Out of Country Health Care

Information for Saskatchewan Residents

June 2026

The Ministry of Health may provide coverage for out-of-country physician and hospital services in some circumstances such as:

- emergency medical services received while outside Canada; or
- medical services approved in advance by the Ministry of Health when the treatment is not available in Canada.

If you need emergency medical care outside Canada

What are emergency medical services?

Emergency medical services are services you need because of an unexpected medical situation that requires urgent care.

What services can I claim?

You can submit a claim for:

- physician services;
- inpatient services received at a licensed hospital;
- outpatient services provided in a hospital, such as an emergency room visit
    - diagnostic tests, such as MRIs and x-rays, when they are included in the hospitals daily inpatient or outpatient rate.

What is not covered?

- services from other health care professionals, such as physician assistants and nurse practitioners
- treatment that is considered experimental or received as part of a clinical trial
- diagnostic tests received outside a hospital
- prescriptions filled outside Canada
- ground or air ambulance expenses
- non-urgent medical care

How are emergency medical costs reimbursed?

The Ministry of Health provides limited reimbursement for out-of-country medical services. You are responsible for any amount not covered.

- Physician services are reimbursed in Canadian funds at the same rate as those services provided in Saskatchewan.
- Hospital services are reimbursed at:
    - up to $100 CAD per day for inpatient services; and
    - up to $50 CAD for an outpatient hospital visit, to a maximum of two visits in one day.
- All payments are made in Canadian funds.

Medical services outside Canada may cost much more than the amount you can claim. It is strongly recommended that you purchase private health insurance before you travel.

If you are planning treatment outside Canada

If a Saskatchewan specialist refers you outside Canada for treatment that is not available in Canada, you may be eligible for coverage of approved medical expenses.

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How do I apply for approval?

Individuals cannot apply directly to the Ministry of Health for out-of-country coverage. A Saskatchewan specialist must apply for coverage on the patient's behalf.

You may be eligible for help with medical costs outside Canada when a Saskatchewan specialist recommends a medically necessary treatment, surgery, or service that is not available in Saskatchewan or elsewhere in Canada.

Your specialist must confirm to the Ministry of Health that all treatment options in Canada have been explored and you must receive Ministry of Health approval before any services are provided.

Submitting a request for prior approval does not guarantee coverage. Without prior approval, you are responsible for all costs related to your care.

What does my specialist need to send?

All requests for out-of-country coverage must be submitted by a Saskatchewan specialist in the same field of practice as the requested service.

All requests must:

- describe your circumstances, including details of the medical services you received in Saskatchewan and elsewhere in Canada;
- clearly describe the service requested and the name and location of the provider; and
- confirm that the service is not available in Saskatchewan or elsewhere in Canada.

Not all medical services are eligible for coverage, and you cannot refer yourself to an out-of-country provider.

What are planned medical services?

Planned medical services are procedures, treatments, and surgeries that are planned and scheduled in advance.

Can my family doctor apply if I do not have a Saskatchewan specialist?

No. Saskatchewan legislation requires a Saskatchewan specialist to apply on the patient's behalf.

What costs will I have to pay?

If approved, the Ministry of Health will arrange payment for 100% of the approved medical services, including physician and hospital fees.

You are responsible for travel and accommodation costs related to receiving care outside Canada. Children age 16 and under may be eligible for travel assistance through the Pediatric Out-of-Province Travel Assistance Program.

How will I know if my request is approved?

If coverage is approved, you and your specialist will receive a letter confirming the decision. If you have not heard from the Ministry of Health, contact your referring specialist for an update on the request.

Questions?

If you have questions, talk to your Saskatchewan health care provider. You can also contact the Medical Services Branch for additional information about out-of-country coverage.

Medical Services Branch
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