

Health PEI

Out of Province (OOP) / Country Appeal Frequently Asked Questions

If you believe you need medical services or treatment outside of the province, we encourage you to contact the Health PEI Out of Province Referral Office for further information about the program and services which may be covered for OOP funding and/or the process for making a referral request. It is important that Health PEI has received an OOP request and approved the requested services before you leave the province to obtain these services as prior approval is required for reimbursement.

1. I received a letter denying my request for OOP medical services or funding. I don't understand why my request was denied. Should I appeal?

No. An initial step if you have questions or concerns about why your request was denied, is to contact the Health PEI Out of Province Referral Office at (902) 368-6516.

Reasons why your request may have been denied:

- Wait time is not considered justification to seek services out of province.
 - Adequate health services were available in PEI.
 - Two or more consultants/specialists were available in PEI in the specific health service required.
 - You accessed the health service at a private clinic. Services provided at private clinics are non-insured under PEI Medicare.
 - The OOP specialist and their services are non-insured under the Hospital & Health Services Insurance Plan on PEI.
 - The OOP referral request was not submitted to the OOP Referral Office by a PEI physician/Nurse Practitioner for prior approval *before* the patient accessed health services in another province.
 - The request was for out of country services while adequate services were available within Canada OR the services requested had not been approved under the Canada Health Act.
- 2. After my request was denied, I received additional information from a PEI physician or nurse practitioner. This information could support my case. Should I appeal with this new information?**

Do not appeal with new information or documentation, particularly if you did not provide that information to support your initial request for OOP medical services or funding. Instead, contact the OOP Referral Office. You may be eligible to have the original decision reviewed with the new supporting information.

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Your case will not be eligible for appeal if there is new information or documentation that was not provided or reviewed at the original approval level. Should you appeal with new information or documentation, your request will be returned to the original approval level for further consideration. You could also be asked to submit an entirely new application for OOP medical services or funding.

3. What types of decisions can be appealed?

The appeal mechanism may be available if you have received an unfavourable decision by Health PEI for funding for *medically necessary treatment, interventions, or subsequent care*.

Health PEI has established policies and requirements for prior approval of coverage for non-emergency services delivered out of the province.

Health PEI appreciates that residents may desire or need to seek medical care, based on a recommendation/advice of a treating medical professional in another province. While Health PEI is committed to providing necessary medical care and services to our residents, we are unable to fund all medical services and treatment available outside of the province. The OOP Referral Program is only available for certain non-emergency medical services and treatment.

We understand that because not all requests can be approved by our OOP Referral Program, our patients may, from time to time, disagree with a decision to deny funding. However, the Appeal Panel deciding your appeal will not be able to change the current policy or make an exception to the current policy. *You will be unable to successfully appeal a decision that was made in accordance with the Canada Health Act and the valid Health PEI policy that applies to your medical services or treatment.*

If you believe you need medical services outside of the province, we encourage you to contact the Health PEI OOP Referral Office for further information about the program, the services which may be covered for OOP funding, or the process for making a request. *You must request approval for the services before leaving the province for the services or treatment.*

4. What types of decisions cannot be appealed?

- The appeal mechanism is not available for decisions about accommodation or travel.
- Wait time is not considered justification to seek services out of province.
- Adequate health services were available in PEI.
- Two or more consultants/specialists were available in PEI in the specific health service required.

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- You accessed the health service at a private clinic. Services provided at private clinics are non-insured under PEI Medicare.
 - The OOP specialist and their services are non-insured under the Hospital & Health Services Insurance Plan on PEI.
 - The request was for out of country services while adequate services were available within Canada OR the services requested had not been approved under the Canada Health Act.
5. **I was not approved for OOP medical services or funding. I was told the medical services are not funded or reimbursable under the Health PEI policy which applies to my case. I think this is unfair, the policy should be changed, and Health PEI should reimburse my costs. Should I appeal?**

The Appeal Panel is unable to change current Health PEI policies or make an exception to current policies. You will be unable to successfully appeal on this basis. However, Health PEI is committed to delivery of quality health care services and welcomes feedback that will improve service delivery and our policies. This includes feedback that could be considered by our team when the policy comes up again for review. If you have feedback about current OOP policies these should be directed to: [Send Health PEI Patient Feedback | Government of Prince Edward Island](#)

6. **I received reimbursement for OOP medical services. I'm not clear about the amount I was approved for, and how Health PEI calculated the amount. What are my next steps?**

If you have questions or concerns about the calculation or the amounts you were approved for, you should contact the PEI Medicare Claims Department at (902) 838-0900 or toll free 1-800-321-5492.

7. **I did not have prior approval from Health PEI for OOP medical or hospital services, yet my doctor recommended the OOP treatment, and I left PEI without prior approval. I have now been denied a request to have these amounts reimbursed. What happened? Should I appeal?**

Residents seeking funding for non-emergency medical, or hospital services must ensure a request for prior approval is submitted by their treating health professional *before* they leave the province for treatment. A request, submitted with supporting medical information, must be made by a PEI physician or nurse practitioner to refer a patient to an out of province physician/hospital for out of province/country services.

Residents who do not receive prior approval from Health PEI for an OOP non-emergency medical or hospital service will be responsible for the total cost of the services rendered.

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The prior approval requirement is important to Health PEI's responsibility to deliver publicly funded and insured health services. A request for prior approval helps ensure that service capacity on PEI is used to its fullest extent and that only complex cases or cases where services are not available are referred out of province.

In the case of mental health and addictions services, the request for OOP medical services triggers a review of the resident's circumstances by the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Committee. The Committee reviews all out of province mental health or addiction related requests to provide a recommendation of the facilities and treatment options which would be available to, and best support, the patient.

If you decide to appeal an unfavourable decision where you did not seek prior approval, you must provide an explanation as to why it was not possible for you to obtain prior approval.

8. **I was not approved for OOP medical services or funding. After receiving my letter, I compiled additional information to help support my case and change the decision. Should I appeal with this information?**

No. If you believe you have additional supporting information or documentation you should contact the Health PEI OOP Referral Office. You may be eligible to have the original decision reconsidered/reviewed in light of the new supporting information.

9. **I was not approved for travel, meals, or accommodation expenses related to the medical services I received out of province. I do not agree with this decision and want to appeal it.**

Health PEI has three out of province Travel Support Programs. The Programs provide travel assistance via Maritime Bus, Confederation Bridge or Northumberland Ferries to eligible PEI residents who are required to travel out of the province for medical services. To access this program, patients must have received prior approval from Health PEI for their out of province services.

Patients may visit the website at: <http://www.healthpei.ca/ooptravelsupportprogram> or call 902-368-5918.

Health PEI understands there may be additional costs associated with your hospital stay or other treatment outside of PEI. Unfortunately, the appeal mechanism is not available for these types of expenses or costs. The appeal process only covers unfavourable decisions for funding for medically necessary treatment, interventions, or subsequent care, where eligible.