



Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program: Medical Supplies and Equipment (MS&E) Client Quick Reference Sheet

Who is eligible for MS&E coverage under the NIHB Program?

Registered First Nations and recognized Inuit living in Canada, and a child less than 2 years old whose parent is an NIHB-eligible client.

What do I need to access MS&E under the NIHB Program?

First Nations clients will need to provide one (1) of the following to their MS&E provider:

- Indian Status Card, or an official letter marked 'Certificate of Indian Status'
- NIHB Client Identification Number (B-number)

Inuit clients will need to provide one (1) of the following to their MS&E provider:

- Northwest Territories Gov. Health Card
- Nunavut Gov. Health Card
- NIHB Client Identification Number (N-number)

Inuit clients accessing services outside their home Territory may use their Territorial health card number as their NIHB number so that MS&E providers can bill for eligible benefits.

If an identification document does not include a photo, you will also need a piece of photo ID.

What types of MS&E benefits are covered by NIHB?

The NIHB Program covers a wide range of medical equipment and supplies. The following are examples of items covered for each category:

- **Audiology:** hearing assessment, hearing aids, cochlear implants processor
- **Orthotics, prosthetics and footwear:** braces, prostheses, custom-made footwear
- **Oxygen and respiratory equipment:** oxygen cylinders, Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machines
- **Pressure devices:** compression stockings, burn garments
- **Mobility and self-care equipment:** walkers, wheelchairs, bathroom safety equipment
- **Communication and low vision:** speech generating devices, white cane, desktop technology
- **Medical surgical:** dressings, ostomy, and incontinence supplies

For a complete list of MS&E benefits, consult the [MS&E Guide and Benefit Lists for First Nations and Inuit](#).

How do I access MS&E benefits through NIHB

First, you will need to get a prescription or recommendation for the item(s) from a healthcare professional who is recognized by NIHB.

- To verify coverage for the item(s), consult the [MS&E Guide and Benefit Lists for First Nations and Inuit](#).
- To confirm eligibility for coverage and the amount covered, you can contact your NIHB regional office or the Express Scripts Canada client line (*see phone numbers at the end of this document*).
- Visit an MS&E provider who is enrolled with NIHB and eligible to provide the specific item.
- If prior approval is required for coverage, the provider will send a request to the NIHB Program. Once approved, they can dispense the item(s) to you and bill the Program directly.

Note: Clients that are covered by another public or private health care/benefits plan must submit their claim to the other plan first.

How do I find an MS&E provider who is enrolled with the NIHB Program?

If you need assistance locating a NIHB-enrolled MS&E provider, please contact your NIHB regional office (*see phone numbers at the end of this document*) or an NIHB Navigator for assistance. Enrolled benefit providers can bill the NIHB Program directly, so clients don't have to pay upfront.

Where can I find information on specific MS&E benefits and policies?

More information on specific benefits and how to access them is located in the [MS&E Guide and Benefit Lists for First Nations and Inuit](#). For all listed benefits, find essential information including:

- **Prescriber information:** Health professionals recognized by the NIHB Program to provide prescriptions or recommendations for MS&E items.
- **Provider information:** Types of providers eligible under the Program to dispense medical supplies and equipment to NIHB clients.
- **Prior Approval requirements:** Indicates if MS&E items require prior approval of NIHB coverage before they can be dispensed.
- **Recommended replacement guidelines:** Indicates quantity and frequency that the Program covers.

Early replacement of MS&E items

Items may be considered for early replacement under certain circumstances, such as when there is a change in a client's medical condition, or an item is no longer functioning properly. Find details in section 1.12.1 Early replacement requirements in the [MS&E Guide and Benefit Lists for First Nations and Inuit](#).

Are there items or services not covered by NIHB?

Some items and services are not covered under NIHB. These are exclusions and cannot be appealed or covered as an exception.

Examples of exclusions include:

- Items for cosmetic purposes
- Medical treatment (such as surgery)
- Repairs for items covered under warranty
- Therapy treatment and equipment

For a full list of exclusions, visit section 1.6.4. of the [MS&E Guide and Benefit Lists for First Nations and Inuit](#).

Do I have to pay upfront for MS&E benefits?

MS&E providers can enroll with NIHB to bill the Program directly. You are encouraged to find an enrolled provider so you don't have to pay upfront for benefits. Before you receive the item or service, contact the provider to confirm that they will:

- Bill the NIHB Program directly for eligible items or services provided.
- Not charge you any additional fees.

If you use an eligible MS&E provider who is not enrolled with NIHB, or will not bill the Program directly, you can choose to pay upfront for items and services and submit a request for client reimbursement (*see below*). Contact your NIHB regional office or the NIHB Call Centre at Express Scripts Canada before your purchase to confirm eligibility for coverage and the amount covered by the Program.

Client Reimbursement

Clients have the option of submitting reimbursement requests by fax, mail, or through a secure online account. For client reimbursement instructions and forms, visit the [Express Scripts Canada NIHB website](#) (<https://nihb-ssna.express-scripts.ca/en>):

- Select "I am a client" and follow the links to "NIHB Client Reimbursement" to find instructions and forms.
- Make sure to include all supporting documents required (listed on the form and web page).
- For mail/fax submission, download, complete and sign the reimbursement form.
- For online submission, you'll need to create an NIHB client web account.

If you need assistance with client reimbursement, call the NIHB Call Centre at Express Scripts Canada (*see phone numbers at the end of this document*). Please note that you will be reimbursed for items up to the amount that the Program covers.

What is an NIHB client web account?

Clients have the option of creating a secure web-based account through the [Express Scripts Canada NIHB website](#) (<https://nihb-ssna.express-scripts.ca>). By creating a secure client web account, you can:

- View your benefit claims history and status of pending requests.
- Submit client reimbursement requests online.
- Submit appeal requests online.
- Receive NIHB Program communication directly by email.

What can I do if coverage has been denied?

If coverage for an item or service has been denied, you may appeal the decision. You can mail or fax your appeal to the Program or submit an appeal online through your secure NIHB client web account.

More information on the appeal process can be found on the Government of Canada website at canada.ca/nihb or by contacting your NIHB regional office.

Reminder: Items or services that are exclusions of the NIHB Program will not be considered for appeal.

CONTACT INFORMATION

NIHB Regional Offices

Atlantic: 1-800-565-3294

Alberta: 1-800-232-7301

Quebec: 1-877-483-1575

Ontario: 1-800-640-0642

Manitoba: 1-800-665-8507

Saskatchewan: 1-866-885-3933

Yukon: 1-866-362-6717

Northwest Territories and Nunavut: 1-888-332-9222

For complete NIHB contact information, including mailing addresses: canada.ca/nihb-contacts

Express Scripts Canada NIHB Call Centre

Toll Free Phone

1-888-441-4777

Toll Free Fax

1-888-249-6098

Government of Canada – First Nations Status Registration

Toll Free Phone

1-800-567-9604

TTY Toll Free

1-866-553-0554

Inuit clients may contact their land claim organization for information about registration.