

Frequently Asked Questions: Individual and Family Wellness Policy (Formerly the Family Respite Policy)

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) answer common questions individual and families may ask about the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* (formerly the *Family Respite Policy*), which came into effect October 1, 2021. The policy was most recently revised on April 1, 2023, to reflect a change in the language CLBC uses to talk about its services.

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Change in Policy Name as of April 1, 2023

Q: Why did CLBC change the name of the *Family Respite Policy*?

In April 2023, CLBC changed how we talk about our services to respond to individuals' and families' feedback requesting the names of our services be plain language and culturally safe.

This change in language meant we needed to update all the language in our policies and supporting documents. This includes renaming the *Family Respite Policy* to the [Individual and Family Wellness Policy](#). This policy tells people how they can use funding they receive for wellness support (formerly called respite).

Q: Did CLBC make any other changes to this policy?

Yes, we did. Based on questions we received when we updated the name of the policy, we also clarified that:

- You **can** use funding to hire family members (e.g., siblings) age 16 and up to provide Wellness Support (note that parents, spouses and children of the individual being served cannot be hired without an approved exception to CLBC's [Service Provision by Family Member Policy](#)), and
- You **cannot** use funding for services funded by the BC Medical Plan or third-party health insurance.

Q: Why can't I use wellness funding for therapies, such as massage or other health-related therapies?

Costs for medical services fall within the Ministry of Health's responsibilities and are outside the scope of CLBC's mandate and policies.

These costs can be covered by the BC Medical Services Plan, or a third party extended health insurance plan, for individuals and/or families with those plans.

Please note that wellness funding from CLBC also cannot be used to pay for health services (such as massage therapy) in the interim while people wait for coverage from a third-party insurance provider.

Q: Will wellness support funding be available to individuals living independently, or who are living in Shared Living (for example, Home Sharing, Live-in Support)?

Individuals who are living independently, or with their families, are eligible to receive funding for wellness support.

People living in shared living (e.g., home sharing, live-in support) are not eligible to receive this funding as wellness support is part of the services they are already receiving.

Q: In the new language, what does *Individual and Family Wellness* include?

It includes all the support and activities outlined in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*.

General Questions

Q: What does CLBC mean by Individual and Family Wellness?

CLBC trusts individuals and their families know how best to sustain themselves and their caregiving. Supports outlined in CLBC's [Supports Funded by CLBC](#) document provides both an individual and their primary caregiver, or supporter, to have short breaks from their responsibilities and/or to strengthen their personal skills and capabilities.

For individuals living with their families, the individual's family and support network often provide support for self-care and wellness. CLBC provides funding for wellness to support the resilience of individuals and families and/or support networks.

Q. Who does the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* support?

The *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* is for individuals who live at home with their family, or receive support through a Microboard, or people who live independently with support. The policy helps people understand how to use funding they receive from CLBC for wellness by either purchasing supports directly themselves, or through an agency.

CLBC has updated the [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Simplified Guide](#) and the [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Standard Guide](#) to reflect the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*. These guides help individuals and families understand their responsibilities in Direct Funding Standard and Direct Funding Simplified arrangements.

Q: Does the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* apply to Home Sharing Providers?

No. Support for Home Sharing Providers is outlined in the [Respite Guidelines Policy](#). This policy is under review as part of CLBC's work to improve Home Sharing services.

Direct Funding for Wellness & Self Care – What You Can Purchase

Q: Are we allowed to use wellness direct funding for recreational, social, or educational programs?

Yes, under the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*, the funding you receive for wellness supports can be used for recreational, social, or educational programs for the time when the family caregiver would typically provide support. For example, an individual could attend a swimming class while the family caregiver goes to the gym or has coffee with a friend.

Q: Can individuals and families use direct funding for wellness support to pay for the individual's transportation costs (e.g., such as bus fare or mileage) to a recreational, social, or educational program?

Yes, under the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*, in addition to paying for the program cost or fee, a portion of direct funding may be used to cover reasonable expenses such as the individual's transportation costs to attend the activity.

Q: What does CLBC mean by "occasional purchase" of food takeout services?

