

## Update on massage therapy claims in Alberta

Last year, we provided you with [information](#) about claiming for massage therapy in the province of Alberta. We also issued plan member [communications](#) to help them better understand massage therapy claims in Alberta.

Sun Life and other insurers are contacting their plan members about these changes so they will understand how massage therapists are approved for claims coverage.

### The latest update

This update concerns practitioners who belong to the Natural Health Practitioners of Canada (the NHPC). Sun Life currently recognizes NHPC massage therapy practitioners who have successfully completed 2,200 hours of formal education in massage therapy, or completed the Massage Therapy Competency Assessment Process (MTCAP). Since the MTCAP is a self-assessment by the practitioners themselves, rather than by a third party, the assessment is not deemed to be as rigorous as standardized examinations in regulated provinces.

As a result, the NHPC has developed a Competency Equivalency Exam (CEE) - a written exam modeled on exams taken by massage therapists graduating from colleges of regulated provinces. The exam is offered on a voluntary basis for NHPC massage therapy members with less than 2,200 hours of formal education who want to upgrade their credentials. Commencing in October, NHPC now offers the exam to its massage therapy practitioners.

The NHPC recognizes long-practicing practitioners or those who have gained the educational equivalency over time. These practitioners will be grandfathered by the NHPC. We continue to work closely with NHPC to understand the final grandfathering criteria.

### What is changing?

As of May 1, 2013, Sun Life will only recognize NHPC massage therapy practitioners in good standing who:

- have 2,200 hours of formal training; or
- have successfully completed the CEE.

We will no longer recognize NHPC members who have only completed the MTCAP.

### What this means to your plan members

Up to and including April 30, 2013, Sun Life will accept massage therapy claims as noted in the July, 2011 communication. Commencing on May 1, 2013, claims for the services of a massage therapist in Alberta who belongs to the NHPC will only be recognized if that practitioner has 2,200 hours of formal training, passed the CEE or has been grandfathered.

Not all NHPC massage therapists have one of the above qualifications. We recommend that if your plan members have massage therapists who are members of the NHPC, that they ask their practitioners about their qualifications.

Plan members with practitioners who belong to other associations in Alberta recognized by Sun Life as noted in the 2011 plan member communication, are not affected by this change.

### Next steps

We encourage you to share the [communication](#) we have prepared with your plan members so they can better understand how Alberta massage therapy claims are handled.

### Questions?

Contact your Sun Life Financial group benefits representative.