

## **Direct Contract Support Cost Settlement Fund**

### **PURPOSE**

To establish a standard guideline for allowable expenditures and limits of the Direct Contract Support Cost (DCSC) Settlement Fund.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2016 the Nez Perce Tribe received a settlement from Indian Health Service to reimburse the Tribe for Direct Contract Support Costs. The Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC) created an endowment fund for Nimiipuu Health. NPTEC gave clear direction what the funds were to be used for. Nimiipuu Health could use the funds for deferred services for Enrolled Nez Perce Tribal members, travel assistance for medical appointments, emergency medical transportation, to pay for health insurance premiums for high-cost users, donations, and capital expenditures. The yearly distribution schedule was set by NPTEC. Nimiipuu Health could draw down \$250,000 per year and every fifth year it would increase to \$750,000 as funding allows.

### **POLICY**

The Direct Contract Support Cost Settlement fund is to be utilized for Enrolled members of the Nez Perce Tribe. Allowable expenditures include but are not limited to:

1. Provide funding for travel to medical appointments or health related appointments.
2. Provide travel assistance for emergency medical situations.
3. Provide funding for medical deferred services.
4. Donations (this is the only category that can service a non-enrolled tribal member as long the expenditure benefits the Nez Perce Tribe or entity of the Nez Perce Tribe).

### **PROCEDURE**

Enrolled Nez Perce Tribal members requesting financial assistance from the Direct Contract Support Cost Settlement fund will need to complete a DCSC Financial Assistance form. See Attachment A.

1. Patient must be an enrolled member of the Nez Perce Tribe
2. All other alternative travel resources must be utilized, including own personal vehicle, immediate family, tribal programs, and other community resources.

3. The completed DCSC Financial Assistance form will need to be forwarded to Nimiipuu Health's Finance Department for approval. Financial assistance must be pre-approved prior to distribution to the member.
4. The maximum amount per member will be \$1,000 per fiscal year (October 1 thru September 30)
5. In a medical emergency situation only up to \$1,000 per instance will be approved.
6. Financial assistance must be used for the purpose indicated on the DCSC Financial Assistance Form. If the member doesn't use it for that specific purpose funds will need to be returned to Nimiipuu Health Finance Department.
7. If it is identified funds were not used for the specific purpose and not returned to Nimiipuu Health's Finance department that member will not be able to utilize the DCSC Fund for five years following the original request.

Points of clarification:

1. Travel assistance will only be allowed for emergency, urgent and non-routine types of care (e.g. emergency department admissions, surgeries, etc.)
  - a. Due to funding constraints of this program, routine care will typically not be authorized.
2. Gas assistance: Typically given in the form of gas cards, this form of assistance will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Type of vehicle utilized will have no bearing on the amounts provided. Appointments of less than 25 miles, defined as local travel, is not a covered fuel expense. Typical amounts of fuel assistance are listed below. For those not listed, they will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
  - a. Lapwai to Moscow - \$25.00
  - b. Lapwai to Spokane - \$50.00
  - c. Lapwai to Coeur D'Alene - \$50.00
  - d. Kamiah to Lapwai or Lewiston - \$25.00
  - e. Kamiah to Spokane - \$75.00
  - f. Kamiah to Coeur D'Alene - \$75.00
3. Lodging assistance: Lodging will be given to individuals to attend medical appointment/procedures when an overnight stay is warranted. Room reservations will be in the same city where the medical appointment is located. Pets will not be allowed/authorized for the stay. Individuals will only be allowed lodging expenses, any additional charges (food, ordering movies, etc.) are the

responsibility of that individual. Any over charges on the stay will be deducted out of that Tribal members available funds and may result in not being allowed booking of lodging by Nimiipuu Health in the future. If it is reasonable to expect that an individual will be able to arrive at their appointment/procedure without lodging assistance, it will not be authorized. Individuals receiving lodging assistance are responsible for keeping Nimiipuu Health informed about any changes to their itinerary, only Nimiipuu Health will be authorized to make changes to hotel accommodations. Any obligation made by an individual to their stay may result in not being allowed booking of lodging by Nimiipuu Health in the future.

4. Food assistance: will not be authorized by Nimiipuu Health. Assistance will only be in the form of travel, lodging and medical expense assistance. It is the responsibility of the individual to make arrangements for their meals.
5. Covered individuals: assistance will only be authorized for Nez Perce Tribal members. If individuals wish to attend their family members appointment/procedures, they must be immediate family member (as defined in the NMPH HRM) or reside in the same household and only in emergency circumstances. Parent/guardians may submit applications for assistance on behalf of a child.
6. Payment: Nimiipuu Health will only make payment to businesses (hotels, businesses for gas cards, etc.). In the case where individuals have incurred expenses and wish reimbursement, they must provide proof of payment for those expenses.
7. Verification of need: Appointment/procedure times will be verified. Individuals need to have reasonably sought alternate assistance including contacting Nimiipuu Health to see if there are Transportation Aides available for travel to and from appointments (this will also be verified).
8. Timeline: Applications should be submitted as soon an individual becomes aware of need for assistance. Applications received for emergent/emergency situations will be given priority for processing. Submissions for same day assistance may not be authorized in time, but every effort to get them approved will be taken.
9. No guarantee of assistance: there is limited funding available under this program, with priority given in urgent/emergent situations. In the case where there is no longer funding available, assistance will not be provided.

Note: Not all circumstances or situations can be addressed in this policy and those will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.