There are a range of options in the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* that help families care for or support their family member. The expectation is that individuals and families may decide to use some of their funding for wellness supports to purchase food delivery or takeout services.

Using some of your funding occasionally for food delivery or takeout is meant to relieve stress for family members when they have had a challenging day supporting an individual.

Q: Can I pick up food for takeout because there are no food delivery services in my community?

Yes, you can use some of your direct funding for takeout food that you are picking up. Food does not have to be delivered to your door. However, funding cannot be used to purchase food if you are eating in a restaurant.

Q: Can funding for wellness be used to purchase cleaning services?

Yes. CLBC recognizes an individual's disability-related needs may make it difficult for the caregiver to keep up with cleaning-related activities required to care for the individual. The policy states funding may be used for activities required to care for the individual due to their disability-related needs (e.g., cleaning or laundry services). For example, for wheelchair users there may be an increased need for support in cleaning floors, or a medical condition may require more frequent clothing changes.

Q: Does the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* allow people to use wellness funding for workshops and support groups to help with connection and learning?

Yes. You can use funding for workshops or groups. Research shows families benefit from learning and connecting opportunities, like parent-to-parent programs, support groups, workshops, and other educational and support activities, as they provide both knowledge and emotional support.

Q: Can I use wellness funding to pay for a program or class and to also hire staff to support my daughter when she attends?

Yes. You can use wellness funding for programs or class fees and to pay a support worker's wage. This funding may also be used to cover other reasonable costs, such as the support worker's bus fare or an admission fee to participate in the activity with the individual.

Q: Can wellness funding be used to pay for an individual to attend a workshop at a post-secondary institution?

Yes. wellness funding can be used to pay for an individual's class, course or workshop at a community or recreation centre, or a post-secondary institution.

Examples of some educational programs that can be purchased include cooking classes, jewelry making classes, life skill courses, conversational French classes, and drumming lessons.

Q: When can I use wellness funding to purchase an educational program for my family member?

Funding you receive for wellness can be used for classes, courses, or workshops if the purpose is to provide the family caregiver with a break during times when the caregiver would typically provide care or support.

The funding cannot be used for an individual's educational programs at times when the family caregiver is typically not providing support (e.g., when they are at work).

Q: Can wellness funding be used to pay for tutoring services for the individual?

Yes. Under the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*, funding may be used to pay for an individual's tutoring services if they are provided at times when the family caregiver would typically provide care or support.

Q: Can wellness funding be used to reimburse a parent for mileage taking their adult child to activities?

Yes. Reasonable mileage costs are appropriate if a family caregiver is driving their family member to activities designed to give the individual and their family caregiver time independent from each other (e.g., classes at a recreation centre).

Q: I am currently receiving \$350 per month to purchase wellness support. Can I use more than the \$350 in a month if I have some funding left over from the previous month(s)?

Yes. Based on your family's needs, the funding you receive for wellness support can be used flexibly from month to month during the term of your contract with CLBC (e.g., within a two-year term).

Q: My spouse and I are planning a trip. Can I save up my monthly funding to pay a caregiver while we are away?

Yes. During the term of your contract, you can use your funding flexibly on an hourly, daily, or weekly basis to pay for wellness support as per the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*.

Q: I would like to pay my 17-year-old son to support his brother while I take a break from caregiving. Can I do that?

Yes. CLBC's *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* now allows for siblings 16 years or older to provide paid support for their sibling. Note, immediate family members (for example, parents, spouses, children of the individual being supported) may be paid **only** under exceptional circumstances as outlined in the *Service Provision by Family Members Policy* and require approval from CLBC.

Caregivers who are not close family members must be at least 19 years of age or older. Anyone being paid to support an individual must have a current criminal record check completed, regardless of their age.

Q: Can I use wellness funding to pay for a vacation for myself or my loved one?

No. The funding CLBC provides cannot be used to pay for vacations (i.e., plane tickets, cruises, hotels, etc.). It can only be used to purchase supports or activities to meet an individual's disability-related needs.

Q: I see we can use direct funding for professional counselling. What is considered a "professional"?

