

# Alberta Aids to Daily Living

## Bulletin # 106

### Q&A summary for authorizers and vendors of medical-surgical and/or benchmark mobility benefits

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#### April 13, 2021 authorizer Q&A session

##### Registration and Access

##### **Can we register on the Alberta Blue Cross online portal as a clinic versus individual authorizers?**

Only individual registrations will be possible. Access information can be shared with an office administrator if required and providing standard username/password security measures are followed.

##### **Can non-authorizers/assessors/therapy assistants or administrative staff become users of the system?**

Access will be granted to approved AADL authorizers, vendors and specialty suppliers. You may grant access to your account to an office administrator so long as standard security protocols are followed.

##### **Can authorizers see what previous benefits were provided?**

The authorization history report and the patient inquiry screen product consumption report are available to all users of the system.

##### **Will clients have access to the Online Health Portal?**

Clients will not have access to the Online Health Portal. The primary method for clients to obtain information will still be authorizers and vendors. Should they have any further questions, they can contact the Alberta Blue Cross Customer Service Centre.

##### **Will the client have access to the portal if they want a copy of the authorization?**

The authorizer or the vendor can print a copy of the authorization for the client. Additional copies can also be requested through the Alberta Blue Cross Customer Service Centre.

##### **When you are working at multiple sites, how do you enter your profile information?**

Users of the system will get one password and username for use at all worksites.

##### Forms and Documentation

##### **Will the cost share status on the Alberta Blue Cross Online Health Portal indicate whether the client had applied for cost share, but was denied?**

The patient inquiry screen will display the cost-share status for the previous year, current year and future year (if that information is available).

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<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-aids-to-daily-living.aspx>

It will not contain information on the status of applications.

**What is the process to apply for cost- share exemption? Can we submit a cost share exemption form through the portal?**

The cost-share exemption process will remain the same. The forms will be available on the AADL website and the Alberta Blue Cross website. Forms need to be completed and then sent to AADL for processing. The form can be mailed, faxed or sent by encrypted e-mail from Alberta Health Services.

**If the cost-share application arrives prior to an authorization, is it still processed?**

Yes. It may take a bit longer if the client information needs to be added to the system, but it will be processed.

**How will the client declaration form be completed? Do we physically get the signatures and then upload the file when we get back to the office? Do we need a scanner?**

A scanner is one way to upload the client declaration form. If you have an approved device, you can take a photo of the form and upload it that way as well.

**Will a specific browser be needed to review the manual/forms?**

Alberta Blue Cross supports the majority of major internet browsers such as Edge, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari, and Firefox. Other internet browsers may function, but will have limited support.

**Do we need a signed client declaration for each benefit or authorization?**

The client declaration form does need to be uploaded with each authorization; however, you

do not need to have the client sign a new form each time. You can have it signed once, keep a copy and use it each time for that client.

**If we are not the original authorizer, do we need a new client declaration form?**

Yes, if you are a new authorizer working with this client, you need to have them sign a new client declaration so you can upload it with the authorization.

**Currently, client declarations are included in AADL 1250 & 1251 forms, and a separate client declaration form is not required. Is a client declaration form now required?**

Yes, that is correct. The client declaration will now be a separate form that needs to be completed and uploaded with each authorization.

**Which documents need to be completed for authorization, specifically for incontinence supplies?**

Where possible, we have streamlined the authorization process by removing forms and collecting the required information through the portal instead. For briefs, diapers, liners and catheter supplies, the only document required for authorization is the Client Declaration Form.

**Do clients no longer need to sign a 1250/1251 form?**

For the benefits transitioning over in this phase, medical surgical and benchmark mobility benefits, the 1250 and 1251 forms will no longer be required.

**How do we submit the change of vendor form?**

The authorization is not attached to the vendor so a change of vendor form is not required. The client can choose the vendor they want and the

vendor can view the authorization in the Online Health Portal.

**Is the form for pressure gradient stockings still required?**

Where possible, we streamlined the authorization process by removing forms and collecting the required information through the portal instead. The lower leg assessment will still be required and must be uploaded on the Alberta Blue Cross Online Health Portal.

**How do we obtain a client's signature? If the client has dementia, does the client declaration need to be signed by the guardian?**

The process to obtain signatures has not changed. Whoever is responsible for making decisions on the client's behalf should be signing the form.

**Where can we access the new client declaration form?**

The form will be available on the Alberta Blue Cross website and the AADL website.

