Cuts to the Interim Federal Health Program

Refugee Categories in Canada

Resettled Refugees

Government assisted refugees (GARs) & Privately sponsored refugees (PSRs)

- Permanent residents
- 1 year of financial and social support
  - GARs: Fed govt funding & settlement agency support
  - PSRs: Private sponsors
  - SAH: Settlement agreement holders
  - BVOR: Blended visa

- Health coverage:
  - Eligible to apply for MSP on arrival
  - IFHP for 1 year from date of arrival for supplemental benefits

Refugee Claimants / Asylum Seekers

- Temporary status until claim is heard by Immigration Review Board (IRB)
- Finances:
  - Social assistance
  - Work permits (generally low income jobs)
- Social supports:
  - Not coordinated, no automatic settlement support
  - Shelter system, community organizations

- Health coverage:
  - IFHP until accepted or deported

Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)

- **Temporary** health care coverage for refugees, federally funded
- **Basic coverage:** MDs/Diagnostics/Laboratory tests/hospitalizations (similar to provincial coverage)
- **"Supplemental" services:**
  - Prescription medications (matches provincial formulary)
  - Emergency dental
  - Basic vision
  - Assistive devices (feeding, ostomy, urinary, mobility devices, hearing aids etc)
  - Allied health: PT, OT, SLP, counselling, limited home care, etc

  ****Most supplemental services require MD/NP referral AND pre-authorization**
- Coverage for 1 year for PSRs/GARs and until refugee claim accepted for claimants (or until definitively rejected)

www.medaviebc.ca/en/health-professionals/resources

New co-payments on IFHP supplemental services effective May 1

- Applies to all beneficiaries, no exceptions*:
  - $4 for every prescription (including refills)
  - 30% co-pay on any supplemental service
    - Feeding tubes, pumps
    - Urinary supplies
    - Hearing and vision (hearing aids)
    - Mobility devices
    - Psychotherapy
    - SLP, OT, PT
    - Dental

Graphic: Sophia Ikura

Health care coverage	GAR / PSR	Refugee claimant	Individual on social assistance
Basic (medical)	Provincial health insurance	**IFHP**: until claim is accepted or definitively rejected	Provincial health insurance
"Supplemental"	**IFHP:** 1 year *Not eligible for social assistance & associated benefits in the first year of arrival*	**IFHP**: until claim is accepted or definitively rejected	Provincial extended health benefits: until no longer eligible based on income

Health Care Coverage for GARs/PSRs

- Provincial insurance (ie. OHIP, AHIP, MSP) for basic coverage
- IFHP for supplemental services for **1 year**

PROTECTED - B

INTERIM FEDERAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

Family name:
Given name(s):
Date of birth:
Sex:
Citizenship:
UCI:
Application no.:

NOT VALID FOR TRAVEL
DOES NOT CONFER STATUS

The above named individual is eligible for the following coverage:

Coverage | Effective Date | Valid Until

This coverage may cease or be modified without notice if the individual's immigration status changes.

This certificate must be presented to participating health care providers, along with government issued photo ID, before receiving services. If an individual pays for services covered by the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP), the individual cannot be reimbursed.

I, the undersigned:

- declare that I require coverage under the IFHP, I will notify CIC immediately of any changes to my immigration status, or if I become eligible for or receive other health insurance;
- understand that it is my responsibility to renew this coverage before and annually thereafter, as required;
- understand that my medical and personal information will be shared with CIC, IFHP claims administration and other appropriate third-parties for the administration of the IFHP and that personal information may be shared with other government institutions and other third parties in accordance with the *Privacy Act* and the *Department of Citizenship and Immigration Act*.

SIGNED at on

For the health care provider, you **MUST** verify the eligibility of the individual with the IFHP administrator **BEFORE** providing services, via web https://provider.medavie.bluecross.ca/ phone 1-888-414-1880 or fax 506-867-3824.

Client ID #:
Family name:
Given name(s):
Date of birth:

Canada

SPECIMEN

Example: Child with cerebral palsy, G-tube fed, wheelchair dependent, suction catheter

30% of these costs are nearly $500/month

Feeding supplies	Zevex Feeding pump - $949 Feeding bag + tubing - $12 per feed Extension tubing - $30 Sterile saline for flushes - $10 Syringes for flush - $2 per syringe Connecters - $10 Mic-Key Button (spare) - $250	One time costs: •Pump: $949 •Mic-Key Button: $250 Monthly costs (ongoing): •Feeding bags: $1080 •Extension tubing: $120 •Saline flushes: $40 •Syringes: $60 •Connecters: $40
Specialized formula	Neocate Jr - 1 can per day - $60/can (covered with prescription)	$4 per prescription (monthly)
Suction supplies	Portable suction unit - $300-700 Suction catheters (single use) - $50-100 for bulk Yankauer suction tip - $1 - $3 each	One time cost: •Suction machine Monthly costs: •Catheters: $200 •Suction tips: $60
Wheelchair (custom)	$1000 - $2000 (minimum); range depends on needs	
Stander	$1500 - $4000	
Physiotherapy (intensive)	$1500/wk $105 - 160/session	Monthly costs: •$1200 - $1500

For our patients – “supplemental” benefits are **essential,** not optional

No feeding supplies
No respiratory support
No catheters
No PT / OT
No trauma counseling

→

Poor health
Delayed discharges
More admissions
Worsening conditions

→

Increase family stress and mental health
Food/income/housing insecurity
Social isolation
Decreased civic engagement

Strategies and advocacy

Document all impacted cases

Email me for any cases in the hospital that you encounter!

Use this link to submit any de-identified stories of harm or near misses.

Providers can also email IFHP directly with concerns – ircc.ifhpco-payments-pfsicopaiement.ircc@cic.gc.ca

Other strategies to mitigate impact

- Enrol in Canadian Dental Care Program
  - Will allow dual coverage
- Apply for disability benefit when eligible (resettled refugees)
  - Although resettled refugees not eligible for income benefit for at least 12 months, are eligible for other disability benefits
- Work with settlement agencies to appeal for coverage through Refugee Assistance Program
- For ongoing prescriptions – consider writing longer durations to minimize refills

Add your voice to speak against the cuts!

HOME / ADVOCACY / SPEAK OUT: PROTECTING IFHP BENEFITS

Speak Out: Protecting IFHP Benefits

Protecting IFHP Benefits

Changes announced to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) introducing a co-pay for prescriptions and eligible supplemental health products will create an insurmountable barrier to essential healthcare for some of the most marginalized families in Canada.

Write to your representatives today to urge them to support a reversal of these changes and to commit to ensuring universal healthcare for all!

We encourage you to customize the template email to share your personal knowledge and experiences.

https://cps.ca/en/advocacy-defense/speak-out-protecting-ifhp-benefits

Thank you!

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