



Policy: Home Oxygen Service Policy

Originating Department: Seniors and Long-Term Care

Original Approval Date: July 10, 2007 **Effective Date:** December 1, 2022

Approved By: Original Signed by Deputy Minister
Paul LaFleche
Deputy Minister Seniors and Long-Term Care

Version #: 3

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. The Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care (SLTC) funds the Home Oxygen Services program to provide eligible residents of Nova Scotia access to long term oxygen therapy.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is for SLTC to set the directives, roles and responsibilities for the Home Oxygen Services program. The associated *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines* further outline the parameters of the Home Oxygen Services program.

2. DEFINITIONS

All terms in this Policy have the same meaning as defined in the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.

- 2.1. **Client:** An individual who is authorized for and receiving the Home Oxygen Service program.
- 2.2. **Designated Physicians:** Respiriologists and Internists who are authorized by SLTC to determine medical eligibility for the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 2.3. **Long-Term Care Administrator:** The operator of a facility licensed or approved by the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care and includes Nursing Homes and Residential Care Facilities licensed under the Homes for Special Care Act.
- 2.4. **Medical Consultant:** A physician contracted by SLTC to provide advice and consultation for departmental staff, recruitment and consultation for designated physicians and serve as a resource for Service Providers on matters related to the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 2.5. **Palliative Oxygen Therapy:** This term refers to home oxygen service that is provided to a client who is terminally ill, having determined that treatment for cure or prolongation of life is no longer the primary goal and the client has a life expectancy of 90 days or less.

- 2.6. **Service Provider:** A business that has entered into, and meets the requirements of, a service agreement with SLTC to provide equipment, related supplies, and service for the Home Oxygen Services program.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. To ensure that Nova Scotians residing at home or in long-term care facilities have access to safe and reliable long-term oxygen services that meet their health care needs.
- 3.2. To provide direction regarding program eligibility and accountability to ensure the safe, effective, and efficient delivery of the Home Oxygen Services program.

4. APPLICATION

- 4.1. This Policy applies to SLTC, NSHA, Service Providers, Clients, Designated Physicians, the Medical Consultant and Long-Term Care Facility Administrators.
- 4.2. This Policy does not apply to:
- 4.2.1. Individuals who do not meet the general or medical eligibility under the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines* or those who are purchasing home oxygen service independently or through another public or private organization.
 - 4.2.2. Individuals who are prescribed oxygen for psychological support or for breathlessness unsupported by evidence of hypoxemia.
 - 4.2.3. Individuals who are prescribed oxygen therapy to be used solely on an emergency or stand by basis or for pain relief.

5. POLICY DIRECTIVES

- 5.1. General Eligibility Criteria – To be eligible for the Home Oxygen Services program the Client must:
- 5.1.1. Be a resident of Nova Scotia, with a valid Nova Scotia health card number, or be in the process of establishing permanent residence in Nova Scotia and have applied for coverage under Nova Scotia's Health Insurance Plan.
 - 5.1.2. Have a chronic respiratory illness or dysfunction that requires long-term or palliative oxygen therapy as determined by a Designated Physician.
 - 5.1.3. Meet the medical eligibility criteria as identified in the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.1.4. Not be receiving and/or not be eligible to receive the same benefits from another publicly funded program.
 - 5.1.5. Have a condition that can be managed safely and effectively at home and have an environment that is safe and suitable for the provision of home oxygen services, both for the individual and for the Service Provider.
 - 5.1.6. Agree (or have a parent/guardian agree) to a Home Oxygen Service Non-Smoking Agreement.
 - 5.1.7. Have a physician/nurse practitioner responsible for ongoing care related to his or her respiratory condition.

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- 5.1.8. Agree to a financial assessment and be responsible for any applicable client fees according to the Home Care Fee Determination process as identified in the *Home Care Policy Manual*.
- 5.1.9. Agree to be responsible for any fees related to equipment or services not funded through the Home Oxygen program.
- 5.1.10. Select a Service Provider from the Approved Home Oxygen Service Provider List.
- 5.1.11. Agree to comply with the requirements of this Policy and the associated *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.