## Authorizations

**Will quantity and frequency limits on products be identified in the Patient Inquiry screen?**

No, quantity and frequency limits will continue to be displayed in the Approved Products List (APL), which will be available on the Alberta Blue Cross website and on the Resources page within the Online Health Portal.

**Will current AADL clients receive information about these changes and be advised they can access information about authorizations through vendors and Alberta Blue Cross? Are clients expected to monitor authorization expiry dates and**

**contact authorizers? Or are authorizers expected to monitor these dates and contact clients prior to authorization expiry?**

The experience for clients should be seamless as nothing regarding their portion of the process changes. They will continue to work directly and closely with authorizers and vendors. The change in submission system does not change any of the clinical requirements of the authorizer. Information on when particular authorizations will be terminating is available on the Authorization History Report.

**If an authorization is expiring or coming up for renewal, will an email be sent to the authorizer?**

An email or notification will not be sent, but the authorizer or the vendor can check the Authorization History Report on the Online Health Portal for information on authorizations.

**What happens if changes need to be made to an authorization, but the client has a new authorizer?**

If needed, the new authorizer can terminate the current authorization and enter a new one.

**Is there a SAVE button or will the information be lost if the authorization is not completed in one sitting?**

The process for entering an authorization should be quite rapid. If you have already prepared the necessary documents for upload, it should not take more than a minute or two to complete an authorization submission.

**What about rural areas where there are no vendors in the community? Will we still be able to order trial equipment?**

Nothing is changing regarding how you put clients in touch with vendors. You can continue to direct clients to suitable vendors, provide

them with listings of approved vendors, or contact vendors on their behalf to commence service.

**In home care, we always give clients vendor choice and get consent to contact the vendor. With this system, when the vendor comes to the client's home to trial and possibly provide equipment, does the vendor complete the authorization once the authorizer puts it into the portal?**

Authorizations should be approved prior to any products or services being rendered. An authorization can and should be fully completed by the authorizer.

**Sometimes the client is not physically able to go to a vendor to pick up equipment. We (rehab homecare) often assist by picking up the equipment for the client. Can we still do that or does the client need to find a family or friend to get the equipment?**

Yes, you may still continue this practice.

**How does this system work for clients who need a therapist to coordinate with their vendors?**

Nothing is changing regarding how you put clients in touch with vendors. You can continue to direct clients to suitable vendors, provide them with listings of approved vendors, or contact vendors on their behalf to commence service.

**Will the authorization report include the vendor and vendor number?**

Vendors are not attached to the authorization and so will not appear in the authorization history report.

**Does this replace IVR?**

Yes, the Alberta Blue Cross Online Health Portal will replace the IVR system for medical-surgical and benchmark mobility benefits.

**Once we have completed the authorization online, can we print a copy for our client?**

Yes, there is an option to print a copy to provide to the client.

**Will the portal show when a client is eligible for a new walker or life time limit (e.g., wall grab bars 4 in a life time limit)?**

The patient inquiry product consumption report will provide information about historical claims made by the client. This information, when combined with an understanding of the APL, will allow an authorizer to know when a client's coverage is available.

**Will historical data be uploaded?**

Yes, we will be obtaining both authorization and claims history from AADL and adding that information to the Alberta Blue Cross records.

**Will there be a way to check which vendors previously provided authorized products?**

Information on the vendor of historical claims will not be available to users of the system. This information should be obtained by the client or, if that information is not available, the Alberta Blue Cross Provider Contract Centre.

**Will authorizations be approved more quickly through this process?**

The majority of authorization types will be automated, meaning that approval or denial will be posted immediately. Some authorizations will still require clinical review and approval.

**Will AISH clients automatically be fully funded as they have been in the past?**

The policy remains the same. AISH clients are cost share exempt. The program doesn't always get notified when someone is on the AISH or Income Support program so a client or authorizer can call AADL directly if their file needs to be updated with the information.

**If a client currently receives incontinence supplies but now needs pressure gradient stockings as well, do I cancel the authorization for incontinence supplies and add a new authorization for both the pressure gradient stockings and incontinence supplies?**

There are a number of authorization streams. Clients will only be able to have one active authorization per authorization type. In the example given, incontinence supplies and pressure gradient stockings are separate authorization streams. A client can have one active authorization for each.

**Will the QFR be online?**

Yes, QFRs will be entered on the Online Health Portal.

