

Appendix 1: Comparative Overview of Government-Funded Patient Relocation Supports in Canada and Selected International Health Systems

Table 1A: Support for relocating patients offered by provincial and territorial governments in Canada*

Province/ Territory	Government programs for general and rural relocating patients	Government programs for relocating transplant patients	Government programs for relocating low-income patients	Government programs for patients travelling out of province/territory for medical care
British Columbia	Travel: The Travel Assistance Program is a partnership between the BC Ministry of Health and private transportation carriers. It provides subsidies for non-emergency patient travel costs with certain airlines, some bus companies, VIA Rail and BC Ferry Services. Between 15-100% of costs are covered depending on the company. Gas costs for private vehicles are not covered. Health Connections provides transportation support for rural residents seeking healthcare within their health authority; each health authority provides different	No specific programs available.	For patients receiving income or disability assistance, the Ministry of Poverty Reduction provides medical transportation supplements as follows. Travel: The least expensive appropriate mode of transportation is covered given that all other options and resources have been explored. Mileage for private vehicle reimbursed up to \$0.36/km. Accommodation: Support may be provided if patients have explored all other resource options fully. Food:	No specific programs available.

	transportation support through this program. Accommodation: The BC Ministry of Health provides a list of hotels which offer discounted rates to patients relocating for medical care. Food: No programs available. Caregiver costs: Escorts can receive travel discounts through The Travel Assistance Program if medically necessary. (Government of British Columbia n.d.-b)		Meal allowance not normally provided. Caregiver costs: May be eligible for medical transportation support if medically necessary. (Government of British Columbia n.d.-a)	
Alberta	Travel: No programs available. Accommodation: No programs available. Food: No programs available.	No specific programs available.	Seniors age 65+ with low income (threshold of \$34,770 for single senior, \$56,820 for couple) can access medical relocation support through the government's Special Needs Assistance for Seniors program as follows. Travel:	No specific programs available.

			Provides assistance for travel for medical trips greater than 80 km round-trip. Accommodation: Provides up to \$118 per night. Food: Meal costs considered on travel days. (Government of Alberta n.d.)	
Saskatchewan	Travel: No programs available. Accommodation: No programs available. Food: No programs available.	No specific programs available.	For patients in Northern Saskatchewan enrolled in some income support programs, medical transportation support can be accessed via Supplementary Health Benefits as follows. Travel: Patients in Northern Saskatchewan can receive financial support for long-distance medically related transportation. (Government of Saskatchewan n.d.-b)	Pediatric patients referred out of province for medical care can access support from the Pediatric Out-of-Province Travel Assistance Program. Any combination of the following is reimbursed up to \$2,000. Travel: Travel for patient and parent/guardian by air, private vehicle at reimbursement rate of \$0.55/km, rail or bus. Accommodation: Expenses can be submitted given that overnight stay is required to receive treatment.

				Per diem expenses: Up to \$61 per person per day (up to 2 people with both child and parent/guardian) can be reimbursed for expenses such as meals, parking and taxis. (Government of Saskatchewan n.d.-a)
Manitoba	The Northern Patient Transportation Program provides support to patients living in Northern Manitoba as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of \$35/day for taxis, parking or rental expenses. Accommodation: Reimbursement of up to \$65/day for a hotel. Food: Reimbursement of up to \$24.65/day for food. Caregiver costs:	No specific programs available.	No specific programs available.	For patients referred out of province for specialist medical care, Manitoba Health's Out-of-Province Transportation Subsidy provides reimbursement as follows. Travel: Reimbursement for reasonable transportation costs. No coverage for accommodation, meals or other expenses. Caregiver: Travel costs for escort may be reimbursed if medically required. (Government of Manitoba n.d.)

	Transportation costs for one essential patient escort are subsidized. (Northern Health Region n.d.)			
Ontario	The Northern Health Travel Grant provides support as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of \$0.41/km when traveling by car, air, bus or rail for patients who must travel more than 100 km one way to seek care that is not locally available. No coverage for taxi services offered. Accommodation: Provision of an accommodation allowance between \$175 to \$1,150. Food: No programs available. Caregivers costs: Medical travel companions are eligible for an accommodation allowance if the patient is hospitalized.	Travel: No specific programs available. Accommodation: The Transplant Patient Experience Reimbursement Program (TPER) reimburses up to \$2,500/month or \$30,000/year for accommodation for patients receiving heart, heart-lung, lung or small bowel transplants who live a certain distance from the hospital (100 km for adults, 55 km for children). (Trillium Gift of Life Network 2023)	No specific programs available.	No specific programs available.

