

Notice to Physicians

REVISED LOCUM PROGRAM EFFECTIVE JULY 24, 2023

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 vacation, continuing medical education, parental and/or unplanned leave due to illness. It is generally accepted that a physician, while being replaced by a locum, is not providing billable services elsewhere.

As per the 2023-27 Physician Agreement changes to the Nova Scotia Locum program effective July 24, 2023. The following revised guidelines, payment rates and claim forms are in effect as of July 24, 2023. All forms can be found online on the MSI website (<https://msi.medavie.bluecross.ca/locum-registration/>). Please note: all claims must be calculated prior to submission. The available forms are functional and will calculate the values for you when completed electronically. Please be sure to include your signature on each submission.

New Application and Claim Forms

Physicians should use the new application form effective immediately.

New Locum claim forms and Physician Locum Application Form can be found on the MSI website <https://msi.medavie.bluecross.ca/locum-registration/>

Physician Billing Expectations

Physicians should continue to submit existing claim forms up to and including the October 6 paper cut-off, after this date, physicians must use the new updated locum claim form. Existing claim forms will not be accepted after October 6, these will be returned with instruction to use the new claim form.

Reconciliation

As the locum guidelines were updated effective July 24, 2023, physicians previously working under the Provincial Locum Program only who have not received reimbursement for components under the new guidelines such as accommodations, licensing fees and/or travel time may submit a claim form for these components only for review and consideration.

A reconciliation will be completed at a later date to update payment rates effective July 24, 2023 for locum claims previously paid at the existing rate.

Locum Physician Eligibility

Locum physicians are required to be licensed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia and privileged by a health authority.

Revised Locum Guidelines

- For family physicians and specialists, the locum program will fund coverage for: Scheduled leave of physician for vacation, CME, parental, or unplanned leave due to illness.
- Specialist services covered: general internal medicine, general surgery, orthopedic surgery, anaesthesia, obstetrics/gynecology, psychiatry, pediatrics, radiology, pathology and urology.
- For daily/hourly paid physicians such as (Hospitalists, Emergency Departments, Psychiatry, CHIP, PMC, etc.). These physicians may be able to claim the travel elements of the locum program and not the daily income guarantees.
- A full locum day is defined as providing a minimum of 7.5 hours of clinical coverage, a half locum day is defined as minimum of 3.75 hours of clinical coverage.

The Locum Program is available:

- To provide coverage for vacancies but only if they are actively being recruited for by a health authority.
- For a maximum coverage period of 30 days per fiscal year, per physician.

The Locum Program is not available:

- For providing service coverage at your regular work sites.
- For providing service coverage in a regional hospital where physician groups have an approved facility on-call rotation of 5 or more physicians.
- To C/AFP Departments, although individual AFP Physicians may be eligible for work outside of the C/AFP Department with their Department Head approval.

Services to be provided

Family Physicians

- Family practice coverage (may include inpatient and nursing home if part of FP normal practice).

Royal College Specialists

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

Payment Rates

Daily Rates

- The minimum daily income guarantee for a locum Physician is:
 - \$1,200 for FP's providing full day coverage; \$600 for half day coverage.
 - \$1,600 for Specialists providing full day coverage; \$800 for half day coverage.

Shadow Billing Above Daily Rates

- If shadow billings for Insured Medical Services are higher than the applicable minimum daily rate on a given day, including for Insured Medical Services delivered after hours, the locum physician will receive the amount of shadow billings greater than the applicable minimum daily rate.

Travel

If required by the health authority to travel for the locum assignment, travel will be reimbursed as follows:

- Kilometrage from the Physician's residence or regular work site (whichever is closer to the required non-regular work site) to the required locum work site, and return, at the then-prevailing Nova Scotia Government kilometrage rate (unless NSH has provided a rental car for physician's use).
- Per diem of \$100 per day for full day coverage; \$50 for half day coverage.
- Accommodations at 100% to a maximum of \$300 per night, receipts of which must be provided to be eligible for reimbursement.
- Airfare to and from Nova Scotia, where required, 100% covered at regular economy fare up to a maximum of \$1,500, receipts must be provided for reimbursement.
- Travel time at \$100 per hour up to a maximum of 10 hours return (5 hours each way) per week.
- No travel time or expenses are payable for travel that is less than one hour total travel time roundtrip.

Licensing Fees

- For Atlantic Registry physicians the CPSNS Atlantic Registry license fee is reimbursed.
- For locum physicians outside the Atlantic Registry, the CPSNS locum license fee is reimbursed.

Facility On Call

- Facility On Call Rotas may be claimed through the applicable Facility On Call fee code. Locum physicians are not entitled to receive payment for any services while on call unless the total daily shadow billings exceed the minimum daily income guarantee.

Additional Payment

- The host physician is eligible for \$250 per day for the duration of the locum if covering for leaves.