

CLIENT ESCORTS

Client Escort Eligibility

6.14 An individual is eligible to serve as a client escort only where they meet all of the following criteria:

- (a) the individual is an adult or is a mature minor parent or guardian of the client;
- (b) if the client is an infant or child, the client escort is able to make medical decisions for the client, if necessary;
- (c) the individual agrees to and signs the Client and Escort Travel Agreement (Appendix B) and agrees to fulfill the responsibilities described in section 6.23;
- (d) the individual is able to stay with the client for up to four weeks before returning to his/her home community;
- (e) the individual agrees to participate in the client's treatment program and receive instructions on specific and essential home medical/nursing procedures that cannot be given to the client only;
- (f) the individual has fulfilled the responsibilities set-out in sections 6.11 and 6.23 and those described in the Client Travel Agreement (Appendix A) and the Client and Escort Travel Agreement (Appendix B) during any past medical travel;
- (g) if the client is unilingual speaking in Inuktitut, the individual may be required to speak both Inuktitut and English for the provision of services not related practitioner-client communication;
- (h) individuals who have not currently been ordered to self-isolate;
- (i) individuals who do not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or have had a test confirming a COVID-19 infection and have not been clear; or
- (j) Individuals who have not been deemed to be susceptible to a greater risk of health complications related to COVID-19 infection, as identified by a Nunavut Practitioner.

Client Escort Benefits

6.15 Medical travel benefits provided to client escorts include transportation to and from the nearest approved centre through:

- (a) scheduled aircraft at economy airfare;
- (b) charter aircraft when it is a reasonable and cost-effective alternative to scheduled travel; and
- (c) ground transportation when required to transfer a client from one approved centre to another.

Client Escort Approval Process

6.16 A Nunavut practitioner must request a client escort in writing, and ensure the following information is included in the request:

- (a) reason or explanation for why the client escort is needed; and
- (b) an indication of support, or not, from the Nunavut practitioner, including an explanation as to why the request is being supported or not.

6.17 Nunavut practitioners must submit client escort requests to the Director, or another official designated by the Deputy Minister, for approval.

6.18 The Director, or another official designated by the Deputy Minister; will notify the health centre of any decision concerning the client escort request. Either the Nunavut practitioner or travel clerk will notify the client or guardian of any decision concerning the client escort request.

6.19 A client escort may be approved for a portion of, or the entire duration of a client's medical travel.

6.20 Despite provisions 6.16-6.19, a Nunavut practitioner can approve a request for a client escort where the request concerns a parent or guardian serving as a client escort for an infant or child and the client escort meets the qualification criteria for client escorts in section 6.14.

6.21 If the request is for a second client escort, the written request will be reviewed by the Director or another official designated by the Deputy Minister and forwarded to the Assistant Deputy Minister – Operations for approval. A second client escort may be provided in rare situations, when it is deemed necessary by a Nunavut practitioner.

Client Escort Responsibilities

6.22 Client escorts must sign the Escort Travel Agreement in Appendix B before travel will be arranged.

6.23 While accompanying a client on medical travel for health services, client escorts are responsible for the following:

- (a) checking in for all flights except when prevented for medical reasons or because of circumstances outside the client escort's control;
- (b) abiding by the rules of the boarding home or hotel facility;
- (c) refraining from abusing and being intoxicated by alcohol, cannabis, illegal drugs; there is zero tolerance for intoxication and illegal drug use;
- (d) refraining from engaging in abusive verbal and/or physical behaviour, violent behaviour or illegal behaviour, including behaviour that results in harm to individuals and/or property damage;
- (e) treating the client, fellow travelers, health-care workers, boarding home and hotel staff and airline staff with respect;
- (f) staying with the client at all reasonable times, including sharing accommodations and attending all appointments;
- (g) if the client is in a hospital, being available to assist the client with his/her needs;

- (h) where an escort has been approved on the basis of providing interpretation support for the provision of services not related to practitioner-client communication, The client escort may be asked to demonstrate basic language ability in both the client's language and that of English;
- (i) staying with the client for up to four weeks consecutively; and
- (j) being aware of the client's condition and medications;
- (k) practice social distancing, proper hand hygiene and follow any public health official guidelines concerning the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

