

Fact Sheet: Charging for the transfer of medical records

Independent Health Facilities

This fact sheet provides basic information for health care providers and the public

The *Independent Health Facilities Act* (IHFA) regulates, among other things, the charging and payment of “facility fees”, which is defined in the IHFA to include a charge, fee or payment for or in respect of a service or operating cost that supports, assists and/or is a necessary adjunct to an insured service and that is not part of the insured service.

The ministry’s IHF policy on charging for a copy of a patient’s medical record defines that a “facility fee” includes making a copy of a person’s medical record available to them when that record is required for the ongoing medical care of the patient. It is considered an illegal facility fee if the patient or receiving health care provider is charged any cost associated with making the medical records available to the patient (i.e. copying). See the Fact Sheet titled “Charges for Copying Patient Records”.

However, the IHFA does not regulate charging the shipping costs associated with the transfer of a medical record requested by a patient. Regulation 650 of the IHFA, section 1(1), paragraph 7 specifically provides that the costs associated with “the preparation and transfer of an insured person’s health records when this is done because the care of the person is being transferred at the request of the person or the person’s representative” are not a facility fee for the purposes of the IHFA.

Although such charges are not specifically regulated, it is the ministry’s view that if an independent health facility (IHF) charges patients for the direct costs associated with the shipping of medical records, the charge should be reasonable and patients should be notified in advance that this is an uninsured service and given an estimate of the cost of the transfer.

For more information:

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