



## **Sessional Policy** Effective May 1, 2016

Effective May 1, 2016, all eligible physician services provided under a sessional arrangement are shadow billed. Payment for sessional hours continues to be paid by MSI.

Changes were made to the sessional policy to **better capture the services** that are provided to patients across the province. Additionally, **patient privacy** is better protected if there is no identifying information (e.g., name, health card number) on forms.

## **Shadow Billing**

Shadow billing enables physicians to submit all information about the services provided to patients. Shadow billing is done by physicians where the fee-for-service model is not applicable. The process for shadow billing is the same as fee-for-service billing, but it does not result in direct reimbursement.

The expectation is your existing billing service should be able to accommodate the shadow billing requirement. To enable shadow billing the follow steps are required:

Steps	Additional Information
A new BA is set up by MSI.	All sessional physicians have been set up and advised of their new BAs. If you have not yet received yours, please contact MSI at 902-496-7011 or toll free at 1-888-553-0585.
Accredited Submitter Form: Complete it once; then submit it to MSI.	Complete and submit your Accredited Submitter Form to MSI. If you have not yet done this or require assistance, please contact MSI at 902-496-7011 or toll free at 1-888-553-0585.
Your billing clerk/service enters fee codes for the services you provide to your patients (as they currently do for fee-for-service, APP, AFP).	Utilize your existing billing administrator or service; otherwise see the information contained in the box on the following page.
Submit the Sessional Payment Form to MSI (with date, total patients, hours).	After you have shadow billed your services for a sessional clinic, submit your completed payment form.



**I have never shadow billed before; I am not set up for it. What do I do?**

Physicians who do not have the billing software in their main practices often engage the services of a Service Bureau. Service Bureaus are independent billing providers who do complete billing for physicians for a fee. *Note: prices vary and are set by the independent Service Bureaus; physicians should choose the Service Bureau which best suits his/her needs.*

A list of known Service Bureaus is provided below.

**MSI INFORMATION SYSTEM SERVICE BUREAUS**

Updated as of November 2023

COMPANY	CONTACT NAME	LOCATION	TELEPHONE #
San T Claims Services	Sherry Gray	Bedford	902-832-2749
Personal Billing Services	Elizabeth Morgan, Terry Wagner	Halifax	902-479-0046
Office Services	Pam Patterson	Aylesford	902-847-0061
Janice Hopper	Janice Hopper	Eastern Passage	902-497-0422 902-431-1800
Sandra Chow	Sandra Chow	Fall River	902-233-1825 902-487-0225
By the Bay Admin Services	Melissa Hiltz	Mahone Bay	902-624-0191
Shecan Health Clinic Solutions	Jesi-Leigh Barber	Bedford	902-229-5959
Crystal Connors	Crystal Connors	Kentville	902-690-7397
Hub Billing Services	A Lisa Julian	Truro	902-814-2564

**I need some time to get all this arranged. Does this mean I will not get paid?**

It is understood that some physicians have not needed to bill (either FFS or shadow) for quite some time and that arrangements must be made to meet the new shadow billing requirements. Physicians in this situation have been given a grace period until July 31, 2016. **All physicians** are required to be shadow billing sessional services **by August 1, 2016 to comply with the payment process** – i.e., from August 1<sup>st</sup> onward, shadow billing must be submitted before payment for services is made. Please ensure you keep track of your shadow billing from May 1<sup>st</sup> onward since this must be completed within 90 days of the date of service.

As of May 1, 2016, a new BA has been issued to all physicians providing services under a sessional arrangement. The previous BA was not eligible for shadow billing, so a new BA was required. To activate this BA, an accredited submitter form should be submitted to MSI before attempting to shadow bill. Please contact MSI for any questions about this form.

Shadow billing for sessional clinics will follow the same rules as all other billing (i.e., bill for **all** the services you provide where possible, bill **only** for the services you personally provide, bill **within 90 days** of the service).



## Some of the services I provide cannot be shadow billed. What do I do?

Any services you provide which are not eligible to be billed under the MSI [Physician's Manual](#) and its Preamble should not be shadow billed. Therefore, if there is no appropriate corresponding Health Service Code(s) for the service(s) provided, nothing should be billed for those services. In the event that there were no shadow billings on a particular date, this must be indicated by utilizing the notes section on the sessional payment form – i.e., state the number of patients seen and a short statement indicating there were no billable services that particular date (note: do not include the patient information on the form).