	(Government of Ontario n.d.)			
Quebec	Each health region in Quebec administers a “Programme d’aide financière pour le déplacement des usagers” which provides support to patients who must travel outside of their region to access health care. The programs are different in each health region, but all typically provide some reimbursement for travel, accommodation, food and caregiver costs.	Certain regional implementations of the provincial “Aide financière pour le transport vers un établissement du réseau de la santé” make specific mention of transplant patients. For example, the Outaouais region mentions support for patients waiting for transplant or post-transplant as follows. Travel: Transportation expenses supported if beyond 200 km from residence via \$0.22/km reimbursement in personal vehicle or public transportation fare coverage. Accommodation: Recognized accommodation expenses are reimbursed at the current rate for a semi-private room. Food: Meals are included in reimbursement.	Patients receiving benefits through a social assistance program can receive reimbursement for medical transportation expenses as follows. Travel: Travel costs may be reimbursed per kilometre travelled. Reimbursement for parking may also be provided. Accommodation: Accommodation required for medical visits may be reimbursed. Food: Meal expenses may be reimbursed. (Government of Quebec n.d.)	No specific programs available.

		Caregiver support: Personal companion accommodation and meal costs are also reimbursed. (CISSS Outaouais n.d.)		
New Brunswick	Travel: No programs available. Accommodation: No programs available Food: No programs available.	No specific programs available.	No specific programs available.	For patients requiring care out-of-province, the provincial government provides the following support. Travel: No travel expense support is provided. Accommodation: Reimbursement of up to \$150/day or \$4000/month for housing and meals, given that patient is being treated as an outpatient. Food: See above. Caregiver support: Caregiver meal costs can be partially covered at a rate of \$73.85/day.

				(Government of New Brunswick n.d.)
Nova Scotia	Travel: The Northern Zone Transportation Program offers free transportation to healthcare appointments for residents in certain northern counties. Accommodation: No programs available. (Nova Scotia Health n.d.)	No specific programs available.	For low-income Nova Scotians with a gross family income of \$35,000 or less scheduled for surgery, the following support is provided through the In-province Travel Assistance Pilot Program. Travel: Reimbursement of bus costs or personal vehicle use at a rate of \$0.59/km. Accommodation: Reimbursement of up to \$85/night for accommodation if appointment is 50 km or further from home. Caregiver support: May receive travel and accommodation reimbursement if medically necessary. (Government of Nova Scotia n.d.-a)	For patients requiring care out-of-province, The Out of Province Travel and Accommodation Cost Assistance Policy provides support as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of up to \$1200 round trip for plane, train or bus travel and reimbursement of mileage for personal vehicle travel. Accommodation: Government will provide \$230 per night for accommodation (max \$2,760 per trip) or up to \$3000/month if approved for a multi-month relocation. Caregiver support: Cost assistance for caregiver may be available if medically necessary. (Government of Nova Scotia n.d.-b)

Newfoundland and Labrador	The Medical Travel Assistance Program provides support as follows. Travel: Some reimbursement for bus, ferry and private vehicle gas (up to \$0.25/km) if distance travelled is at least 50 km one way. Reimbursement of airfare available for patients from Labrador-Grenfell Health Zone (varying % based on cost). Accommodation: Some reimbursement for accommodation (varying % based on cost). Food: A meal allowance is either included with paid accommodations reimbursement or provided as a per diem for those with private accommodations. Caregiver support:	No specific programs available.	For Income Support and Community Support Program clients, the Medical Transportation Supports Program provides assistance as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of 100% of eligible travel. Accommodation: Reimbursement of 100% of eligible accommodation. Meals: Reimbursement of 100% of eligible meals. Caregiver support: Escort costs also reimbursed if medically required. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador n.d.-b)	The Medical Travel Assistance Program includes out-of-province support if required for care access as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of flights (varying % depending on cost), private vehicle mileage (up to \$0.25/km), bus fare and ferry fare. Accommodation: Up to \$175/day provided for out-of-province lodging and meals. Food: Meal allowance either included with paid accommodations reimbursement or provided as a per diem for those with private accommodations. Caregiver support: Escort travel, accommodation and meals may be eligible for reimbursement if medically necessary.
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	Escort costs may be eligible for reimbursement if medically necessary. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador n.d.-a)			(Government of Newfoundland and Labrador n.d.-a)
Prince Edward Island	Travel: No programs available. Accommodation: No programs available. Food: No programs available.	For transplant patients requiring surgery outside of the Maritime provinces, travel and accommodation cost assistance is available as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of up to \$1500/6 months for round-trip travel costs by car, economy plane, bus or train ticket. Accommodation: Reimbursement of up to \$2500/month while required to live near the transplant centre. Food: No programs available. Caregiver support: No programs available.	No specific programs available for in-province care. For out-of-province care, subsidized bus fares may be available for low-income patients as described separately.	Travel: Health PEI subsidizes travel with Maritime Bus for patients requiring out-of-province care in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick and whose annual net household income is up to \$65,000. Additional supports for transplant patients travelling out of province are available as described separately. (Government of Prince Edward Island 2024-a)

		(Government of Prince Edward Island 2024-b)		
Yukon	The Medical Travel Program provides support as follows. Travel: Reimbursement of airfare, ground transportation or mileage reimbursement to the nearest suitable health centre. Accommodation: Provision of a travel subsidy of up to \$174/day for up to 16 days if being treated as an outpatient to assist with costs. Food: Included in the travel subsidy described above. Caregiver: Provision of a subsidy of \$88/day for escort if approved. (Government of Yukon n.d.)	No specific programs available.	No specific programs available.	The Medical Travel Program includes coverage for out-of-territory care, with the same rates as in-territory care. (Government of Yukon n.d.)

