

Revised Specialist Locum Guidelines Effective October 1, 2013

“The Provincial Locum Program is intended to facilitate the medical care to patients of eligible physicians, through the provision of funded coverage when the physician is away from their respective practice, due to illness, vacation and/or continuing medical education. It is generally accepted that a physician, while being replaced by a locum, is not providing billable services elsewhere”

Locum Physician Eligibility

- Locum physicians are required to be licensed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia.

Locum Coverage Eligibility for Specialists: the following are the criteria for which the Provincial Locum Program will fund coverage for Specialists.

- Scheduled leave of physicians for vacation, CME, maternity OR unplanned leave due to illness; OR, coverage for a position that has been vacated within the previous six months where an ongoing core service is being provided, OR, weekend coverage.
- Coverage for DHAs 1-8
- Core specialty services covered: general internal medicine, general surgery, anesthesiology, orthopedic surgery, obstetrics/gynecology, psychiatry, pediatrics, radiology, pathology and urology.
- Coverage provided for services in a Regional hospital for physician groups that have an approved facility on-call rotation of 5 or fewer physicians
- Locum day is defined as providing a minimum of 7.5 hours of clinical coverage. A half locum day is defined as providing a minimum of 3.75 hours of clinical coverage
- Maximum 30 days funded coverage for each full time core service physician or vacant position per fiscal year; except 45 days coverage for physicians where they are the solo practitioner in a core service

Note: Specialists with an active clinical practice will not be funded through the locum program to cover services within their own DHAs.

Services to be provided by locum physicians:

Specialists

- Specialist hospital coverage including on-call
- Office coverage where indicated, as requested on application form

Payment Rates

The following rates will be paid to physicians for providing locum coverage under the Provincial Locum Program:

- Minimum daily income guarantee: \$1200
 - *note: physician may request payment by FFS rather than income guarantee, in which case they will receive only per diem and mileage through the Provincial Locum Program, in addition to their FFS billings*
- Top up in addition to minimum daily income guarantee will be paid based on volume of services provided, as indicated by shadow billings, if requested by the locum physician
- Per diem to cover locum physician expenses, eg food and accommodation: \$175 per day
 - Where the Locum physician commutes to the host practice from home on a daily basis, partial per diem will be provided (40%)
 - Where /when the DHA provides accommodation, the locum physician will only be eligible to claim 40% of the per-diem rate
 - Locum physicians who travel two hours or more (one way) between their residence and the locum site are eligible to claim one additional per diem day for each locum provided. Physicians who travel four or more hours (one way) between their residence and the locum site are eligible to claim two additional per diem days for each locum provided. The additional per diem payments are for travel to and from the locum site.
- Overhead: \$210/day payable to host practice where office coverage is required
- Mileage paid within Nova Scotia at current Nova Scotia Government rate
- On-call fee to be funded by DHW and administered by the DHA.
- Out of province locum physicians from New Brunswick and PEI may claim \$175 for each trip to Nova Scotia to offset expenses. Other out of province locum physicians may claim \$500 for each trip. Verification of travel may be requested.
- Bridge/road tolls within Nova Scotia will be reimbursed as required

Program Administration

- An application form will be completed and signed by the locum physician and the Chief of Staff of the host DHA, and submitted to MSI. All program related forms can be found at www.medavie.bluecross.ca/msiprograms. Completed forms can be faxed to MSI at 496-3060 (toll free: 1-855-350-3060) or emailed to Locumprogram@medavie.ca. Contact MSI at (902) 496-7104 with any enquiries.
- Approval/decline of locum application by MSI within 2 working days with notification of locum physician and Chief of Staff of host DHA (approval by MSI is conditional on granting of license by College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia)
- If approved, submit a completed MSI Provider Business Arrangement Form and void cheque to the MSI Provider Coordinators, if your banking information is not on file with MSI.
- If the locum physician chooses the guaranteed daily rate as the preferred payment option, the locum physician will receive a locum shadow billing business arrangement (BA) number from MSI if a locum shadow billing BA number has not already been assigned. The shadow billing BA number is to be used to submit shadow billings. Payment through the Provincial Locum Program can only be provided where the locum physician has obtained a locum shadow billing arrangement number.
- The locum physician will prepare shadow billings for all services provided; the host DHA will provide administrative support for shadow billing.
- At the end of the locum, or on a weekly basis, the locum physician will submit a completed Claim Form to MSI for payment
- MSI will verify the Claim Form for payment
- At the end of the locum, if the locum physician believes services provided exceed the value of the guaranteed daily rate over the course of the locum, they can apply for a 'top up' payment by contacting MSI and requesting a 'reconciliation' of payment.

Shadow billing:

- The provision of shadow billings is critical to the budget of the Provincial Locum Program, as the total amount of shadow billings is charged to the FFS cost centre. The locum program is only charged for the difference between the shadow billings and the guaranteed daily rate.

For Specialist locums, the host DHA is expected to provide administrative support to the locum physician for shadow billing. Payment for locum services will be subject to receipt of shadow billings.