

Repatriation of Ontario Patients – A Guide for Patients and their Families

CritiCall Ontario is a one number to call, 24/7 emergency **consultation** and **referral service** for hospital-based physicians in Ontario caring for critically ill adult, paediatric and neonatal patients. Although CritiCall strives to find care for patients as close to home as possible, in some cases, it is necessary to refer patients outside of Ontario to another province or even the United States so they can receive the care they require as quickly as possible.

Patients who are referred out of Ontario for emergency medical care through CritiCall Ontario will be returned to Ontario for the remainder of their care as soon as possible. This process is called “repatriation.”

In most cases, CritiCall will oversee repatriation of the patients it sends out of province or out of country. The following information is intended to help patients and their families understand how this process works as well as their own roles and responsibilities.

The Repatriation Process

CritiCall Ontario will initiate contact with the hospital where the patient is receiving care within 48 hours of the patient’s arrival.

CritiCall Ontario will work directly with the patient’s Case Managers at the hospital to determine:

- if the patient’s emergency health issue has addressed
- the patient’s ongoing health care requirements (for example, does the patient still require a high level or care, access to rehabilitation services, etc.)
- if the patient is medically stable and ready for transport back to Ontario

Using this information, CritiCall will:

- Locate a hospital within Ontario as close as possible to the patient’s home with the resources necessary to address the patient’s current care needs (this can include ongoing acute care, rehabilitation, etc.)
- Contact the Case Manager with details about where the patient will be going for the remainder of his or her care and the timing of the transfer
- Assist in arranging transportation from the out of province hospital to the receiving Ontario hospital

Patient Transportation

Patient transportation is included in the repatriation process for patients transferred out of province by CritiCall Ontario when the patient is returning to an Ontario hospital. In most cases, patients will be returned to Ontario using the same mode of transportation (eg. air or land ambulance) involved in the initial transport. **If the patient is well enough to be discharged directly from the out of province facility or expires while outside of Ontario, CritiCall will not oversee transportation back to Ontario. In both cases, it will be up to the patient or the patient's family to arrange transportation back to Ontario.**

Medical Coverage

It is very common for patients who are receiving care outside of Ontario to have questions about medical insurance and other expenses. Below is a brief overview of coverage as it applies to patients who have been transferred out of the province or country by CritiCall:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care pays for a wide range of services, however, it does not pay for services that are not medically necessary.
- Most of your Ontario health benefits are covered across Canada.
- The province or territory you are visiting will usually bill the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care directly for hospital and physician services.
- In Quebec, you may have to pay for physician services and then submit your receipt to your local ministry office for payment.
- Expenses incurred by patient family members for non-medical services such as travel, accommodation and meals (except where included as part of insured hospital services) are NOT covered by OHIP.
- Treatment that is generally accepted in Ontario as experimental, for research or a survey, including clinical and drug trials are also not covered by OHIP.

More detailed information regarding out of province emergency medical coverage is available by visiting the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's website at <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/index.html> or by calling 1-866-532-3161.

Keeping You Informed

CritiCall Ontario is a liaison between hospitals and medical transportation providers but does not communicate directly with patients or their families. Questions regarding when the patient is returning to Ontario and where he or she will be receiving the remainder of their care can be answered directly by the hospital Case Manager.