# Hearing services program

October 2024



# Welcome and overview

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## **Session summary**

Introducing the new hearing service program



Key elements of the new hearing loss bundle service program



Structure, fees and reports for the new program



Transition and implementation timelines





## Our new hearing services program: Better, easier, faster

- We're evolving our current hearing program of care and fee for services model into a bundled hearing services plan, to make it better, easier and faster to work with us and allow you more time for your patients.
- We worked with hearing health clinic experts and collaborated with representatives from Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC), Association of Hearing Instrument Practitioners of Ontario (AHIP) and Ontario Association of Professional Audiology Clinics (OAPAC) to replace the program of care with our new hearing services program.
  - > Update to an annual bundled service program for both the initial and subsequent years of service

**Initial bundle** for the first year to dispense the hearing aid and necessary services.

Ongoing bundle, after the first year of service and annually, until normal replacement at end of hearing aid cycle

For WSIB-approved prescription changes: Mini bundle of services to support the replacement aid

How are we making it better, easier and faster?



## **New program highlights**



Offering flexible trial period (30 to 90 days) to allow for a tailored approach and faster time to receive payment (where applicable).



The first-year initial bundle is **one payment** at the end of trial period versus two block payments.



No refunding and re-debiting hearing aid payments for selection changes during the trial period.



Streamlined forms/reports to only collect relevant information.



Clear, consistent and transparent fees



Faster payment with direct billing of both service fees *and* reports (following submission).



Reduced the number of billing codes by 70 per cent, making it less cumbersome and reduced billing issues



Consistency of approach



Includes all hearing loss claims (not specific to NIHL)



# How will the program work?

Overview

Trial period

Year one

Years two and ongoing



## Hearing loss bundled services: Overview



Claim registration and entitlement decision



Initial bundle trial of hearing aids



Services and payment in year one



Services and payment in year two onwards



Five-year cycle re-starts

#### Step 1:

Worker's report of injury (HL6) and hearing assessment submitted to us.

Claims Adjudicator gathers necessary information and allows entitlement.

#### Step 2:

Health care provider orders hearing aids at contracted rates and fits aids.

Person begins trial with new hearing aids.

Once satisfied with the hearing aids, the outcome report is submitted to us.

#### Step 3:

Year 1 Initial service bundle is paid in one lump sum once we receive:

- Outcome report and
- Online billing via TELUS Health portal

#### Step 4:

The ongoing service bundle is paid twice per year when we receive:

- Ongoing hearing service form and
- -Online billing via TELUS Health portal

#### Step 5:

Return to Step 2



## Sharon's hearing health story

## **Step 1: Claim registration and entitlement decision**

Meet Sharon. Her health care provider discussed her hearing loss as being related to noise exposure while working in an industrial machine shop. Her health care provider submitted Sharon's hearing assessment to the WSIB and Sharon submitted a Workers report of injury (HL6) on the WSIB website. Her claim was registered, reviewed by an adjudicator and approved.

This means Sharon now has coverage for necessary benefits like hearing devices and associated health care costs through the WSIB. She won't need to pay out of pocket for these health care costs as her health care provider will bill the WSIB directly.

**Important note:** Providers must ensure that patients do not incur out of pocket expenses when they have applied for a claim with us, when the claim is in pending state, or if the claim has been allowed.





## **Bundled services**



## Initial bundle: Sharon's first year of services

## Step 2: Initial bundle trial of hearing aids

- Sharon will start her first year of hearing services at the time of her initial assessment.
- Sharon's provider will assess her hearing loss and recommend the appropriate hearing aids.
- Where there is a need by hearing instrument specialists (HIS), we're providing added support to enable prescriptions (audiology consult).
- This initial bundle maintains service expectations like the noise-induced hearing loss program of care, but now paid in one installment.

