

Northwest Patient Travel Guide

This guide outlines resources that are available to individuals and families in Northwestern BC who need to travel out of their home community for medical care. Resources are listed by category: “transportation,” “accommodation,” and “financial assistance.” Some of the resources are for specific patient groups.

Icons



Transportation



Accommodation



Financial assistance



Cancer patients



Pediatric patients



Travel Assistance Plan (TAP): Government of BC

Services

Provides **discounted** rates for transportation for residents of BC having to travel for **non-emergency** medical specialist services not available in their home community. Transportation services covered include air, rail, and northern ferries.

Eligibility

- Must be a B.C. resident and be enrolled in the Medical Services Plan (MSP);
- Must have a referral from a physician or nurse practitioner for MSP insured specialist medical services which are not available locally;
- Travel expenses must not be covered by third party insurance, such as an employer plan, extended medical plan, ICBC, WorkSafeBC or federal government program (e.g. Veterans' Affairs).

Escorts

- Patient must be 18 years of age or under or,
- Patient must be incapable of travelling independently for medical reasons

Application Process

1. Complete the TAP Form

- Physician, nurse practitioner, or specialty clinic will provide the TAP form and complete most of it.

2. Obtain a TAP Confirmation Number (preferably two weeks prior to travel date)

- Phone TAP before making travel arrangements to verify eligibility and receive a confirmation number. Applicants who present forms without confirmation numbers will be refused discounts.
- Call B.C. (toll-free): 1 800 661-2668 and please have your Personal Health Number (PHN) and the TAP form ready.

3. Present your completed TAP Form when booking travel

- To receive the discount, present the completed TAP form and the TAP confirmation number at the time of booking travel.

Good to Know

- Health care services not covered by MSP and services provided by practitioners other than medical physicians are not eligible for TAP.
- It is the responsibility of the patient to make travel arrangements. To ensure travel arrangements are approved, phone TAP prior to making travel arrangements

Contact

Visit <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/accessing-health-care/tap-bc/travel-assistance-program-tap-bc> for eligible transportation partners.

Call: 1-800-663-7100



Medical Transportation Benefit: First Nations Health Authority

Services

Provides medical transportation benefits for medically necessary services not available in the patient's community of residence.

Eligibility

- Must be eligible for Health Benefits to receive this service:
 - A registered "Indian" under the Indian Act, or infant of an eligible parent;
 - A resident of British Columbia.
- Must have a referral from a general practitioner or family physician.
- Must have written confirmation of upcoming appointment from health provider or facility.
- Must provide confirmation of attendance of appointment to receive reimbursement, if reimbursement is required.

Escorts

- Escorts may be eligible if the *Physician Escort Request Form* is completed. This can be found at <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Medical-Transportation-Physician-Escort-Form.pdf>

Application Process

- **Note:** Patients who live in community should contact their local community health centre for the appropriate forms.
- Read and follow the FNHA Medical Transportation Check List at <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Medical-Transportation-Client-Letter-Check-List.pdf>
 - Ensure the *Request for Medical Transportation Form* is filled out 5 days prior to appointment. The form can be found at <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Medical-Transportation-Request-Form.pdf>
 - Submit the *Physician Escort Request Form* with the *Request for Medical Transportation Form*, if applicable.
 - Submit the *Confirmation of Appointment Form*. This form can be found at <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Medical-Transportation-Confirmation-of-Appointment-Form.pdf>
- To receive reimbursement, after the appointment submit the *Confirmation of Attendance Form* along with original receipts. This form can be found at <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Medical-Transportation-Confirmation-of-Attendance-Form.pdf>

Good to Know

- Enrollment with Health Benefits is not automatic, some individuals need to apply. To confirm enrollment, call 1-855-550-5454.
- If travel requests are not made 5 days prior to the appointment, the patient may need to pay out of pocket and submit reimbursement. If enough notice is given the travel may be arranged for the patient.
- Patients should keep all original receipts for reimbursement.
- Eligible patients may also apply for funding for meals and accommodations.
- For more information on application and eligibility process visit <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-First-Nations-Health-Medical-Transportation-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Contact

Email: Transportation@fnha.ca

Call: 1-800-317-7878

Visit: <http://www.fnha.ca/benefits/medical-transportation>



Prince Rupert Aboriginal Community Services Society (on behalf of FNHA)

Services	Provides medical transportation benefits for medically necessary services not available in the patient's community of residence.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be eligible for Health Benefits to receive this service:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A registered "Indian" under the Indian Act, or infant of an eligible parent;- A resident of British Columbia.• Must have a referral from a general practitioner or family physician.• Must have confirmation of upcoming appointment from health provider or facility.• Must provide confirmation of attendance of appointment to receive reimbursement, if reimbursement is required.• Must live within the following catchment area: Off reserve in Prince Rupert, north to the Yukon border, east as far as Hazelton, southeast as far as Kitimat, and all points in between
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call 1-888-624-5504 or 250-624-4646; a clerk will assist you with your application.
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The use of an escort must be pre-authorized.• Will also administer patient travel from Prince Rupert location for those whose communities do not administer off-reserve FNHA patient travel.
Contact	Call: 1-888-624-5504 or 250-624-4646. Visit: http://pracss.org/index.php/programs-and-services/medical-transportation-program/