**Are incontinence and catheter supplies separate?**

There is a "Briefs, Diapers, Liners" authorization type, a "Catheter Supplies" authorization type, and a combined "Diapers and Catheters" authorization type.

**If a client has coverage through another Blue Cross plan, will this be identified?**

No, there is no sharing of information between the AADL government plan and private insurance with Alberta Blue Cross.

**If the client has insurance through Alberta Blue Cross, will this impact their eligibility for AADL?**

The standard AADL policies regarding coordination of benefits remain unchanged.

**When will the paper copy not be accepted?**

The blackout dates for medical surgical supplies and benchmark mobility benefits starts on June 10, 2021. After June 21, 2021, authorizations must be entered on the Online Health Portal.

**When working in outpatients, we were previously able to fill out the 1250 for walkers and have the client go to a vendor to pick out the recommended walker. Are we still able to do this and what would the process look like?**

The authorizer will create an authorization for a walker and may provide counsel on appropriate vendors. The patient will then select their vendor. The vendor will then be able to find the approved authorization on the system, check its contents and provide the necessary products and services.

**The majority of my clients are unable to leave the facility to access vendors. Does equipment drop off compensation for the vendor apply to non-recyclable equipment as well as recyclable equipment?**

The approved product list will still show eligible products and services.

**In home care, therapists typically arrange for a vendor to complete equipment trials in conjunction with the therapist and client. Are we no longer able to do so?**

Nothing is changing regarding how you put clients in touch with vendors. You can continue to direct clients to suitable vendors, provide

them with listings of approved vendors, or contact vendors on their behalf to commence service.

**When equipment is trialed in the home with a vendor of their choice, how does the client select a vendor? Or does the vendor access Alberta Blue Cross and claim it?**

Once the vendor has confirmed eligibility in the Online Health Portal and provided the benefit, they can claim for that benefit through the Online Health Portal.

## Training

**Will there be a training module and/or a step-by-step guide made available prior to the launch?**

We will be hosting demonstration sessions in May to prepare authorizers and vendors.

To support authorizers and vendors, Alberta Blue Cross will supply user guides with detailed information, high level training videos and the support of its Alberta Blue Cross Provider Contact Centre (available over the phone or by email).

**How are new authorizers being educated?**

AADL will continue to conduct training sessions for new authorizers, but will revise the modules and sessions to reflect the new processes. Authorizer training will be suspended in May and resume in September to allow time to update the materials.

## Vendor Information

**Are vendors still able to send equipment out for trial in rural areas? Is there still funding through AADL to do this?**

The sequence of events should be that an authorization is created and then products and services are provided according to what is contained within the authorization.

**Does the new system have two separate functions - one being the portal to do, view authorizations, consumption, etc. and the second for billing in real time? I use Kroll currently to bill AADL. Will there be tutorials on billing in real time? Does Kroll need to be updated to handle AADL billings in real time?**

Yes, the portal will be used for authorization submissions from approved authorizers and claim submissions from approved vendors. Claims submission is moving away from batch processes to a real-time system to ensure vendors have up-to-date client information, can have their claims adjudicated in real time with an instant response and know exactly how much cost share to collect from the client.

**If a vendor already has an ABC health provider login, will AADL access be added or will we get a second login that is AADL specific?**

Vendors will get a username and login that is specific to AADL benefits.

**Will the vendor receive notification as quickly?**

Vendors will receive immediate responses on their submitted claims.

**Will vendors be notified via email or some other notification that a new authorization has been added to their profile? Or do we have to log in to search for new ones?**

Vendors will need to log onto the portal to view active authorizations.

**Can the client change vendors?**

Yes, a client can choose vendors and change vendors if they wish.

**Some clients use different vendors for different items. If a vendor is not designated in the authorization, how are clients protected from a vendor claiming an authorization when a different vendor was desired?** Alberta Blue Cross will perform claim assurance and compliance verification services to ensure that claims submitted meet the requirements of the AADL program.