Northwest Territories	The Medical Travel Program may provide support as follows. Travel: May provide transportation support to and from nearest suitable medical centre in the form of airfare, bus fare, taxi fare or private vehicle mileage. Accommodation: May provide accommodation support at designated boarding homes or hotel reimbursement if unavailable. Food: Support may be provided. Caregiver Support: Escort coverage available if approved. (Government of Northwest Territories n.d.-b)	No specific programs available.	For low-income patients, the Extended Health Benefits program provides travel benefits support as follows. Travel: 100% coverage of travel. Other supports are available through the Medical Travel Program. (Government of Northwest Territories n.d.-a)	The Medical Travel Program also supports medical trips out of territory if it is the closest available centre, in the same manner as described separately.
Nunavut	Travel: The Nunavut Health Care Plan will cover airfare costs less a \$250 round trip deductible if	No specific programs available.	The Extended Health Benefits program supports low income residents as described separately.	The Nunavut Health Care Plan and Extended Health Benefits medical travel support is also applicable to out-of-territory

	leaving home community is required for medical treatment. Through Extended Health Benefits, taxi fare and ground transportation reimbursement can be received. Accommodation: Accommodation reimbursement is provided through Extended Health Benefits (rate depends on location and type of accommodation). Food: Meal reimbursement up to \$50 may be provided through Extended Health Benefits. Caregiver support: Escort support may be approved if medically necessary. (Government of Nunavut n.d.-a.) (Government of Nunavut n.d.-b.)			care if required. Same coverage as described separately.
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* Note that this table focuses on provincial/territorial government programs relevant to solid organ transplant patient relocation. As such, it does not mention the following:

- Programs operated by non-governmental organizations.
- Programs specific to Indigenous patients, as these programs are typically significantly funded by the federal government.
- Programs specifically for workplace injuries, as it is not as relevant to solid organ transplantation.

Table 1B: Government support for relocating patients offered in Australia, New Zealand, and Norway

Country	Government programs for general and rural relocating patients	Government programs for relocating transplant patients	Government programs for relocating low-income patients	Government programs for patients travelling out of region for medical care
Australia	Each Australian state has a separate travel assistance scheme which provides support for patients needing to relocate for medical care. These schemes typically subsidize travel, accommodation, food and caregiver costs if medically necessary. For example, the Isolated Patients Travel and	No specific programs available.	No specific programs available.	Many state travel assistance schemes (e.g. New South Wales IPTAAS) extend to assist patients when out-of-state care is required to receive care at the nearest appropriate location. (NSW Government n.d.)

Accommodation Assistance Scheme (IPTAAS) in New South Wales provides support as follows.

Travel:

Patients travelling more than 100 km one way or 200 km per week for medical care are entitled to reimbursement of private car mileage (\$0.40AUD/km), full reimbursement of public transport and air travel and variable reimbursement of taxi travel.

Accommodation:

Reimbursement of up to \$75AUD/night for the first week, then up to \$120AUD/night afterwards.

Food:

No support available.

Caregiver support:

Escorts eligible to receive financial assistance as well.

(NSW Government n.d.)

New Zealand	The National Travel Assistance Program provides support as follows. Travel: Reimbursement for private vehicle mileage (\$0.34NZD/km), public transport, air travel and taxis. Accommodation: Reimbursement of up to \$140NZD/night if living at least 100 km from designated treatment facility. Food: No support available. Caregiver: Support person costs may be reimbursed if medically necessary. (Health New Zealand n.d.)	No specific programs available.	Low-income patients with a Community Services Card can access increased support for medical travel. (New Zealand Ministry of Social Development n.d.)	The National Travel Assistance Program covers all New Zealanders regardless of which health region they reside in, given that they are seeking care at the nearest appropriate location.
Norway	The Norwegian Health Authority Patient Travel Scheme provides support as follows. Travel:	No specific programs available.	No specific programs available.	The Patient Travel Scheme extends to out of region care given that the care is being sought at the nearest appropriate location, however a higher user fee may apply.

	Reimbursement of travel costs if travel exceeds 10 kilometres per direction at a fixed rate per kilometre (NOK 3,10/km), regardless of transport form. For travel over 300 kilometres, the cheapest form of public transit will be reimbursed. Patients can apply for additional reimbursement for ferries, parking and road tolls. Accommodation: Accommodation allowance of up to NOK 711/day provided. Food: Meal allowance of NOK 275/day provided. Caregiver support: Travel companions can apply for reimbursement of expenses, including some lost earnings, if medically necessary. (Helsenorge n.d.)			(Helsenorge n.d.)
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