

Health Benefits Information in Response to COVID-19 on the FNHA Website – #2

Current to April 6, 2020

PLEASE NOTE – the below information/policies are subject to change. Please reference the FNHA website for updates at: <https://www.fnha.ca/benefits>

Content:

Page 1: Extended hours to serve Medical Transportation needs

<https://www.fnha.ca/benefits/health-benefits-news/extended-hours-to-serve-medical-transportation-needs>

Page 2: Important Telehealth Updates for Mental Health Providers Regarding COVID-19

<https://www.fnha.ca/benefits/health-benefits-news/important-telehealth-updates-for-mental-health-providers-regarding-covid-19>

Page 4: Notice for Vision Providers Regarding COVID-19

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Extended hours to serve Medical Transportation needs

Apr 03, 2020

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) Health Benefits Medical Transportation team is extending hours of operations for patient travel to include Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The new hours enhance the FNHA COVID-19 response by providing operational capacity to coordinate rooms and meals for individuals eligible for isolation/quarantine support. The team will assess requests using criteria developed with Health Protection and Emergency Management.

Please route all requests through COVID19needs@fnha.ca for assessment. Not all self-isolation requests will be approved through the FNHA process. Some may be considered out of scope and directed back to communities or Indigenous Services Canada for support.



Health Benefits – Important Telehealth Updates for Mental Health Providers Regarding COVID-19

Telehealth Guidelines

On March 20, 2020, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) sent a notice requiring that providers **suspend all travel into communities** to avoid the potential spread of COVID-19 to our clients in remote and isolated communities. Additionally, **all non-urgent, in-person mental health appointments should be cancelled indefinitely.**

Telehealth includes counselling services delivered over the phone or videoconferencing. Text and email communications are not considered telehealth and are not billable services.

Before delivering services via telehealth or telephone, providers must:

- ensure that they have the ability to effectively provide services via telehealth or telephone;
- use professional judgement to determine if telehealth or telephone is therapeutically appropriate for the client;
- ask the client if they are open to receive counselling via telehealth or telephone;
- follow the telehealth standards set by their professional body; and
- document the appointment.

Do you provide telehealth services?

To support continued access to counselling services, we are updating the provider list to identify which providers deliver counselling services over the phone or through videoconferencing. Please fill out this survey to be included in FNHA's provider list offering telehealth services: <https://interceptum.com/si/en/4869168>

This list will be updated on a weekly basis. The deadline to be added to the list will be weekly as of **March 31, 2020.**

Emailing Prior Approvals and Invoices

We heard that many providers do not have access to fax or mail at this time. We are now allowing [prior approvals](#) and [invoices](#) to be emailed during this state of emergency to HB.MentalHealth@fnha.ca.



To invoice telehealth appointments:

- Indicate the client's location (city/community) and the provider's location (city) in the invoice field where the client would normally sign for an in-person session.
- Keep a call log/calendar, confirming that the session occurred, its duration and the client's name for auditing purposes (only submit if requested).

Our team is currently operating with contingency in-person staffing and doing our best to support both clients and providers. We will be prioritizing prior approvals to expedite access to care but service standards for invoices may be slower than usual.

Professional Telehealth Standards and Resources

We want to ensure that providers stay updated with the latest developments related to COVID-19 (coronavirus). The following are recent updates for mental health providers in BC:

- [BC Association of Clinical Counsellors](#)
- [Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association](#) has [guidelines](#) on the use of technology in counselling and psychotherapy and [recommended resources](#)
- [College of Psychologists of BC](#) has provided [checklists for telepsychology](#) and a [telepsychology assessment](#) to guide registrants
- [College of Social Workers of BC](#)

Thank you for your cooperation to safely provide counselling services for our clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. We'll keep you informed of any updates and check our [website](#) for the most up-to-date forms. Please contact Health Benefits Provider Relations at provider@fnha.ca or **1-855-550-5454** if you have any questions.



Health Benefits – Notice for Vision Providers Regarding COVID-19

FNHA Expectations

The World Health Organization recently declared COVID-19 a Pandemic and the Province of British Columbia has declared a state of emergency. First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) Health Benefits is requiring that providers **suspend all travel into communities** to avoid the potential spread of COVID-19 to our clients in remote and isolated communities.

FNHA will continue to monitor the situation closely and will provide updated communications when travel into communities is permitted once again. Additionally, **all non-essential, in-person appointments should be cancelled indefinitely.**

Where possible and appropriate, providers are encouraged to provide care to patients and clients via telephone and video technology as guided by their respective professional body.

Professional Standards and Resources

We want to ensure that providers stay updated with the latest developments related to COVID-19 (coronavirus). The following are recent updates for vision providers in BC, including telehealth standards and principles on how to determine non-essential and elective care:

- [College of Opticians of BC](#)
- [College of Optometrists of BC](#)

Thank you for your cooperation to safely provide services for our clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. We'll keep you informed of any updates. Please contact Health Benefits Provider Relations at provider@fnha.ca or **1-855-550-5454** if you have any questions.