

Social Work Support During Your Liver Transplant

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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To be reviewed January 2029 or sooner, if needed.
Learn more: <https://library.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources>

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After your transplant

- While you are admitted to the hospital, the inpatient social worker can help you with coping and discharge planning.
- After you are discharged, the outpatient social worker can meet with you and your support person to help you:
 - › Adjust to life after your transplant
 - › Adjust to life changes caused by your transplant
 - › Make sure all of your health needs are being met
 - › Meet your ongoing practical needs and connect to supports

Social Work Support During Your Liver Transplant

Social workers are available to support you throughout your transplant experience. They can help with:

- › Adjusting to or coping with an illness, an injury, or a disability
- › Lifestyle changes
- › Help finding and using resources and services
- › Referrals to community supports
- › Planning for being admitted to the hospital and for outpatient care after you are discharged
- › Practical concerns (like equipment needs, meals, medication, and getting to appointments)
- › Personal concerns (like relationship issues, caregiver stress, and family conflict)
- › Financial (money) concerns (like finding medication coverage)
- › Loss, grief, and death

Before your transplant

A social worker will meet with you and your support person (partner, caregiver, friend, or family member) to assess you for a liver transplant. They will work with you to help you get ready for your transplant journey. This may include:

- Counselling to help you:
 - › Manage uncertainty
 - › Cope with your illness and the life changes it causes
 - › Find caregiver support, if needed
 - › Plan for the future
- Advocacy (representing your interests when you are not able to), like:
 - › Writing letters, making phone calls, or filling out paperwork
- Education to help you:
 - › Understand the services and programs that may help you meet your needs and goals
- Working with other members of your transplant health care team, and other health care providers involved in your care
- Practical support, like:
 - › Helping you find and access resources to meet your needs
 - › Referring you to services or supports

New Brunswick

• Mental Health

- › www.gnb.ca/en/topic/health-wellness/mental-health.html

• 211 New Brunswick

- › 211 New Brunswick gives information on services and programs in your community. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
 - › Phone: 211
 - › <https://nb.211.ca>



What are your questions?

Please ask a member of your health care team. We are here to help you.

Newfoundland and Labrador

- **Mental Health and Addictions**
 - › www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/mentalhealth-committee/mentalhealth/



• 211 Newfoundland and Labrador

- › 211 Newfoundland and Labrador gives information on services and programs in your community. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- › Phone: 211
- › <https://nl.211.ca/>



Prince Edward Island

- **Mental Health Support and Services**
 - › www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-pei/mental-health-support-and-services



• 211 Prince Edward Island

- › 211 PEI gives information on services and programs in your community. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- › Phone: 211
- › <https://pe.211.ca/>



Getting ready for your transplant

Planning for costs

- It is important to be ready for all costs related to your liver transplant. A social worker will help you find resources that may help.

Note: If you are on Income Assistance and/or Disability Support, talk with your assigned case worker to find out what assistance is available. If you receive Non-Insured Health Benefits for First Nation and Inuit (NIHB) and need more information about supports:

- › Phone (toll free): 1-800-580-0950

Nova Scotia

Accommodations

- **If you are from Nova Scotia and you live more than 50 km (1 way) from Halifax:**
 - › You are eligible to stay at patient accommodations near the hospital after your transplant. This includes some meal costs and taxi transportation for clinic appointments. A support person may also be covered, if you are eligible.

Medications

- Anti-rejection medications are covered for everyone who has had a liver transplant.
- These medications are dispensed by:
6 North Pharmacy
Victoria Building, 6th floor
Victoria General (VG) Site
QE II Health Sciences Centre, Halifax, NS

Newfoundland and Labrador

Accommodations and transportation

- You and your support person must pay for your travel and accommodations. You will then be reimbursed (paid back) for part of your costs by the **Medical Transportation Assistance Program (MTAP)**:

› [www.gov.nl.ca/la/medical-](http://www.gov.nl.ca/la/medical-transportation-assistance-program-mtap/medical-transportation-assistance-program/)

