

BACKGROUND

September 12, 2007

Ministry of Health
BC Ambulance Service

AMBULANCE FEE CHANGES

On October 1, 2007, the BC Ambulance Service will implement a fairer, more streamlined fee structure to ensure most patients pay the same for ambulance transport in B. C., regardless of where they live, and to eliminate fees for even more low income individuals. A flat fee will replace the current combination of fee plus mileage charge for long-distance ambulance transports or transfers.

	Current Fee	Fee effective October 1, 2007
MSP Beneficiaries with valid BC Care cards	\$54 for the first 40 km, plus 50 cents for each additional km to a maximum of \$274 for ground or air ambulance	\$80 flat fee, no additional mileage charge for either ground or air transport
MSP Premium Assistance Clients	\$54 plus mileage	\$0
Non-MSP Beneficiaries (visitors to B.C. and employers when an employee is injured at work)	Ground service - \$396 Helicopter service - \$2,400/hr. Airplane service - \$6/statute/mile	Ground service: \$530 Helicopter service: \$2,746/hr. Airplane service: \$7/statute mile
Inter-hospital Transfers (once admitted, between hospitals)	\$54 plus mileage	\$0
Inter-facility Transfers (between care home and hospital)	\$54 plus mileage	\$80 flat fee

EXAMPLES OF CURRENT AMBULANCE FEES/DISTANCE TRAVELLED

A patient transported by ambulance from Vanderhoof to Prince George by ground now pays \$83.50 for the 99 km trip. On Oct. 1, 2007 that same person will pay \$80.

The family of a child transported by air ambulance from Terrace to BC Children's Hospital in Vancouver now pays \$274.00 for the 693 km journey. On Oct. 1, 2007, that family will pay \$80.

A patient needs to be transported by ambulance from Grand Forks to Kelowna General Hospital. He would pay \$139 for the 210 km trip and after Oct. 1, 2007 will pay \$80.

A patient needs to be transported by air ambulance from Port Hardy to Victoria General Hospital. Her current ambulance fee would be \$214 for the 360 km trip and on Oct. 1, 2007, she would be charged \$80.

A patient who is transported from Grand Forks to the hospital in Trail is currently charged \$87. After a few days, it is determined that the same patient needs a higher level of care and is moved from Trail to the Kelowna General Hospital. A second bill will be issued for \$188.50 for a total cost of \$275.50. After Oct 1, the total cost to the patient will be a flat fee of \$80 as there will be no charge for the second trip since it is a transfer between two hospitals.

NUMBER OF AMBULANCE COSTS AND EVENTS

In 2006/07, the average cost of providing an ambulance transport to hospital was \$565, a ground transfer between health care facilities was \$202, and an air ambulance transport or transfer was \$4,500 per patient.

In 2006/07, BCAS responded to 366,000 pre-hospital events by ground, transported 8,300 patients by air, and transferred more than 154,000 patients between health care facilities, including 72,000 between hospitals. This represents a 12 percent increase in demand over the last three years.

CROSS-CANADA COMPARISONS FOR BENEFICIARIES/RESIDENTS

Jurisdiction	Pre-hospital Ground Ambulance Fees	Air Ambulance Fees
British Columbia (on Oct. 1, 2007)	\$80	\$80
Alberta	Edmonton (Advanced Life Support) - \$344 Calgary (Advanced Life Support) - \$272 plus \$3.03 per km	\$0
Saskatchewan	\$300 plus \$2.20 per km (major urban centres)	\$350
Manitoba	\$260 plus \$2.97 per km (average of fees from various service providers)	\$0 for the most serious patients. If the patient does not meet the most serious category, then \$7.25 - \$8.25 per air mile
Ontario	\$45 if deemed medically necessary by receiving hospital physician; \$240 if receiving hospital physician deems medically unnecessary	\$45 if medically necessary. \$240 if not medically necessary.
Quebec	\$125 plus \$1.75 per km	\$630
Nova Scotia	\$128	\$0
New Brunswick	\$0	\$0
Prince Edward Island	\$150	\$750
Newfoundland	\$115	\$130 (\$80 admin fee + \$50 fee for medical escort)

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Contact: Communications
 Ministry of Health
 250 952-1887 Media line

Communications
Emergency and Health Services Commission
Phone: 250 953-3651
Pager: 250 978-3235