

June 24, 2020

To: Medical Staff Association Executive members; Divisions of Family Practice Executives; Northern Health Authority Medical Leaders

From: Engagement & Quality Improvement Department, Doctors of BC; Northern Health Medical Leadership

Re: Policy on Ministry of Health payment for physician planning time in response to COVID-19

Since March 15th, Divisions of Family Practice, Medical Staff Associations, health authorities and other primary care partners throughout the province have taken and continue to take action to rapidly reorganize and stand up services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the height of the pandemic, the Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC were working behind the scenes to clarify how physician planning time would be supported. We'd like to acknowledge and thank you for all that you have done and are doing to protect our communities.

A standardized approach has now been developed for remuneration of physicians' time and expertise for their planning work during the pandemic. Physicians will be compensated to a **maximum of 35 hours** in total for active planning performed between **March 15th and June 30th** at the relevant committee sessional rate, provided the following criteria are met:

- 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 medical staff association (MSA) meeting – planning for physicians' offices and patients will be not compensated, and
- Physicians are active in the planning - payment will not be provided for passive attendance at meetings.

Payments will be made to physicians through Divisions or MSAs where they requested physician involvement. For planning work explicitly initiated by the Health Authorities outside of MSAs or Divisions, physicians will be compensated directly by the applicable health authority.

Payment and Invoicing

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

Physicians should submit their invoices to the MSA/Division which requested the physician involvement. Ministry reimbursement for MSAs or Divisions will be coordinated through Doctors of BC. All invoices must be confirmed with a signature by a health authority designated representative (when submitting invoices to a health authority) or Division/MSA executive (when submitting invoices to the MSA/Division) and must state the date and number of hours engaged in planning activities.

Payment and reimbursement will be coordinated by either the Division/MSA or the HA based on **who requested** the physician's participation in the COVID-19 planning work. Paid HA Physician leadership positions and Physicians who participated in HA planning activities and committees, which have already been paid, do not need to submit any additional claims – the HA will automatically reconcile the rates paid and this new provincial process.. Please review the following scenarios and note the action under the relevant section:

A. MSAs/DoFP who have already paid for active planning sessions (via FEI or DoFP)

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

B. MSA/DoFP physicians who have not yet been compensated for active planning by FEI/DoFP

- Individual physicians can invoice up to 35 hours to the MSA, if it was an approved activity.
- MSAs are to track paid and pending physician COVID planning hours. The MSA/DoFP is to submit one consolidated invoice (template provided) that includes paid and pending claims to Doctors of BC by July 31, 2020.
- Consolidated invoice must be confirmed with a signature by a Division/MSA executive

C. HA Physician Leaders and Physicians already compensated by the HA for COVID planning hours

- The HA will submit for reimbursement from the MoH for up to 35 hours for each physician.
- NH physicians in leadership positions (department head, chief of staff, etc.) and physicians that were already 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.

D. Physicians who have not yet been compensated for active planning requested by the HA

- If HA directed work during this time frame has not already been compensated, the physician will submit individual claims to their respective Medical Leader (e.g. Department Head, Chief of Staff).
- Claims will then be forwarded to NH Medical Affairs. Final approval will be by the respective Medical Director.

For additional information please see the FAQ, Appendix A.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Northern Health

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Medical Staff Association questions should be directed to:

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