[transportation-assistance-](http://www.gov.nl.ca/la/medical-transportation-assistance-program-mtap/medical-transportation-assistance-program/)
[program-mtap/medical-](http://www.gov.nl.ca/la/medical-transportation-assistance-program-mtap/medical-transportation-assistance-program/)
[transportation-assistance-](http://www.gov.nl.ca/la/medical-transportation-assistance-program-mtap/medical-transportation-assistance-program/)
[program/](http://www.gov.nl.ca/la/medical-transportation-assistance-program-mtap/medical-transportation-assistance-program/)



Social supports and well-being

- › [www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/income-](http://www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/income-support)
[support](http://www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/income-support)



Supporting your emotional and mental health

- Having a liver transplant can cause you to have many emotions (like sadness, anger, helplessness, guilt). The stress related to your transplant may feel overwhelming. It may also affect your ability to cope and to manage your health.
- If you would like emotional or psychological support to help you cope, ask your Transplant Coordinator to refer you to a social worker or a psychologist.

You can also find mental health supports in your community:

Nova Scotia

- **Mental Health and Addictions Program**

› <https://mha.nshealth.ca/en>

- **211 Nova Scotia**

› 211 Nova Scotia gives information on services and programs in your community. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

› Phone: 211

› <https://ns.211.ca>



- **For more information, visit:**

- › www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/health/DrugPlans/content/medicare/OutOfProvinceHostelFacilities-MealAllowance.html



Medications

- **If you do not have private insurance**, you can sign up for:

- › The New Brunswick Drug Plan
- › Organ Transplant Plan

- **If you have private insurance** and it does not cover anti-rejection medications, you can apply to the:

- › Organ Transplant Plan

- **For more information:**

- › Phone (toll-free): 1-800-332-3692
- › Email: info@nbdrugs-medicamentsnb.ca
- › www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.8936.html



Non-Insured Health Benefits Program for First Nation and Inuit (NIHB)

- Support for medical supplies and equipment, medical transportation, mental health counselling, and vision care benefits:

- › www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1572537161086/1572537234517

- › Phone (toll-free): 1-800-565-3294



Medications

- People who have had a liver transplant are eligible for medication coverage through the **Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP):**

- › www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/prescription/



- **Non-Insured Health Benefits, NIHB Drug Exception Centre**

- › Phone (toll free): 1-800-580-0950

Prince Edward Island

Accommodations

- You are eligible to stay at patient accommodations near the hospital after your transplant. This includes some meal costs and taxi transportation for clinic appointments. A support person may also be covered, if you are eligible.

Transportation

- You may be eligible for travel on Maritime Bus to and from Nova Scotia or New Brunswick for approved medical appointments. The **Out-of-Province Travel Support Program** will pay for 50% (half) or 100% (all) of your bus tickets. This will depend on your income.
- Maritime Bus also has special rates at certain accommodations.

• For more information:

- › Phone: 1-902-368-5918
- › www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-pei/financial-assistance-for-out-of-province-medical-travel



Ambulance transport out-of-province

- There is no cost for ground or air ambulance transport if you:
 - › Have a valid PEI health card
 - › Are referred by a PEI doctor for transport out-of-province

- Your support person must pay for their own transportation (including accommodations and meals). They may be eligible for bus or accommodation discounts through the

Out-of-Province Travel Support Program (see above).

- When you are discharged from an out-of-province hospital, **you must pay for your transportation back to PEI.**

Medications

- People who have had a liver transplant may be covered for approved medication costs through the **Transplant Anti-Rejection Drug Program**:

- › www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/transplant-anti-rejection-drug-program



New Brunswick

Accommodations

- You are eligible to stay at patient accommodations near the hospital after your transplant.

Out-of-province accommodations

- You may be covered for accommodation and meal expenses for a certain period of time, according to the **Medicare Hostel Policy**, if:
 - › You have been referred by a NB doctor for out-of-province treatment
 - › Your treating doctor requires you to stay for at least 3 nights in a row at a hostel
- Your support person may also be covered. This will be up to your treating doctor.