

May 6, 2020

Changes to Alberta Health Care Insurance - Diagnostic Imaging Referred by Chiropractors

Dear Medical Professional,

I am writing to inform you of the changes recently announced by the Alberta Government for diagnostic imaging services ordered by Chiropractors. All diagnostic imaging services are no longer being covered by Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHC) effective March 31, 2020.

Mayfair will provide appropriate advice to you and your patient about the changes. Accurate communications and advice will be provided during the appointment booking process and at all Mayfair clinics.

Below are the guidelines:

1. Patient Payment for Uninsured Diagnostic Imaging

- a. Please ensure that you and/or your clinical team advises patients that diagnostic imaging services are now uninsured by AHC. It is now a 'patient pay' services when requested by a chiropractor and there will be a cost to the patient for the exam(s).
- b. Mayfair's pricing for X-ray and Ultrasound aligns with the published Alberta Society of Radiology based solely on Schedule of Medical Benefits (SOMB) with no further fees.
- c. The following services are unavailable and will not be offered on a "patient pay" basis:
 - Arthrograms
 - Pain Therapy
 - Bone Mineral Densitometry
 - Nuclear Medicine
- d. X-ray & ultrasound exams are performed according to standard Mayfair protocols, which may sometimes involve a combination of related body parts or exams for particular indications to ensure a thorough and complete exam.
 - Requisitions must define what images are NOT wanted. An example: Routine C-spine is AP, Lat, Odontoid, & both Obliques. For a limited study, you must request: C-Spine – No Obliques.
- e. Mayfair can provide Pre-Assessment services (by checking the 'For Pre-Injection Assessment' box on the Pain Requisition Form) for patients requiring or possibly needing spine injections (neck and back):
 - This would include provision of a treatment plan, pain management options & physician directed imaging and pain procedure ordering.
- f. Private MRI and CT services will be offered on a "patient pay" basis with a referral from a chiropractor with the exception of MRI/CT Arthrograms.

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- g. Please call our contact center on 403.777.3000 then press #3 to access private pay pricing for your patients for ultrasound, X-ray and pre-assessment services.
- h. The relevant fee(s) will be payable by the patient prior to the exam. Mayfair accepts credit or debit card. Cash and cheque payment is not accepted. Mayfair does not direct bill private insurance providers at this time.
- i. Patients are welcome to check with their private insurance provider/Health Care Spending Account (HSA) for fees that may be covered for diagnostic imaging services.

2. Partnership with Physicians

- a. Physicians are permitted to order diagnostic imaging services under the current AHS plan. Chiropractors have the option to send patients to a physician for a formal referral process and/or partner with a physician to enable their patients to obtain diagnostic imaging as an insured service. Should this pathway be chosen, the report will be issued to the referring physician.
- b. Mayfair will have no role in the referral process. The reports will be sent to the referrer on the requisition form and will be uploaded into Netcare. This does not apply to pre-assessment services.

3. Patient Education

- a. Patient education materials will be available online at www.radiology.ca for your patients that are referred for diagnostic imaging by your organization. The content defines insured versus uninsured diagnostic imaging services and payment options. The materials will also explain options to reclaim uninsured diagnostic imaging expenses through private health plans /HSA coverage if this an option.

Mayfair understands the impact of this change in government policy on your practice. As a valued referrer, Mayfair is doing our best to be as supportive as possible, while operating within the parameters of this new paradigm. Please consult with Alberta Health Services to understand what arrangements may exist within these policy changes by the government. You may also visit <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/health-med-212-bulletin-payment-diagnostic-imaging-referred.pdf> for more information.

Mayfair will make every endeavor to ensure you and your patients have a clear understanding of the changes. Mayfair will also be contacting referred patients that have appointments after March 31, 2020 to explain the changes that are taking place so that they may consider their options.

If you have any questions, please email the Business Development Team at BD@radiology.ca and one of the team members will contact you.

Sincerely
Tim Mar
Director, Business Development

Exams referred by chiropractors or physiotherapists are to be patient-paid as of March 31, 2020
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/health-med-212-bulletin-payment-diagnostic-imaging-referred.pdf>

Prices quoted below are based on the current Schedule of Medical Benefits as of October 1, 2019
<https://www.alberta.ca/fees-health-professionals.aspx>

Some DI providers may charge a small additional service fee for handling private payments

X-ray, CPSA Accredited

| Area / Description | Fee code | Rate |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Finger | X29 | \$20.81 |
| Hand | X30 | \$32.37 |
| Wrist (or Wrist + Hand) | X31 | \$37.00 |
| Elbow | X33 | \$33.14 |
| Shoulder girdle | X36 | \$54.72 |
| Toe | X38 | \$20.81 |
| Foot | X39 | \$32.37 |
| Ankle | X40 | \$37.00 |
| Knee, Basic | X43 | \$42.01 |
| Knee, OA series or Pre-Op | X43 + X43B | \$42.01 + \$21.20 = \$63.21 |
| Hip only | X47 | \$47.40 |
| Pelvis and One Hip | X52 | \$61.27 |
| Pelvis and Both Hips | X53 | \$69.37 |
| SI Joints | X54 | \$60.50 |
| Spine, one area | X55 | \$68.98 |
| Spine, one area, with obliques | X56 | \$83.24 |
| Spine, two areas | X57 | \$114.46 |
| Spine, two areas, with obliques | X57A | \$164.17 |
| Complete spine (3+ areas) | X58 | \$160.32 |
| (Complete spine with obliques) | X58E | \$247.03 |
| Ribs | X22 | \$48.17 |
| Bone Mineral Densitometry, DEXA | X128 | \$141.28 |

*add 50% for a bilateral study, unless otherwise stated

Diagnostic Consultative Ultrasound, CPSA Accredited

| Area / Description | Fee code | Rate |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Hand | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Wrist | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Elbow | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Shoulder | X335 | \$160.32 |
| Foot | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Ankle | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Knee | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Hip | X334 | \$115.23 |
| Abdominal wall | X313 | \$102.90 |

*per area or side

Notes:

- Additional exams and fees can be found on the AMA's Fee Navigator:
<https://www.albertadoctors.org/fee-navigator>
- Prices could vary depending on the exact clinical indication; please contact your preferred Radiology / Diagnostic Imaging Provider to confirm pricing
- Prices include the usual overhead costs (business costs) of providing the service, which are approximately 70% of these fees

For more information on Radiology / Diagnostic Imaging in Alberta, go to
<https://getthewholepicture.ca/>