

When CritiCall Ontario Transfers Patients to the USA

When to call CritiCall Ontario

If your hospital has **an urgent or emergent patient** who requires care beyond your hospital's resources, call CritiCall Ontario at 1-800-668-HELP (4357).

When does CritiCall refer to the United States?

When referring and consulting physicians determine that a patient must receive emergent care within the next 4 hours (Life or Limb) and the resources the patient needs are not immediately available and accessible (possibly due to geography or transport) within Ontario, a CritiCall Medical Associate will be contacted by the Call Agent to assess the appropriateness of sending the patient out of country. CritiCall Ontario will facilitate contact and acceptance with Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care approved Out of Country hospitals.

Once it's determined the patient will be sent to a hospital in the United States, what happens next?

CritiCall will fax a patient-specific "Prior Approval Application for Full Payment of Insured Out-of-Country Health Services" form to the sending physician for additional patient information. **The completed form must be faxed to CritiCall at 1-905-388-6377 and to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care at 1-866-221-3536 or (613) 536-3181.** It is important to note that **prior approval** on an emergent basis can only be obtained through CritiCall and that CritiCall does not approve payment.

If we send directly to the US without using CritiCall, is our hospital responsible for the costs?

If your hospital sends directly across the border without CritiCall facilitation or prior approval from the MoHLTC, you may be responsible for payment (including transportation and medical costs). CritiCall is not involved in billing or payment collection. For more information, contact OHIP out-of-country services at 1-888-359-8807 or visit www.health.gov.on.ca, select tab for 'OHIP out-of-country services'.

What if a patient doesn't have OHIP coverage?

If the patient **does not have a valid Ontario Health Card number or is from outside of Ontario**, the patient and his or her family should be informed that they will have to pay expenses out of pocket, through their own provincial health insurance or private health care insurance.

What identification do patients and staff require for crossing the Ontario border?

It is the sending hospital's responsibility to ensure the patient and staff (including physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and anyone accompanying the patient) have the necessary travel documents. A passport or an enhanced driver's licence is recommended. For more information about crossing the border with patients into the United States, contact the United States Department of Homeland Security or visit its website at: <http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>.

When does the patient come back to Ontario?

CritiCall will facilitate repatriation (bringing patients back to Ontario) of patients transferred out of country if CritiCall was involved with the initial transfer. Out-of-country repatriation will be initiated by CritiCall within 48 hours of patient transfer. When the patient is medically stable, CritiCall will work with the US hospital to determine the patient's care requirements and then attempt to locate a hospital with the necessary resources within Ontario and as close to the patient's home community as possible that can accept the patient. The most appropriate Ontario hospital will be expected to admit within 48 hours of notification.