#### What's included?

#### Assessment

- Audiometric testing (if not already in the last six months)
- Evaluation of communication needs
- Selection of hearing aid technolog
- Prescription signed by audiologst
- Pre-fitting counselling and informion

#### In-office services (maintenance visits)

- All follow-up visits as needed to ensure quality hearing within that first year
- Cleaning of instrument
- · Minor repairs and parts replacement services
- Impression clinic service and material fees
- Cerumen management (ear wax removal)

#### Dispensing/fitting

- Listening check and electroacoustic measures/analysis
- Hearing aid programming
- Hearing aid physical fit and sound quality
- Hearing aid instructions (e.g., use, care, maintenance)
- Patient education (e.g., counselling, education, information and social supports)
- Verification using real ear measurements
- Programming (includes wireless pairing)



## Sharon's hearing aid trial period

## Step 2: Initial bundle trial of hearing aids

Sharon has been fit with hearing aids and is now in the 30-to-90-day trial period. During the trial period, she'll work with her provider to try her aids for at least 30 days and can make selection changes to find the most suitable fit. Once Sharon and her provider are satisfied with the aids, they complete the outcome report.

#### **Trial period updates**

The hearing aid trial period applies to new aids and is now more flexible. When the person is being fitted for new hearing aids, they have at least 30 days and up to 90 days to trial them. There is no limit to how many entry or midlevel hearing aids they can trial during this period.

#### What do you need to do?

- Submit the **hearing services initial bundle outcome report**
- If you have already billed for hearing aids and the aids were changed during the trial period, submit the hearing aid selection change form with the manufacturer's invoice.
- If you have not already billed for the hearing aids, you do not need to complete the selection change form.



## Sharon's first year of services: provider payment

## **Step 3: Services and payment in year one**

After submitting the outcome report, Sharon's health care provider submits service billing for the initial bundle covering her first year of service via the TELUS Health provider portal. Her provider bills the WSIB directly for service, in one installment, with fees specific to an audiologist or hearing instrument specialist (HIS).

## What do you need to do?

Once the patient is satisfied and has selected their final hearing aids at the end of the trial period:

- 1. Have the patient sign and submit the hearing services initial bundle outcome report to us on our website.
- To receive payment for the initial bundle and outcome report, submit your billing online through the TELUS Health provider portal.



## Ongoing bundle: Sharon's ongoing services

## **Step 4: Services and payment in year two onwards**

Sharon is now in the second year of hearing services and needs some services related to her hearing aids. These services will be covered as part of the annual ongoing bundle. All services covered in the bundle are available to the patient at any time within that year. Submitting forms and billing, occurs at a minimum of 180 days from the date of their initial visit.

#### What's included?

#### Mandatory Minimum Service

At each visit by the patient during the onging bundle, you must perform the following services t a minimum:

- physical inspection of the hearing aid (inludin g receiver), minor repairs and parts replacent
- cleaning and maintenance of the device
- physical ear check

#### In-Office Services/ Periodic Check ups (as needed)

- Hearing test
- Electroacoustic Analysis
- Programming
- Verification using Real Ear Measurement
- •Cleaning, minor repairs and parts replacement
- •Other maintenance visits (incl. cerumen mgt)

#### Clinic Services

- Repair & Remakes Clinic services/handlig
- Impressions service and material fees (clinc services)

Note: We'll cover Sharon's cost for batteries separately (outside the bundle) based on her entitlement

#### What do you need to do?

- Regardless of how many times the patient visits during the annual ongoing bundle, you can only bill every 180 days. Patients must sign the ongoing hearing services form. Submit the form on our website at wsib.ca/submit.
- 2. Once you submit the form, submit your billing for the **form and the initial bundle fee** via TELUS Health to receive payment.



## Summary of changes

Former noise-induced hearing loss program of care

First Year	Process	
Trials	90 days, following hearing aid fitting	
Forms	Outcome report, including others as needed	
Billing	Billing for block 1 and 2 separately in two payments; Block 2 billing released after receipt of Outcome report at the end of 90-day trial period	
Fees	Single bundle fee in place since 2016	

Years two to four	
Billing	Services outside of the program of care are billed per service delivered (per ear)
Forms	No current forms

New hearing services program as of November 18, 2024

First Year	Process		
Trails	Now with more flexibility, a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 90 days following the hearing aid fitting.		
Forms	Streamlined outcome report, including others as needed		
Billing	Bundle fee billing for the first year of service is released in one payment at end of trial/final selection Outcome report fee must be submitted online to support expedited payment of bundle fee		
Fees	Increased fee, now specific to either the hearing instrument specialist or audiologist		

Years two to four	Process
Billing	Billing is for a bundled set of services, annually, with funding paid in two installments aligned to a patients visit, at minimum every 180 days (per ear)  Minimum level of services must be delivered
Forms	Paid ongoing bundle form must be completed every billing cycle (at 180 days) to support expedited payment of the ongoing bundle fee



## Audiology consultation service

We have a new audiology consultation service to support hearing instrument specialists (HIS) when completing assessments. This is to reduce burden to physicians while maintaining access to care. This is an optional service for audiologists to provide to their HIS partners they have a collaborative relationship with.