## Some of the patients I see are complex, but I cannot shadow bill for all the services I provide to them. What should I do?

When a patient has multiple issues, you should shadow bill the service for which the patient is seeing you on any particular visit. For example, in a youth health centre, the patient may be seen for a sore throat, but during the course of the examination, other issues are present. You should shadow bill for the main reason the patient is being seen *in that instance* (i.e., the sore throat).

## What if I don't have a patient's Health Card Number (HCN)? Or a patient doesn't have an HCN?

Contact MSI at 902-496-7008 or 1-800-563-8880 to request a patient's HCN. A patient HCN is required to complete all shadow billing.

## What if a patient doesn't present him/herself?

You cannot shadow bill for patient "no-shows" since this is not a billable activity under the MSI [Physician's Manual](#) and its Preamble. It is expected you will bill only for those patients for whom you provide services. You will still record your time spent in the clinic/office.

## What do I do about meetings, collaborating with other healthcare staff and talking with caregivers?

You cannot shadow bill most indirect patient services, such as discussions with families and other health care providers. You will still record the related hours on your Sessional Payment Form.

## My sessional arrangement is located in the hospital, but the service I provide requires an office-based fee code. How do I bill for this?

There are two types of facility codes in most hospital settings – location **hospital** and location **office**.

As per the Preamble to the MSI [Physician's Manual](#), hospital and office locations are defined as follows:

**HOSPITAL:** A facility for the observation, care and treatment of persons suffering from a psychiatric disorder or a hospital for treatment of persons with sickness, disease or injury, including maternity care, as approved under the Health and Services and Insurance Act. (5.0.8)

**OFFICE:** the location where a physician is practicing his or her profession. An office may be located in the physician's home, in a hospital, in an institution, or in other facilities or buildings. (5.0.11)

There may be some instances when an office based code is billed and rejected due to the facility code for the hospital being used. For any codes specific to location office, please use the appropriate corresponding "Clinic Ambulatory Care" facility number associated with that hospital. Please see the list below for the clinic facility numbers by hospital.

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Hospital Name	Hospital Facility Number	Clinic Ambulatory Care Facility Number
Aberdeen Hospital	11	2743
All Saints Hospital	12	2622
Annapolis Community Health Centre	13	3967
Buchanan Memorial Hospital	15	3563
Cape Breton Regional Hospital	73	2512
Cobequid Multi Service Centre	61	2696
Colchester Regional Hospital	18	2986
Cumberland Regional Hospital	30	2691
Dartmouth General Hospital	65	2714
Digby General Hospital	20	2685
Eastern Kings Memorial	21	3008
Eastern Memorial	22	4354
Eastern Shore Memorial	23	6625
Fisherman's Memorial	24	2678
Glace Bay Health Care Incorporated	25	3304
QEII - Halifax Infirmary	74	2698
Hants Community Hospital	37	2684
Inverness Consolidated Hospital	34	5025
IWK Hospital	17	2712
Lillian Fraser	32	4016
New Waterford Consolidated Hospital	63	5264
Northside General Hospital	41	3383
Harbour View Hospital Rehab Ctr	4371	156201
Queen's General Hospital	38	2742
Roseway Hospital	39	3368
Sacred Heart Hospital	47	3708
Soldier's Memorial Hospital	48	2693
South Cumberland Community Care Centre	49	4842
South Shore Regional Hospital	19	2677
St. Martha's Hospital	43	2746
St. Mary's Memorial Hospital	45	6914
Strait Richmond Hospital	68	3709
Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital	50	2731
Twin Oaks Community Hospital	52	5327
Valley Regional Hospital	67	3436
Victoria General Hospital	54	2975
Victoria County Memorial Hospital	53	6875
Yarmouth Regional Hospital	56	2686
Bayer's Lake Community Out-Patient Centre	164607	164455

## ★ Shadow Billing Continued

### Need more help on particular shadow billing concerns?

Contact MSI at 902-496-7011 or 1-866-553-0585 or email [afpclaims@medavie.bluecross.ca](mailto:afpclaims@medavie.bluecross.ca)

### Interested in billing education?

MSI has many resources available on its website related to shadow billing.

<http://msi.medavie.bluecross.ca>

## ★ Shadow Billing Accountability and Privacy Expectations

### Shadow Billing Accountability

There are no thresholds or minimum expected billing associated with your shadow billing of sessional services. You are simply expected to shadow bill any and all those instances of service which follow the rules of current billing guidelines (i.e., as outlined in the [Physician's Manual](#)). Those services you provide which would not be eligible to be billed under the [Physician's Manual](#) and its Preamble should not be shadow billed.