5.2. Roles and Responsibilities

5.2.1. SLTC will:

- 5.2.1.1. Provide funding to support the provision of oxygen equipment and related supplies and services in accordance with this Policy and the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
- 5.2.1.2. Establish the budget for the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 5.2.1.3. Establish reporting requirements for NSHA and Service Providers for the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 5.2.1.4. Establish, maintain, and manage this Policy and the *Home Oxygen Procedures and Guidelines*.
- 5.2.1.5. Establish general eligibility for the Home Oxygen Services program and the applicability of fees for Clients.
- 5.2.1.6. Establish, maintain and manage Service Agreements with Service Providers.
- 5.2.1.7. Establish and maintain the required documents under the Home Oxygen Services program, including the Medical Eligibility Assessment and Reassessment Forms and the Designated Physician Remuneration Form.
- 5.2.1.8. Establish and maintain the Approved Oxygen Service Provider List.
- 5.2.1.9. Provide oversight and accountability for the Home Oxygen Services program.

5.2.2. Clients will:

- 5.2.2.1. Agree to comply with the parameters of the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with this Policy and with the Client responsibilities outlined in the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
- 5.2.2.2. Agree to select and enter into an agreement with a Service Provider from the Approved Service Provider List.
- 5.2.2.3. Agree to a financial assessment and be responsible for any applicable fees according to the Home Care Fee Determination process identified in the *Home Care Policy Manual*.

5.2.3. NSHA Continuing Care will:

- 5.2.3.1. Administer the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with this Policy and the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.

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- 5.2.3.2. Be responsible for determining applicant eligibility for the Home Oxygen Services program.
 - 5.2.3.3. Support the Client in the coordination of the Home Oxygen Services program.
 - 5.2.3.4. Educate Clients and support them in upholding their responsibilities as partners in the Home Oxygen Services program per this Policy and the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.2.3.5. Be responsible for billing and reconciling Service Provider payments in accordance with this policy and the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.2.3.6. Establish and maintain the required documents and forms under the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.2.3.7. Comply with all reporting requirements for the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 5.2.4. Service Providers will:
- 5.2.4.1. Provide equipment, supplies and services to Clients in accordance with the Home Oxygen Services Agreement, this Policy and the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.2.4.2. Invoice the NSHA in accordance with this Policy and the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.2.4.3. Comply with reporting requirements for the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 5.2.5. The Medical Consultant will:
- 5.2.5.1. Support the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with the Medical Consultant Service Agreement.
 - 5.2.5.2. Recruit and approve Designated Physicians to support the Home Oxygen Services program.
 - 5.2.5.3. Provide advice and feedback to support the Home Oxygen Services program.
 - 5.2.5.4. Act as a resource for Service Providers on matters related to the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 5.2.6. Designated Physicians will:
- 5.2.6.1. Assess applicants for initial medical eligibility and medical re-qualification for the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with this Policy and with the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
 - 5.2.6.2. Support Service Providers on matters related to oxygen therapy and Client medical eligibility.
 - 5.2.6.3. Submit Designated Physician Remuneration Forms for payment.
- 5.2.7. Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners will:

- 5.2.7.1. Following initial assessment/re-assessment by a Designated Physician, prescribe oxygen therapy and make prescription adjustments in accordance with the *Home Oxygen Service Procedures and Guidelines*.
- 5.2.7.2. Support the Client with the coordination of oxygen therapy through the Home Oxygen Services program.
- 5.2.8. Long Term Care Facility Administrators
 - 5.2.8.1. Support residents receiving the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with this policy and with the *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*

6. POLICY GUIDELINES

6.1. Travel

- 6.1.1. Clients travelling within the province can continue to receive the Home Oxygen Services program in accordance with *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
- 6.1.2. The Home Oxygen Services program is not provided for Clients travelling outside of the province in accordance with *Home Oxygen Services Procedures and Guidelines*.
- 6.1.3. Individuals travelling outside of the province for the purpose of receiving a lung transplant that has been pre-approved by the MSI Medical Consultant may be eligible for support through the Department of Health and Wellness - Insured Services.

6.2. Private Insurance

- 6.2.1. Clients with private insurance coverage are eligible for the Home Oxygen Services program. Clients may submit any fees for oxygen services not funded by SLTC to private insurance for coverage assessment.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 7.1. Accountability is delegated to the Deputy Minister of SLTC to administer this policy.
- 7.2. The Senior Executive Director of SLTC, or designate, has responsibility for on-going monitoring and enforcement of this policy.

8. MONITORING / OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

- 8.1. The Director of Home and Community, SLTC will monitor the implementation, performance, and effectiveness of this policy.

9. REFERENCES

- 9.1. *Home Care Policy Manual*

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1. *Home Support Services/Home Oxygen Services Fee Determination Table*
- 10.2. *Home Oxygen Service Procedures and Guidelines*

11. VERSION CONTROL

11.1. *Version Control:* Replacement of *Home Oxygen Services Program Policy*
Version # 02, March 1, 2016

12. INQUIRIES

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