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## INFORMATION FOR PHYSICIANS & MEDICAL OFFICE STAFF

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Complete information on the Travel Assistance Program may be found online at: [www.gov.bc.ca/travelassistanceprogram](http://www.gov.bc.ca/travelassistanceprogram)

The Travel Assistance Program (TAP) helps alleviate some of the transportation costs for eligible BC residents who must travel within the province for **physician-referred**, non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community.

TAP is a corporate partnership between the Ministry of Health and private transportation carriers who agree to waive or discount their regular fees.

Request for Travel Assistance application forms (**HLTH 2900**) are made available to physician offices throughout BC by Health Insurance BC (HIBC). The forms are sequentially numbered and are only provided to physicians, nurse practitioners and medical specialty services, including hospitals.

Patient and escort eligibility criteria may be found in the TAP handout "Information for Patients".

### ELIGIBLE MEDICAL SERVICES

- Non-emergency medical specialist services available at the closest location outside the patient's community
- Diagnostic procedures
- Laboratory procedures
- Diagnostic radiology
- Nuclear medicine procedures
- BC Cancer Agency
- Transplant Units
- HIV/AIDS treatment at St. Paul's Hospital
- Specialty clinics at BC Children's Hospital and other tertiary care hospital services

**Note:** *Patients are responsible for making their own travel and accommodation arrangements. There is no reimbursement after travel has been completed.*

### ORDERING TAP FORMS

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**Telephone:** Call **1 800 661-2668** (toll-free in BC) or 250 952-2657 (in Victoria). This is the automated TAP line at Health Insurance BC (HIBC) and the MSP Practitioner Number of the physician or nurse practitioner is required for entry, available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

**Facsimile:** Fax your request to HIBC Provider Services at **250 405-3592**. Please provide the name of the physician or nurse practitioner, full mailing address, and MSP Practitioner Number.

For all other physician TAP queries, please contact **1 866 456-6950** (toll-free in BC) and select Provider Services to speak to a client service representative. Available 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

### NON-ELIGIBLE MEDICAL SERVICES

- Patient transfer from one facility to another
- **GP to GP referrals**
- Supplementary benefit practitioner services:
  - acupuncturist
  - optometry
  - physical therapy
  - massage therapy
  - podiatry
  - non-hospital based dentistry
  - naturopathy
  - chiropractic services
  - prosthodontist
- Non-insured services, e.g.:
  - cosmetic surgery
  - experimental procedures
  - clinical drug trials
  - preventative medicine

## HOW TO COMPLETE A TAP FORM

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*TAP forms are valid for three months after the original appointment date on the patient's completed TAP form. This allows for the rescheduling of specialist appointments without the patient having to obtain another TAP form.*

The referring office of the physician or nurse practitioner completes Part One of the form, including the 'Escort Required' box, and ensures the form is properly signed or stamped.

Transportation partners have the right to refuse an incomplete or altered TAP form. **Only one TAP form should be issued at time of referral.**

Please enter the following information on the TAP form:

- Referring and Destination physician's name and practitioner number;
- In cases where the patient is not referred to a specific physician, please check the "specialty services" box on the form;
- Destination city; Destination appointment date;
- Escort required or not required (see eligibility, Information for Patients); and
- Signature or stamp of the referring physician or nurse practitioner and current date.

Once the TAP form has been completed by the referring physician or nurse practitioner, give the TAP form to the patient and ask them to fill in the address block, including postal code and telephone number and sign the declaration on the front of the form. Instructions are included on the back of the form.

The patient then telephones the program to obtain a confirmation number prior to travel. The TAP automated application service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free in BC: **1 800 661-2668**.

## INFORMATION FOR DESTINATION PHYSICIAN OR SPECIALTY CLINIC

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After the initial visit, if the patient must return to the specialist, hospital or specialty service as part of the same course of treatment, the destination specialist's office or specialty service can complete and sign or stamp another TAP form for the next visit. **A new form should be issued for each subsequent visit at the time the next appointment is made.**

There is no provision for repeat visits on the TAP form. If another appointment is required as part of the same course of treatment, the **destination physician's office** or medical specialty service should issue another TAP form for the patient at the time the next appointment is made, entering their own name and practitioner number in both the referring and destination physician spaces.

The procedure must be repeated each time another appointment is required. The patient must contact the program for a confirmation number each time a form is issued.

## INFORMATION FOR HOSPITALS

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Forms can also be provided to eligible patients from the Social Work departments of major hospitals, the BC Cancer Agency, Centre for Excellence at St. Paul's Hospital, Transplant Clinics, and other hospital based specialty clinics.

If hospital staff are assisting a patient to return home who arrived by ground or air ambulance, they should fill in Part Two – Hospital Use Only and sign or stamp the form in the signature space provided (the hospital social work department may sign or stamp the form).

## CONTACT US

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For more information about the Travel Assistance Program please visit the website at [www.gov.bc.ca/travelassistanceprogram](http://www.gov.bc.ca/travelassistanceprogram) or contact Health Insurance BC at 604 456-6950 (Lower Mainland) or 1 800 456-6950 (Rest of BC).