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Asked by: John Main, MLA (Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Asked of: Hon. George Hickes, Minister of Health

Number: 65 – 5(2)

Date: March 12, 2020

Subject: Dental Services

- 1) For those Nunavut communities which do not have resident dentists:
 - a) How many dental service providers are contracted to conduct community visits?
 - b) By community, from April 1, 2018 to March 1, 2020, how many days of dental service were provided to each community?
 - c) Which entity pays for the travel, accommodation and office space for dental service providers who are contracted to conduct community visits?
 - d) Which entity pays for the specific dental services provided by dental service providers who are contracted to conduct community visits?
 - e) For dental services already provided to clients during visits by dental service providers, which entity covers the costs for dental services which are denied payment under the NIHB program and where no other coverage option exists?
 - f) For dental services denied coverage under the NIHB program and where no other coverage option exists, what assistance is provided by the Government of Nunavut to community members who wish to appeal the NIHB decision to deny coverage?
 - g) What assistance is provided by the Government of Nunavut to pay for dental services recommended by a dentist but denied coverage under the NIHB program and where no other coverage option exists?

Response:

a) How many dental service providers are contracted to conduct community visits?

There are two dental contractors who hire dentists to provide services in Nunavut communities. Aqsaqniit Dental Services provides services to the Kitikmeot Region. Nunavut Innovative Health Solutions (NIHS) provides services for the Kivalliq and Baffin regions. Each of these contractors may have 5 to 10 dentists working for them at any given time.

b) By community, from April 1, 2018 to March 1, 2020, how many days of dental service were provided to each community?

See Table in Appendix 1.

c) Which entity pays for the travel, accommodation and office space for dental service providers who are contracted to conduct community visits?

The Government of Nunavut (GN) pays for travel, accommodations and meals at the Nunavut per diem rate as stipulated in the dental contracts. The GN owns all of the dental facilities in Nunavut, with the exception of two private clinics in Iqaluit. Office space is rented to the contractors by the GN at the rate of \$200.00/day.

d) Which entity pays for the specific dental services provided by dental service providers who are contracted to conduct community visits?

Dental services for Nunavut Inuit are covered by Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB), provided that those services are eligible for NIHB coverage. Not all dental services are covered by NIHB.

e) For dental services already provided to clients during visits by dental service providers, which entity covers the costs for dental services which are denied payment under the NIHB program and where no other coverage option exists?

NIHB and most insurance plans cover a broad range of essential dental services. GN employees have coverage for dental treatment through the GN's dental plan. Non-GN employees may have coverage through their employers. For children up to and including the age of 12, a range of preventive and clinical services are provided by the Nunavut Children's Dental Project. Dental therapists provide services in three communities: Arctic Bay, Arviat, and Rankin Inlet.

Dental Therapists are GN employees and can deliver basic dental services to anyone in the community. However, therapists usually provide only emergency services for adults.

- f) For dental services denied coverage under the NIHB program and where no other coverage option exists, what assistance is provided by the Government of Nunavut to community members who wish to appeal the NIHB decision to deny coverage?**

The Territorial Dental Officer, the Territorial Manager of Health Insurance Programs, and the Territorial Dental Coordinator can provide guidance on questions regarding NIHB coverage and the appeals process.

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) employs an NIHB navigator who provides guidance for patients with questions regarding NIHB coverage and appeals.

- g) What assistance is provided by the Government of Nunavut to pay for dental services recommended by a dentist but denied coverage under the NIHB program and where no other coverage option exists?**

NIHB and most insurance plans cover a broad range of essential dental services. Requests are reviewed by the Territorial Dental Officer, the Manager of Health Insurance Programs and the Deputy Minister of Health.

Appendix 1

DENTAL SERVICE DAYS – April 1, 2018 to March 1, 2020					
COMMUNITY	GP Days	Denture	Orthodontics*	Hygiene	
KITIKMEOT					
Cambridge Bay	253	28	34	111	
Gjoa Haven	161	23		50	
Kugaaruk	129	25		32	
Kugluktuk	215	30		70	
Taloyoak	123	11		11	
TOTAL	881	117	34	274	
KIVALLIQ					
Arviat	218	19			
Baker Lake	204	19		28	
Chesterfield Inlet	73	13			
Coral Harbour	169	8			
Naujaat	164	9			
Rankin Inlet	402	35	56		
Sanikiluaq	106	15			
Whale Cove	58	23			
TOTAL	1394	141	56	28	
BAFFIN					
COMMUNITY	GP Days	Denture	Orthodontics	Hygiene	Pediatric (Qikiqtani Hospital)
Iqaluit			36		114
Arctic Bay	91	32			
Clyde River	124	27			
Grise Fiord	32	10			
Igloolik	147	46		21	
Kimmirut	87	13			
Kinngait	138	46			
Pangnirtung	193	53			
Pond Inlet	204	58			
Qikiqtarjuaq	96	28			
Resolute Bay	39	11			
Sanirajak	136	7			
TOTAL	1287	331	36	21	114

*Orthodontic patients are transported to regional hub communities for orthodontic treatment. The orthodontist has recently travelled to Arviat to provide services as well.