### Updating Authorizer Information

**How do we ensure our AADL contact information is up to date? Would we refer to the previous survey email link that had a March 31 deadline?**

The deadline for the survey has been extended to May 3. You can find the survey here: <https://extranet.gov.ab.ca/opinio6//s?s=52634>

**Who do we contact to confirm that our authorizer record is updated?**

If you have completed the web survey to update your information, this information will be provided to Alberta Blue Cross prior to the implementation date. To confirm, you can contact Rachel Prefontaine at [rachel.prefontaine@gov.ab.ca](mailto:rachel.prefontaine@gov.ab.ca)

### Blackout Period

**Patients will need supplies during the blackout period between June 10-20. Will vendors let us order supplies without a patient authorization in the system?**

If active authorizations already exist, they will be transferred to Alberta Blue Cross as part of the transition. Vendors can provide products and services during the blackout period and then submit the claims once we have implemented the program at Alberta Blue Cross.

**As a vendor, should I be proactive and make sure clients get supplies prior to the blackout period?**

No access to the existing system will be permitted in the blackout period. This means that for this time period, no authorizations or claims will be possible. Yes, vendors should be proactive if they are aware that products or services will be needed over the blackout period.

**Do the blackout dates mean we cannot submit authorizations at all during the period of June 10-20? Do we hold them and enter them all on the 21st?**

Yes and yes.

**Can you provide more information about the blackout dates between June 10-20? Your timeline indicates that authorizers are to contact AADL for palliative or emergency requests during this timeframe. How do we contact you if a hospital bed and mattress is required for a palliative patient?**

The existing communication channels should be used until the Alberta Blue Cross implementation date.

### Future Phases

**When will large equipment (wheelchairs) and hospital beds transition to Alberta Blue Cross?**

Recycle benefits are expected to transition to Alberta Blue Cross in January 2022.

**If we need to order a palliative hospital bed from ACUTE care, do we still use the 1250 form and fax the form to AADL until early 2022?**

Yes, that is correct. You will still use a 1250 form to order a hospital bed.

**For supported seating benefit components for wheelchair seating, do we need to submit each component separately?**

Seating benefits are part of a future phase and will transition over to Alberta Blue Cross in January 2022.

## **April 13, 2021 Q&A session for medical-surgical benefits vendors**

### **Registration**

**If we already have direct deposit set up with Alberta Blue Cross, do we need to set up another one?**

Yes, this is separate from other Alberta Blue Cross business. You will receive a direct deposit form with your vendor package.

### **Authorizations/Providing Benefits**

**Can you speak to the changes in how authorizations are listed on the portal and how it isn't a single vendor anymore?**

The client can choose a vendor and also change vendors whenever they choose. Vendors can view the authorization on the Online Health Portal.

**If a client gets 3/4 of their supplies in July and then need more, will the other vendor see they only have 1/4 left?**

Information on the client's product consumption is available through the patient Inquiry screen. The vendor will be able to see how many of a particular product the client has used since the last anniversary date.

**Is consumption still based on a two month period for incontinence and ostomy?**

Yes. Frequency maximum periods will depend on the product or service and will be listed on the Approved Product List (APL).

**How will the vendor know the patient has changed vendors?**

Clients should be communicating a change of vendor to both the previous and new vendors. If this does not occur, Alberta Blue Cross can be contacted to clarify.

### **Approved Product List/Pricing**

**Is the product quantity a yearly amount?**

The quantity period will depend on the particular product selected. Please refer to the AADL Approved Product List (APL) for up-to-date information.

**Is there still an AADL code attached or just a general description of the product?**

Products and services are grouped into product categories, which match the Approved Product List listing. The particular product name will also match what is displayed in the Approved Product List.

**Is there a pricing guide?**

Product pricing is listed on the Approved Product List.

**How are upgrades handled with this system? Are we able to have vendor-specific pricing?**

Upgrades happen at point of sale. There will be maximum prices built into the system, based on the maximum amount that AADL will contribute. The vendor will enter the total amount claimed and the upgrade charge will be noted on the claim statement.



**Will we still get updates on changes to benchmark pricing?**

Yes, vendors will continue to get updates on any changes to policy or the approved product list.

**Claims**

**Right now everything is billed in two month cycles. Is it going to change to date specific?**

Claim submission can occur any time after the product or service has been rendered. However, we strongly recommend this occur as quickly as is reasonably possible. Prompt billing will ensure the client's records are as up to date as possible and will avoid potential issues.

**After a claim is submitted, is a reference number provided?**

Yes and a vendor can also enter their own invoice number for their records if they choose. The reference number is also available in the reporting section.

**How will product returns be handled? How do we reverse a claim or part of a claim and return payment to Alberta Blue Cross?**

The vendor can erase a claim if it hasn't been submitted. If it has been submitted and the vendor has been paid, it can be reversed by contacting Alberta Blue Cross. The vendor will have a debt owed on their account.

