centres is [here](#):

- Carrier Sekani Family Services
 - Kackaamin Family Development Centre
 - Gya'Wa'Tlaab Healing Centre
 - NAMGIS Treatment Centre
 - Nenqayni Wellness Centre
 - North Wind Wellness Centre
 - Round Lake Alcohol and Drug Treatment Society
 - Telmexw Awtexw Treatment Centre
 - Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society
 - Wilp Si'Satxw Community Healing Centre
2. Is the client requesting travel from a facility on the list of FNHA-funded treatment centres?
 - Yes - travel to an FNHA-funded centre can be approved without submitting an Exception.
 - No – an Exception may be required. [Review details for Travel to a Non-FNHA-funded treatment centre](#).
 3. What documentation is required?
 - The treatment centre should confirm acceptance before the trip, in writing, and,
 - The treatment centre signs the confirmation of attendance form after the trip
 4. Is a medical escort being requested for the medical trip?

- Yes - Can help the client in travelling to the appointment
 - The medical escort is not funded to stay during the client's treatment.
 - Remember to plan for the medical escort's return trip home after their travelling client has arrived at the treatment centre.

Travel to a Non-FNHA Funded Treatment Centre

If the client is requesting MT benefits for travel to a treatment centre that is not on the above list, the PT Clerk is to submit an Exception to FNHA.

Questions to Ask

1. Does the program or funder pay for client travel to/from the facility?
 - Yes – The FNHA medical travel benefit is not eligible.
 - No- Submit an Exception for approval from FNHA.
2. Did the client apply for their treatment to be covered by FNHA?
 - Yes- Does the client have a letter of acceptance to show FNHA's approval?
 - No - Then the funder is responsible for the client's treatment
4. What documentation is required?
 - Before the trip - A confirmation of acceptance from the treatment centre.
 - After the trip - A confirmation of attendance from the treatment centre.
 - If FNHA covers treatment for a non-FNHA-funded centre – a letter of acceptance from FNHA.
5. If all documents are received, submit the client's request as an Exception to FNHA.

See supporting details for approval to a non-FNHA-funded centre [here](#).