Wellness funding can be used to purchase professional counselling supports from a registered or licensed professional. A professional refers to a (regulated) profession that has a governing or regulatory body responsible for licensing and regulating the practitioners (e.g., College of Psychologists of BC).

Q: Can we use our wellness funding to purchase supports from people who understand our Indigenous cultural traditions, including seeking support from knowledge keepers, elders, and others?

Yes. The *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* supports individuals and families to draw strength from their cultural traditions and resources. For example, if your family would be better served by consulting an Elder rather than a professional counsellor, direct funding for wellness can be used.

Q: Do I need to confirm that the recreation or community centre has completed criminal record checks on program instructors when I enroll my daughter in a class or program?

It is appropriate to ask if an organization conducts criminal record checks for their staff. When registering your family member for an activity using your wellness funding, there is the expectation you will ensure the program is appropriate and safe for meeting the needs of vulnerable adults.

Q: I would like a service provider to deliver our wellness support but there is no agency in my area who is contracted to provide them. Why, and could this change?

Some communities do not have any agencies with CLBC contracts in place to provide wellness supports, due to smaller populations and fewer service requests. In these circumstances, funding provided to you directly gives you flexibility to find qualified caregivers in your area. If you are interested in accessing supports through an agency, please let your CLBC facilitator know. This will help the local CLBC office monitor the need and demand for contracted services in your community.

Q: If we are receiving wellness support through an agency or a host agency, can we use the flexible options outlined in the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*?

With the exception of Person Centred Societies, the flexible options in the policy are only for when people are directly purchasing their own wellness support. If an agency or host agency is providing wellness support, you are accessing contracted services. Contracted services are not eligible for the flexible options in the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*.

If you decide you might want to access direct or manage your own wellness funding so you can use funds flexibly, please talk to your CLBC facilitator so you can understand what making this change means. Alternatively, you can also speak with your service provider or host agency.

Person Centred Societies may use their Individual and Family Wellness support flexibly.

Q: My son receives direct funding for community inclusion and wellness support, but he needs counselling. Can I ask CLBC to move most of the funding to wellness support so we can use it for counselling?

Funding for wellness support is intended to be flexible. It is not designed to replace other services for an individual. If your son's or family's needs or circumstances have changed, or if your son no longer needs community inclusion services, please talk with your CLBC facilitator to explore your options.

Q: My aunt is willing to provide wellness support. Do I still need to get a criminal record check for her?

Yes. The *Criminal Records Review Act* requires that anyone who works with vulnerable adults (which includes individuals eligible for CLBC) must have a criminal record check completed through the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General's Criminal Records Review Program. The Criminal Records Review Program requires anyone who works or is in contact with vulnerable adults complete a criminal record check. This includes family members who are paid caregivers such as an individual's aunt.

Note that immediate family members (for example, parents, spouses, children) may be paid only under exceptional circumstances outlined in the *Service Provision by Family Members Policy*).

More information about the criminal record check process can be found on CLBC's website [here](#).

Q: Under the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*, can I use direct funding to purchase a space in an existing CLBC- funded service?

No. This funding is designed to support family caregivers to purchase services or activities themselves. It cannot be used to purchase space in, or to expand, existing programs already paid for by CLBC.

Q: Can I use wellness funding to pay for behavioural support services?

No. CLBC funds behavioural and communication support services through contracted agencies. You must request these services through a CLBC facilitator.

Q: CLBC has provided our family with short-term emergency funding of over \$12,000 for wellness support while a new Home Sharing Provider is found for our daughter. Under the *Individual and Family Wellness Policy*, are we able to use all emergency funds flexibly?

This amount of wellness support is generally only provided to a family in emergency circumstances.

The *Individual and Family Wellness Policy* allows families to use up to a maximum of \$10,000 per year flexibly. This means that any amount over this maximum can only be used for:

- Support workers (e.g., contractors or employees) who provide care and/or support to the individual
- Banking fees, if a family chooses to open a separate bank account, including costs for ordering cheques, and
- Any costs associated with contracting or hiring respite support workers e.g., WorkSafe BC costs, criminal record checks, etc.