**Is there an area on the claim noting the vendor number?**

Vendors will be logged in under their ID, not their vendor number.

**So we are trusting now that other vendors will bill in a timely fashion in the event the client decides to get their supplies at multiple vendors?**

We are encouraging all vendors to claim when they provide the benefit.

**Does the new system have two separate functions - one is the portal to do, view authorizations, consumption, etc. and the second is billing in real time? I use Kroll currently to bill AADL. Will there be tutorials on billing in real time? Does Kroll need to be updated to handle AADL billing in real time?**

Yes, the portal will be used for authorization submissions from approved authorizers and claim submissions from approved vendors. Claim submission is moving away from batch processes to a real-time system to ensure vendors have up-to-date client information, can have their claims adjudicated in real-time with an instant response and to know exactly how much cost share to collect from the client.

**Other**

**How will clients be told about this change?**

The process will not really change from the client perspective. Our communications are focussed on the authorizers and vendors as this is an authorization and claim system.

## April 14, 2021 Q&A session for benchmark mobility benefits vendors

### Authorizations

**As a vendor, will we still need to keep the authorization - the physical paperwork - for our previous authorizations?**

Yes, the previous policy around document retention still applies.

**Is there a spot for the authorizer to add an extra note to provide more information?**

Yes. There are several points in the authorization that allow for notes. Some notes are directed and visible to the vendor and some notes are visible to other authorizers. However, the Online Health Portal is not intended to be a long-term storage of clinical information.

**Do we have to scan assessments onto the portal to get approval for the benefits requested, such as lower leg assessments and wheelchair assessments? What about Quantity and Frequency Requests (QFR)?**

Yes, some documents will need to be submitted with the authorization. Scanning is the easiest way to upload a document onto the portal, but authorizers can use their phone to take a picture if it's an approved device. QFR is now a type of authorization and is submitted on the Online Health Portal.

Please note that wheelchairs and recycled equipment are not transitioning to Blue Cross until Phase 5. The June transition includes medical surgical and benchmark mobility benefits.

**How do authorizers enter their information and upload documentation onto the Alberta Blue Cross portal? Do they require certain hardware and software to complete an authorization on the portal?**

No specific software is required. A scanner is helpful. The portal works with most browsers, but the Alberta Blue Cross provider help line can assist if someone is having issues.

### Cost Share Information

**Does the system change to “exempt” when someone has reached their yearly maximum in terms of cost share?**

Yes, Alberta Blue Cross gets updates regularly to ensure the cost share amount is accurate. As the system is real time, it takes into account all information already entered so it's accurate to that moment.

**So if another vendor has already claimed \$200 worth of cost share, will my screen show the client only owes \$300? (Which would make the AADL refund cheques for cost share amounts paid over \$500 unnecessary.)**

Yes, that is correct.

### Claims

**Rather than printing, can the claim summary be saved as a pdf and emailed to the client?**

Yes, it could be saved to PDF or a file instead of being printed.

**Can you back date claims?**

Vendors can go back six (6) months assuming the authorization is in the system.

**During each phase, will I still have access to AADL E-business for claiming until all phases are complete?**

Yes, if the benefit has not been transitioned to Alberta Blue Cross, the AADL E-business site will be active to process your claim. For example, seating and wheelchair benefits will still be processed through E-business.

## **Blackout Period**

**During blackout dates, will we still have access to confirm client eligibility and coverage information so we can dispense products or is the whole system on blackout?**

The system will be available to process benefits not included in this phase. However, for the benefits being transitioned, you will not have access. The IVR will still be available and you can contact AADL to confirm eligibility.

**During the blackout period from June 10-20, will there be no claiming through the AADL portal? Will all claiming start on June 21, which would include all items approved through AADL?**

Yes. Existing authorizations will be transferred to Alberta Blue Cross as part of the transition. Once the Alberta Blue Cross system has been implemented, claims for the blackout period can be entered.

## **Other**

**How long will Alberta Blue Cross take to process a benefits request once everything is transitioned to Alberta Blue Cross?**

The system is mostly automated and authorizers will know immediately if a request is eligible. This will also be viewable by vendors. It's the same with claims - a vendor can move from predetermination to completion of claim with one click. Vendors will get immediate feedback and reimbursements the next day if they have daily deposit.