Northern Health Connections

Services	Provides low-cost bus service for patients who need to travel out of their community for medical appointments in Northern BC and Vancouver
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have BC Services Card• Cannot require medical assistance during the trip• Need to access medical care that is not available in the home community
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fill out online form at https://nhconnections.pwt.ca/reservation/select_iframe.aspx• Before calling, ensure you have the following information available:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Name, address, and phone number.- Name and phone number of emergency contact.- BC Services Card number- Name and phone number of health care professional you're travelling to see- Date and time of appointment (if applicable)
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will also provide transportation back home if had to travel for medical care• Deadline for reservations is 2pm on the day before the patient would like to travel.• Rates differ based on destination but typically range between \$10-\$30• Accommodation for overnight travel is not included.• Seniors 65 years and older can also take the bus for non-medical trips.
Contact	Visit https://nhconnections.ca/ Call 1-888-647-4997



Hope Air

Services	Offers free flights and Airbnb accommodations for those who have to travel out of community for medical care.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have financial need• Must have a confirmed health care appointment that is covered by your provincial health care plan.
Escorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All individuals under 19 must have an escort.• If someone over 19 requires an escort, it must be deemed medically necessary.• Limit of one escort per patient.
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All applications are submitted online via a fillable form. Applications can be submitted at: https://hopeair.ca/Our-Work/Travel-Request/Travel-Request
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicants can access a sample form to ensure they have all the required documentation at https://hopeair.ca/hopeair/media/forms/Sample-Flight-Request-Form_en.pdf• Flights are booked on commercial airlines or through the Volunteer Pilot Program which means it may be a smaller, private flight from a volunteer pilot.
Contact	<p>Email: mail@hopeair.ca Call: 1-877-346-HOPE (4673) Visit: https://hopeair.ca/</p>



District of Kitimat Subsidized Transportation Program

Services	Provides reimbursement for travel costs between Terrace airport (YXT) and Kitimat (and vice versa).
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be a Kitimat resident <p>Eligible if you are one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individuals 60 years and older• Individuals with disabilities and a caregiver• Individuals with financial need
Escorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caregivers permitted
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm eligibility contact Leisure Services Department at 250-632-8970• Submit receipts for taxi/shuttle services and apply for reimbursement
Contact	<p>Email: recreation@kitimat.ca Call: 1-250-632-8970 Visit: https://www.kitimat.ca/en/our-community/resources/Documents/YXT-Transportation-Subsidy-Brochure-2019-2020.pdf</p>



Medical Travel Accommodation Listing: Government of BC

Services	Provides discounted accommodation for those who have to travel out of town for medical care.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have a medical appointment outside of home community.
Escorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family members/escorts allowed.
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visit http://csa.pss.gov.bc.ca/medicaltravel/ to obtain a list of accommodation for the community in which you need to receive medical care.• Call the listed place to confirm rates and availability.• Inquire about proof of medical necessity, if required. This changes from location to location.
Contact	Visit: http://csa.pss.gov.bc.ca/medicaltravel/ Call: 250-387-7300 Email: procurement@gov.bc.ca



Easter Seals House

Services	Provides accommodation for adults and families who have to travel to Vancouver for medical appointments or treatment.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be attending medical appointment or receiving treatment outside of home community.
Escorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult patients and families can bring anyone with them.
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call 1-800-818-3666 to book reservations and inquire about rates
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is located blocks away from the Vancouver hospitals and treatment centres• There is no restriction on the length of stay.
Contact	Address: 3931 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC, V6H 4H5 Visit: https://www.eastersealsbcy.ca/how-we-help/easter-seals-house/ Call: 1-604-736-3475 or 1-809-818-3666 (reservations) Email: eshousevcr@eastersealsbcy.ca



Ronald McDonald House

Services

Provides low-cost accommodation on the campus of BC Children's and Women's Hospitals for those needing to travel to Vancouver for specialized medical care. 73 rooms available.

Eligibility

- Child patient must be under 19 receiving medical care at BC Children's Hospital, Sunny Hill Health Centre, or another local medical facility for an extended period of time (typically more than 3 days).
- Pregnant woman with a high-risk pregnancy (and one caregiver) receiving medical care at BC Women's Hospital.
- At least one adult in the room must be 19 years+ of age at the time of check-in.

