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Changes allow secondary insurance for chiropractic and podiatry services upfront

Edmonton... Effective July 1, Albertans with secondary insurance will be able to use it upfront to help pay for chiropractic or podiatry fees, rather than pay those fees themselves.

Regulation changes will allow secondary insurance to cover the patient's portion of chiropractic or podiatry fees beginning with the first service instead of waiting until the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan annual benefit is exhausted.

"This small change is an example of the many we expect to make under Alberta's Third Way in health care. These positive changes will make a real difference to Albertans," said Iris Evans, Minister of Health and Wellness. "Secondary insurance is now commonplace in Canada. It makes sense to allow Albertans to use it to help pay their chiropractic and podiatry fees from the first time they get service."

Chiropractic and podiatry are not required services under the *Canada Health Act*. Chiropractors and podiatrists charge a fee for each patient service. Alberta's insurance plan pays a fixed amount for some services and the patient pays any difference. Patients are responsible for the full cost of any services not covered by Alberta's plan.

The change to the *Alberta Health Care Insurance Regulation* will take effect July 1. The current regulation prevents secondary insurers from covering the patient's portion of chiropractic or podiatry services until their annual benefit is exhausted. The regulation was put into place at a time when secondary insurance was not readily accessible to all Albertans.

Alberta's insurance plan provides an annual benefit of \$200 for chiropractic services and \$250 for podiatry services.

Secondary insurers will continue to be able to provide coverage for the full cost of any chiropractic or podiatry service not covered by Alberta's plan and for any costs the plan does not cover for out-of-province services.

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