



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

May 27, 2020

Clarification regarding 80% versus 100% payment under the Physician Work Disruption Policy (PWDP)

Dear Members:

Some physicians have asked for clarity as to how the 100% top-up payment is accessed under the PWDP would start and end.

The relevant sections from the Policy are as follows:

3. Physicians who are requested and agree to provide “additional services”, i.e. assessment centres, coverage in ER, support to another clinical area, extended clinic hours beyond normal practice hours, regional community call services, assessment clinics, support for quarantine units, etc. will continue to bill FFS and will be provided the greater of actual FFS earnings during the pandemic period or 100% of their historical average income as defined above, for the duration of the secondment. VPs of Medical Services will be responsible for designating which services and physicians fall within “additional services”. “Additional services” can be requested within or outside regular work schedules. Physicians are expected to maintain normal responsibilities and duties to the extent possible while also providing “additional services”.

4. A physician who ceases to be available to provide “additional services” must notify their VP of Medicine (or designate), and they will no longer be eligible to receive benefits under this Policy.

Therefore, the 100% payment starts when the “secondment” starts, and ends after “the duration of the secondment.” In other words, the top-up to 100% does not commence based solely upon the ‘agreement’ by the physician to provide services, but rather once the delivery of “additional services” begins.

Each RHA has structured the secondments for “additional services” somewhat differently. Some RHAs have weekly rotations where physicians take one or more shifts. These secondments start in the first week that the physician starts work, and end when either the physician, or the work, is no longer being scheduled. These start and end points will define the period in which the 100% top-up is paid.

In Eastern Health the in-patient COVID units have been established as Teams, some of which are only scheduled for work if the number of in-patients escalates. Also in Eastern Health, the assessment centres are scheduled in one-month blocks where the physicians working during a designated month may not be required in subsequent months. We have consulted with the Department and Eastern Health, and they see the “secondment” starting when work for a specific physician starts, and ending when the physician is no longer scheduled to work. For the in-patient teams, the physicians on teams that are never scheduled for work will not receive 100% at any time. For physicians assigned to the assessment centre blocks, the 100% period starts and ends in relation to the month in which they are scheduled for work. If they are not scheduled in another subsequent month, they will not return to the 100% level.

“If you have other items requiring clarification please let us know at nlma@nlma.nl.ca.

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