

REFUGEE SPONSORS HEALTHCARE FAQ

What health insurance is available to privately sponsored refugees (PSRs)?

1. **Medical Service Plan (MSP).** Typically takes 3 months from application to become active.
2. **Interim Federal Health (IFH).** Effective within days of application, for 1 year.

How do PSRs register with MSP?

Enrolment is **not** automatic. Upon arrival, the sponsor must assist with MSP registration. Complete [this form](#) and send it to Health Insurance BC with copies of each individual's immigration documents. Call HIBC at 1-800-663-7100 and ask for an enrolment specialist with any questions.

How do PSRs register with IFH?

Syrian PSRs arriving through Toronto and Montreal should receive their IFH papers upon entry into Canada. If newcomers are not Syrian or do not have an IFH certificate, [apply for IFH online](#) and mail the application to the [BC CIC office](#).

What does IFH cover?

As of April 1, 2016, all refugees [have full IFH coverage](#) covering:

- [Physician and hospital services](#)
- [Laboratory and diagnostic services](#)
- Medications on [BC formulary](#) plus some [additional drug benefits](#)
- [Supplemental services](#) such as basic dental care, optometry, physiotherapy & counseling

How do I find a family doctor for the refugee family I've sponsored?

Interior Health (IH) [maintains a list](#) of family doctors in different communities that accept IFH insurance. IH has also established refugee health teams within some existing IH clinics, to whom refugees can be referred: [Rutland Aurora Clinic](#) in Kelowna and the [Kamloops Primary Care Centre](#) at Lansdowne. If you are having difficulty connecting newcomers with a family physician, contact Leslie.BryantMaclean@interiorhealth.ca.

My family doctor is willing to take refugees, but isn't registered with IFH. What do I do?

Providers can register by [completing this form](#) and returning it by email, fax or post, or registering on the [provider's website](#) by clicking "Request Account" link on the top right of the screen. For more information, call Medavie Blue Cross at 1-888-614-1880.

Where do I find a dentist?

Interior Health [maintains a list](#) of dentists that have agreed to accept IFH insurance.

How will a non-English-speaking refugee communicate at a medical visit?

Interior Health sites have access to phone interpreters through the Provincial Language Service.

With notice, the following settlement organizations can sometimes provide an interpreter to accompany the patient to medical visits:

- [Kelowna Community Resources](#)
- [Kamloops Immigrant Services](#)
- Penticton: [South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services](#)
 - Tahira Saeed, Manager | tahiras@soics.ca
- Salmon Arm: [Immigrant Services Shuswap](#) | immigrantservices@shaw.ca
- [Vernon & District Immigrant Services Society](#) | vdiss@shaw.ca

The refugee patient was sent for labs/x-ray by the doctor. Where do I take him?

Hospital outpatient labs and x-ray departments accept IFH, as do some private offices (see [list of registered IFH providers](#)). Always show IFH papers and MSP if available when accessing services.

Where should a prescription be filled? Will it be covered?

See IH's [list](#) to find a pharmacy that accepts IFH. Some medications are covered. See above under "What does IFH cover?"

The refugee patient was asked for money by the lab/x-ray-/pharmacy even though she has IFH coverage. What should we do?

Do not pay - even if this is an error, it is extremely difficult to be reimbursed. Show the provider the IFH certificate and MSP if available. Ensure the provider is registered with IFH. Tell the provider to call the patient's family physician to clarify coverage.

How does a refugee family get vaccinations?

Coordinate with the community family doctor or directly contact your local [Public Health Office](#) to set up an appointment to have vaccinations reviewed and offered for the whole family. School aged children need vaccinations before they can register for school.

Where should I take a refugee who is urgently unwell upon arrival?

Take him/her to the Emergency Department. Present any health insurance at the registration desk.

Checklist for sponsors to ensure successful integration into the healthcare system:

First Day...	Within First 2 Weeks...	Before the end of the first year...
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to healthcare for urgent medical needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Set up medical appointment with community family doctor for each family member	<input type="checkbox"/> Set up optometrist or dental appointments if necessary (within first 6 months)
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide information on emergency services 911, nearest hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> Set up vaccination appointment - either with family doctor or local public health office	<input type="checkbox"/> Apply for Pharmacare just before the one year mark
	<input type="checkbox"/> Register for Interim Federal Health Insurance (IFH)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Register for MSP	