Application Process

- Referrals and requests by a Social Worker

Good to Know

- Siblings and family members are welcome; limit of one guest suite per family.
- Fees are \$12 per night per family.
- Some families may qualify for funding through the BC Family Residence Program. If you are eligible, accommodation at Ronald McDonald House BC will be booked on your behalf. Registration by emailing bctfrp@variety.bc.ca or calling 1-866-496-6946

Contact

Call: 604-736-2957 or toll-free 1-855-451-6703

Visit: <https://rmhbc.ca/>

Email: info@rmhbc.ca



Variety: The Children's Charity of BC

Services

Provides discounted accommodation in Vancouver/Richmond area through the BC Family Residence Program.

Eligibility

- Must be covered under BC Medical Services Plan.
- Must have a child aged 18 or younger receiving medical care at BC Children's Hospital of Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children.

Application Process

- Call 1-866-496-6946 for reservations.

Good to Know

- Families who wish to make arrangements for their own accommodation are responsible for the cost. Payment of accommodation subsidy is made directly to facilities approved by the program and no funds will be provided directly to an individual or family.
- Local transportation costs, meals and other expenses are the responsibility of the family.

Contact

Visit: <https://www.variety.bc.ca/>

Call: 1-800-381-2040

Email: info@variety.bc.ca



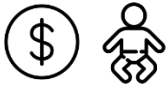
Canadian Cancer Society Accommodation

- Services** Provides accommodation in Vancouver, Victoria and Kelowna for individuals receiving cancer treatment outside of their home community and their caregivers.
- Eligibility**
- Must be receiving cancer treatment outside of home community.
- Application Process**
- Can self-refer but usually the cancer clinic facilitates this process.
 - Contact the lodge in the community you are receiving treatment in:
 - **Prince George:** call 250-562-3535
 - **Vancouver:** call 604-879-9131
 - **Victoria:** call 250-592-2662
 - **Kelowna:** call 250-712-2203



Travel Treatment Fund: Canadian Cancer Society

- Services** Provides financial funds to use towards covering travel and accommodation costs to attend cancer treatment. These are provided once a year.
- Eligibility**
- Must meet the low-income criteria
 - Must be undergoing active cancer treatment and live more than 200 km away from treatment centre **or** must have at least 10 treatment appointments during the year at a treatment centre
 - Must **not** be receiving travel financial support through income assistance or disability assistance, Veteran Affairs, First Nations and Inuit Health, or extended health benefits.
- Application Process**
- Complete application form with healthcare provider: <https://bit.ly/33VyHzm>
 - Provide most recent Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada and income from other adult income earners in household to verify financial need. If financial situation has changed during the year, proof of current income must be provided.
 - Send completed form by mail, fax, or email:
Travel Treatment Fund / Canadian Cancer Society
860-625 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC, V6C 2T6
Phone: 1 888 939-3333 / Fax: 1 888 675-6507
Email: traveltreatmentfund@cancer.ca
- Good to Know**
- If eligible, funding will be provided once a year.
- Contact**
- Call:** 778-808-6462
Visit: <http://www.cancer.ca/en/support-and-services/support-services/financial-help-bc/?region=bc>
Email: traveltreatmentfund@cancer.ca



Friends of Children

Services	Provides reimbursement services for accommodation, some travel, and groceries.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have a child 18 years of age or younger needing medical care.• Must have confirmation of appointment
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call 250-562-2217 or 1-866-564-2217 for an application.• Once the application and documentation is received, the information will go to the committee that determines eligibility.
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All financial support is provided by reimbursement.• For travel, will reimburse 20 cents per kilometer travelled but mostly refers families to Hope Air.• Will pay for cab costs to and from the location of accommodation and location of appointment.• Will provide \$50 a week grocery gift card for families having to stay out of community for more than 5 days. Gift cards can be found at BC Children's Hospital.
Contact	<p>Visit: https://www.friendsofchildren.ca/ Call: 1-866-564-2217 Email: info@friendsofchildren.ca</p>



Kimmunity Angels

Services	Provides financial aid to support the cost of medical travel to attend medical appointments and medical treatment and medical equipment.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have financial need• Available to individuals living in Terrace and surrounding areas
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete application online: https://www.kimmunityangelsociety.ca/application.html
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applications are reviewed based on need• Provide medical information to verify need/request, and Notice of Assessment(s) from Canadian Revenue Agency and bank information to verify financial need
Contact	<p>Visit: https://www.kimmunityangelsociety.ca/ Call: 250-641-2344 Email: give@kimmunityangelsociety.ca</p>



Helping Hands of Terrace Society

Services	Offers financial aid to individuals to help cover cost of travel (not including flights) such as gas, accommodation, food, and any other expenses incurred from the medical condition that the person cannot afford.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must have financial need
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call 778-210-2844.• Provide letter from physician you are travelling to see.
Good to Know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support is provided based on individual need. The society will supplement what is needed.
Contact	Call: 778-210-2844

*This guide was developed by the **Northern Patient Travel Improvement Committee**, a team of patients, health researchers, and care providers in Northwestern BC.*

If any corrections need to be made, please email healthresearchnw@unbc.ca.