### Shadow Billing & Privacy

On a regular basis MSI performs random service verification audits on certain fee codes. These service verification audits involve contacting patients to confirm they received such services as billed by the physicians. For many of the sessional arrangements,

## ★ Sessional Payment Form

such an audit would be inappropriate for the patient population being served. Hence, MSI is excluding all sessional shadow billing from this service verification audit process – **no service verification letters will be sent to these patients.**

The Sessional Payment Form looks a little different from the old sessional form, but less information is required than the previous forms.

- The services you provide for sessional compensation will be listed by date on the payment form. All sections of the Sessional Payment Form must be completed. Incomplete forms cannot be processed for payment.
- Since all patients are shadow billed, health card numbers are captured through the billing process. To ensure patient privacy, patient-identifying information should not be added to this new Sessional Payment Form.
- The Sessional Payment Form is not transferrable to any other physician.





Payment for invoices is made by MSI only if shadow billing has already been submitted for the time period being claimed. Once shadow billing is entered, submit your Sessional Payment Form. The table below outlines the payment schedule.

2016 PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR SESSIONAL ACTIVITY			
SHADOW BILLING Electronically Submitted By	AND	SESSIONAL PAYMENT FORM Emailed to Medavie by 11:00 AM on	THEN PAYMENT TO PHYSICIAN Deposited on
May 5, 2016		May 13, 2016**	May 25, 2016
May 18, 2016		May 30, 2016	June 8, 2016
June 2, 2016		June 13, 2016	June 22, 2016
June 16, 2016		<b>June 24, 2016**</b>	July 6, 2016
June 29, 2016		July 11, 2016	July 20, 2016
July 14, 2016		<b>July 22, 2016**</b>	August 3, 2016
July 27, 2016		August 8, 2016	August 17, 2016
August 11, 2016		August 22, 2016	August 31, 2016
August 25, 2016		<b>September 2, 2016**</b>	September 14, 2016
September 8, 2016		September 19, 2016	September 28, 2016
September 22, 2016		<b>September 30, 2016**</b>	October 12, 2016
October 5, 2016		October 17, 2016	October 26, 2016
October 20, 2016		October 31, 2016	November 9, 2016
November 3, 2016		November 14, 2016	November 23, 2016
November 17, 2016		November 28, 2016	December 7, 2016
December 1, 2016		December 12, 2016	December 21, 2016
December 15, 2016		<b>December 21, 2016**</b>	January 4, 2017
<b>** denotes a date variation</b>			

Shadow billing must be submitted before sessional payments are processed. The schedule above lists the key dates for the submission of shadow billing and sessional payment forms and when to expect payments. **Note: \*\* denotes a date variation.**

Though MSI strives to achieve these goals, it may not always be possible due to unforeseen system issues. It is advisable not to leave these submissions to the last day.

**The payment schedule only shows 2016. How do I know what the dates will be for 2017?**

The 2017 schedule will be provided when it is published in the Physician’s Bulletin in November 2016. It is important to remain current on MSI billing-related matters because physicians are responsible for all claims submitted to MSI. Please visit the MSI website at <http://msi.medavie.bluecross.ca/> to become a subscriber to the Physician’s Bulletin for important

updates.

**What if I don't have Microsoft Excel?**

There are free trial versions of Microsoft Excel available online. Faxed submission of forms will be accepted for a few months to allow you time to meet the new requirement. However, **effective August 1st**, no fax submissions will be accepted by MSI; only electronic submissions of the approved sessional payment form will be accepted for payment from that date onward.

**Why can't I fax my sessional payment form?**

To **ensure physician privacy**, sessional payment forms can no longer be accepted by fax. If a fax number is mistakenly entered, your sessional form may be misdirected.

**What if I cannot find the new sessional payment form when I need it; or what if I lose the new form?**

Both DHW and MSI have copies of all physician sessional payment forms; please contact either party to request a new form.

**We welcome your feedback and your questions.**

For information about the sessional policy, please contact  
**Physician Services** at [alternate.funding@novascotia.ca](mailto:alternate.funding@novascotia.ca) or 902-424-8200.

For specific sessional shadow billing or payment information, please contact  
**MSI** at [afpclaims@medavie.bluecross.ca](mailto:afpclaims@medavie.bluecross.ca) or 1-866-553-0585