
IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)

On June 30, 2012, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) introduced changes to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP), which affect the benefits provided to all beneficiaries.

Since June 30, 2012, the products and services covered through the IFHP depend on the immigration status of the beneficiary. The services under which you have billed in the past are no longer covered for the majority of beneficiaries; namely vision care, dental care, devices to assist mobility, hearing aids and testing, interpretation services, oxygen supplies, psychotherapy and counselling, rehabilitation services (physiotherapy and hospital charges), home care and long-term care. However, some beneficiaries eligible for expanded health care coverage will continue to be covered for these services.

To help you better understand the new IFH program, we have included a new Provider Handbook, the Expanded Health Care Coverage Benefit Grid and the Expanded Drug Benefit List (if applicable).

Here is a quick outline of the coverage available under the new program:

- **Health Care Coverage** (the following services and products provided in Canada when of an urgent or essential* nature)
 - Hospital services;
 - Physician and nurse services;
 - Laboratory and diagnostic services;
 - Ambulance services; and
 - Medication and immunizations will be covered only if required to prevent or treat a disease posing a risk to public health or to treat a condition of public safety concern.

* For the definition of “*urgent and essential*” please refer to the Interim Federal Health Program Policy, found at www.cic.gc.ca/ifhp.

- **Expanded Health Care Coverage** (the following services and products when provided in Canada):
 - Hospital services;
 - Services of physicians, registered nurses and other health care professionals licensed in Canada;
 - Laboratory, diagnostic and ambulance services;
 - Supplemental services**;
 - Supplemental products***; and
 - Translation services for health purposes.

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** “*Supplemental services*” includes audiology care, emergency dental care, home care, long-term care, services provided by a midwife, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, post-arrival health assessments, psychotherapy by a registered clinical psychologist, speech-language therapy, and vision care, to the extent that they are covered in the benefit grid.

*** “*Supplemental products*” includes immunizations, medications, and medical supplies to the extent that they are covered in the benefit grid.

- **Public Health or Public Health Safety Health Care Coverage** (the following services and products, provided in Canada, only if required to diagnose, prevent or treat a disease posing a risk to public health or to diagnose or treat a condition of public safety concern.)
 - Hospital services;
 - Physician and nurse services;
 - Laboratory and diagnostic services;
 - Medication and immunizations will be covered only if required to prevent or treat a disease posing a risk to public health or a condition of public safety concern.

Disease posing a risk to public health means a communicable disease that is on the list of national notifiable diseases of the Public Health Agency of Canada which is subject to human to human transmission and requires public health intervention or for which immunization has been recommended under Canadian medical standards or that is referred to in the Interim Federal Health Program Policy of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

Condition of public safety concern means a mental health condition in a person who has been examined by a physician licensed in Canada and for which the physician is of the opinion that the person will likely cause harm to others.

ELIGIBILITY

The new program is not universal which means clients can have differential access to services based on the type of coverage they have been granted. Since June 30, 2012, providers have to verify client eligibility before rendering services in order to ensure the client is covered for the intended services.

In the near future, providers will be able to verify client eligibility on the secure provider web portal. Until this functionality is available, providers are asked to call the Medavie Blue Cross Contact Centre at 1-888-614-1880 to ensure the client is covered for the service being provided. A bulletin will be posted on the web portal to advise you when you can begin checking client eligibility online.

BENEFITS

New benefit codes have been created for the services offered. The new benefit grids are available on the provider web portal at <https://provider.medavie.bluecross.ca>.

Medication and immunizations will be covered only if required to prevent or treat a disease posing a risk to public health or a condition of public safety concern except for beneficiaries eligible for expanded health care coverage. Prescribing physicians and nurse practitioners are asked to call the Medavie Blue Cross Call Centre at 1-888-614-1880 prior to prescribing medication to ensure the client will be covered for the product and in most cases to initiate the prior authorization request. The pharmacy benefit grid is also posted on the portal.

You have six months from the date of service to bill for claims incurred up to June 29, 2012. The old codes must be used to bill for any services rendered before June 30, 2012.

Prior approvals received before June 29, 2012 will only be valid for services done until that date. A new authorization is required for any benefits that are eligible with prior approval after June 30, 2012.

The Medical / General claim form has been updated and can be found on the provider web portal at <https://provider.medavie.bluecross.ca>. Providers can use either ICD9 or ICD10 codes or write the Medical Diagnosis on the form. The ICD 10 code is preferred however the ICD 09 or the Medical Diagnosis will be accepted.

For additional information on the changes to the Interim Federal Health Program, please visit the CIC website at www.cic.gc.ca/ifhp.

If you have any questions, please call the Medavie Blue Cross Contact Centre at 1-888-614-1880.