6.24 Where it is determined that a client escort is not fulfilling his/her responsibilities as per the Client Escort Travel Agreement (Appendix B) and as described in section 6.23, a Director or another official designated by the Deputy Minister will consider the following courses of action:

- (a) A client escort can be deemed ineligible for current and future escort duties;
- (b) A client escort can be billed for the costs associated with medical travel including missed appointments;
- (c) A client escort can be asked to make and pay for their own arrangement, including accommodations, meals and ground transportation; and/or
- (d) A client escort can be responsible for any damages resulting from abusive, violent or illegal behavior.

Escort Switching

6.25 After four weeks of performing continuous client escort duties, a client escort may submit a request to the Director or another official designated by the Deputy Minister, to travel home, and a new client escort may be authorized. A Director may deny an escort switch due to the travel restrictions currently in place during the covid-19 outbreak.

6.26 A client escort may submit an appeal to the appointed medical travel appeals reviewers to request travel back home before four weeks of continuous client escort duties have passed.

6.27 If a client escort is unable to fulfill their duties before the client's medical travel is completed, a substitute client escort may be identified with the client and authorized for medical travel.

MEDICAL ESCORTS

Medical Escort Eligibility Criteria

6.28 A medical escort will be provided based on the clinical determination of a Nunavut practitioner.

Medical Escort Benefits

6.29 Medical travel benefits provided to medical escorts include the following:

- (a) medical travel transportation to and from the nearest approved centre through:
 - i. scheduled aircraft at economy airfare;
 - ii. charter aircraft when it is a reasonable and cost-effective alternative to scheduled travel;
 - iii. ground transportation when required to transfer a client from one approved centre to another;
 - iv. medevac when needed to access emergency or specialized care; and
 - v. the cost of travel to get a client who becomes seriously ill or badly injured on the land to the nearest approved centre (subject to provisions in the Memorandum of Understanding between Health and the Department of Community and Government Services).
- (b) accommodation and meals at Government of Nunavut rates at approved commercial accommodation in accordance with the Government of Nunavut's Financial Administration Manual; and
- (c) transportation as required between residence, approved centres, accommodation and airports.

ELECTIVE INFANT TRAVEL

Elective Infant Travel Eligibility

6.30 When it does not pose a risk to the infant's health, and subject to sections 6.31 to 6.33, an infant may accompany a parent or guardian when on medical travel, including when the client is travelling on confinement and is the parent or guardian of the infant.

- (a) A parent or guardian who is travelling as a client escort for a child, may have his/her infant accompany them while on medical travel.
- (b) Child care, while the client and client escort are attending the appointment is the responsibility of the parent or guardian

Approval Process for Elective Infant Travel

6.31 Infant travel requests must be submitted by a Nunavut practitioner to the Director, or another official designated by the Deputy Minister, for approval.

- (a) Requests for infant travel will not be approved where it is reasonable to expect that the infant will reach the age of two during the medical trip

6.32 An infant travel request must be submitted in writing and include the following information:

- (a) confirmation that childcare has been arranged for the infant during the clients appointments if necessary; and
- (b) confirmation from the Nunavut practitioner that the medical treatment for the client will not pose a health risk to the infant.

6.33 The Director, or another official designated by the Deputy Minister, will notify the client or guardian of any decision concerning the infant travel request.

RETURN OF DECEASED

6.34 If a client, client escort or medical escort dies while on approved travel, the following benefits will be provided:

- (a) preparation of the body to meet minimum airline regulations; and
- (b) transportation of the body to the Nunavut community of residence in the most economical way and in the most economical casket that meets airline standards.
 - i. At the request of the family and with prior approval from a Director, the body can be returned to a community other than where the deceased last resided as long as there is no extra cost to Health.

6.35 The family or estate of the deceased may choose to pay for preparation and transportation expenses for the body beyond the benefits provided in Sections 6.34 (a) and (b) above.