

FAQ - Ministry of Health payment for physician planning time in response to COVID-19

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

IMPORTANT DATES

- Physicians will be compensated to a **maximum of 35 hours in total for active planning performed between March 15th and June 30th**
- All invoices, with an accurate accounting of costs, must be submitted to Northern Health or Doctors of BC by July 31st

1. What type of planning activities are eligible for reimbursement?

- **Meetings must be about service delivery planning, re-design and implementation** related to provision of patient care at a community, facility, regional and/or provincial level in response to COVID-19.
- **The planning work is extraordinary**, and goes beyond usual department, Division or MSA meetings – planning for physician's offices and patients will be not remunerated, and
- **Physicians are active in the planning** - payment will not be provided for passive attendance at meetings.

2. Can a physician claim be reimbursed through the MoH for 35 hours of planning time from each of the health authority (HA), MSA and/or Division?

No. A physician will be reimbursed for a **maximum of 35 hours** in total, no matter how many organizations they are invoicing. For example, if a physician submits invoices to their MSA and Division that totals more than 35 hours, only 35 hours will be reimbursed by the MOH.

3. What consultation occurred to arrive at this compensation model?

Since the pandemic started, the Health Authorities, Doctors of BC and the Joint Collaborative Committees (JCCs) have heard from a number of MSA and Divisions about their funding pressures and challenges due to unbudgeted spending required for COVID-19 planning. The Ministry of Health sought input from physicians at a number of provincial tables, including the JCC Co-chairs.

4. What happens if planning is required for a potential Wave 2 after June 30th?

Decisions on payment for future planning will be considered should it be needed.

5. I have already been reimbursed for more than 35 hours of work through my Division/MSA or the HA. Am I going to have to pay this back?

No. If you have already been compensated, there is nothing more for you to do at this time. Your Health Authority or MSA/Division will advise if they need any additional information from you.

FAQ - Ministry of Health payment for physician planning time in response to COVID-19

Health Authority Specific Questions

1. **I was compensated at a different rate than the sessional rate being provided for these 35 hours, will I be paid the difference?**

Yes, NH physicians in leadership positions (department head, chief of staff, etc.) that were compensated for COVID-19 response planning will be automatically paid the difference in rate for up to 35 hours. –Any additional hours will be compensated at the original NH rate.

2. **Who does the physician invoice at the health authority? Who do I contact at my health authority for more information?**

The local Chief of Staff or Department Head or Medical Director must submit a list of physicians eligible for funding to NH Medical Affairs.

3. **What qualifies as HA initiated physician COVID-19 planning?**

A Health Authority operational or medical leader asking a MSA or Division member to undertake COVID-19 planning.

If you have questions related to the **Health Authority** compensation plan, please contact:

Gregory Marr, Regional Director, Medical Affairs, gregory.marr@northernhealth.ca / 250.565.2959

MSA Specific Questions

1. **For physicians who cross Divisions and FE: Who ensures that individual physicians are capped at 35 hours?**

MSA and Divisions are encouraged to sort this out locally. If not, DoBC will determine a process going forward to ensure that no claims for individual physicians exceed 35 hours. Physicians are capped at 35 hours total regardless if the claim is submitted through the Division or MSA.

2. **Can MSAs top up physicians for hours in excess of the 35 hours reimbursed by MoH?**

Yes, at the discretion of the MSA/Division.

3. **If payments have not yet been made by the MSA to the physician, what is the process for these physician claims?**

MSAs are to track paid and pending physician COVID planning hours. The MSA is to submit **one consolidated invoice** (template provided) that includes paid and pending claims to Doctors of BC by July 31, 2020.

4. **What about physicians who have already been paid for hours?**

FAQ - Ministry of Health payment for physician planning time in response to COVID-19

MSAs must include these payments (already paid out by MSA) in their one consolidated invoice to DoBC and the MSA will be reimbursed for payments. No further action is needed from the paid physician.

5. How will MSAs be reimbursed?

MSAs will receive an electronic fund transfer into FEMS after their invoice has been reviewed by Doctors of BC.

Medical Staff Association questions should be directed to:

Maureen Haley, Facility Engagement Liaison, Northern Interior, North East, mhaley@doctorsofbc.ca
Holly Hovland, Facility Engagement Liaison, North West, hhovland@doctorsofbc.ca

Divisions Specific Questions

1. What is the process when physicians have already been paid for these pandemic planning meetings, by the Division?

Divisions will be reimbursed as long as they submit to us the list of the physicians with MSP # per the spreadsheet template sent on the email

2. Physicians learning how to support their staff and patients can they also be included in this funding?

Unfortunately no, physicians learning activities are not planning activities

3. Would you please advise which mechanism we use to recoup the other Covid-19 costs we've accumulated, e.g., PPE supplies, redeployment of staff away from projects, etc.?

Per our message dated March 27, 2020, there is no confirmed additional funding available to reimburse Divisions for these expenditures. We will let you know if we have new information.

4. What types of meetings are eligible? Would an EOC planning meeting be invoiced through the Division or Health Authority?

- Meetings must be about **service delivery planning, re-design and implementation** related to provision of patient care at a community, facility, regional and/or provincial level in response to COVID-19.
- As EOCs are HA driven, invoicing would be submitted to the health authority.

5. Is the template meant to capture compensation already covered by the Division or gaps where physicians have yet to be compensated?

The answer is **both**. Within the template, please document the sessional costs already covered by the Division. This is also a good time to connect with your physician membership and ensure that they submit their invoices for any outstanding eligible planning hours to either the divisions and/or MSA (as appropriate).

FAQ - Ministry of Health payment for physician planning time in response to COVID-19

6. How is active participation defined?

Active participation at meetings is where attendees are directly contributing to service delivery planning, re-design and implementation. For example, attendance at meetings such as Town Halls and information webinars do not qualify for compensation under these guidelines.

Divisions of Family Practice:

Erin Friesen Smith, GPSC Liaisons, North Region, esmithfriesen@doctorsofbc.ca

Stacey Tyers, GPSC Liaisons, North Region, styers@doctorsofbc.ca