#### What is expected?

- ✓ Consultation between health care providers, to gather and review necessary information to complete prescription
- ✓ Following college/scope of practice and privacy
- ✓ A formally submitted signed prescription to the hearing instrument specialist
- ✓ Audiologist submission of signed prescription to US

## How is the consult paid?

- Starting on November 18, 2024, the consultation fee is available to audiologists supporting HIS
- Only audiologists registered with TELUS Health (identified as audiologists) can bill this fee
- The audiologist must submit the prescription to us to receive payment
- Submit billing code BSHAUCON through the TELUS Health provider portal



# Special circumstances

Clinic changes

Prescription changes

Lost, stolen or damaged beyond repair



## What if Sharon needs to change clinics?

Sharon has moved to a new city and would like to switch providers. Her previous provider last billed the **initial** bundle eight months ago.

## What does Sharon's new provider need to do?

As we have already paid for the initial bundle (first year of services) for Sharon to her original clinic eight months ago, the new clinic can only submit billing for the ongoing bundle of services in four months and one day.

Sharon has moved to a new city and would like to switch providers. Her previous provider last billed the **ongoing** bundle three months ago.

## What does Sharon's new provider need to do?

The new clinic should call us to let us know about the clinic change and confirm the next allowable billing date.

As the ongoing bundle can be billed every 180 days, the new clinic can submit for the ongoing bundle payment in three months and one day in this scenario.



## Mini bundle: Sharon's prescription change in year 3

Three years after being fitted with her hearing aid, Sharon noticed her hearing has changed. Sharon's hearing health provider completed a hearing assessment, provided us with the required documentation to consider a prescription change. We reviewed the request and approved the replacement.



## Criteria for replacing a hearing aid

- Change in hearing that meets threshold
- Change in the ability to operate hearing aids (supported by medical documentation)
- Fitting issues
- Change in work duties and environment
- Bimodal use of hearing aid and other medical causes

## What is included in a mini bundle (one year)?

- Hearing assessment and audiogram
- Prescription (audiologist) and selection of hearing aid technology
- Dispensing/fitting
- Impression clinic service and material fee
- **Programming**
- Verification using real ear measurement
- Electroacoustic analysis

## What do you need to do?

- 1. Submit the hearing aid replacement and/or clinical exception request form along with the new prescription and hearing assessment. When submitting the request, provide information on the steps taken to resolve the clinical issues. Please visit our website for more information.
- 2.Once approved, Sharon is entitled to a 30 to 90 days trial period for new hearing aid. This follows a similar process for initial hearing aids (you must submit the hearing aid selection change form as required, along with the manufacturer's invoice, so we have the latest information about her hearing aid.
- 3.Once Sharon's satisfied (at completion of the trial), submit the outcome report and submit your billing for the outcome report and the mini bundle fee through the TELUS Health provider portal.



## Sharon loses her hearing aids in year four

- Sharon called us to report she lost her hearing aids while on vacation. We advised her to complete and submit the **declaration of lost**, **stolen and damaged hearing devices form** and to call her provider.
- Sharon's provider will complete and submit the hearing aid replacement and/or clinical exception form to us, requesting a
  replacement of her lost hearing aids.

#### If we approve the request:

Sharon's hearing aids will be replaced with the **same or a compatible model from the same manufacturer** if the current model is discontinued. Lost, stolen or damaged hearing aid(s) are not subject to selection changes or prescription changes.

## What do you need to do?

- 1. Submit the hearing aid replacement and/or clinical exception request form.
- 2. Sharon will submit the declaration of lost, stolen and damaged hearing devices form.

In cases of damaged aids, first consideration after the three-year warranty is to attempt a manufacturer repair of the device. The manufacturer should confirm on their invoice if it's unrepairable. Review our policy on hearing devices for more information.

#### **Important note:**

**Hearing bundle services:** services related to replacement hearing aids are covered under the **ongoing bundle**. Do not bill for a new initial or mini bundle for replacement aids if lost, stolen or damaged.

**Hearing device five-year cycle**: The five-year hearing aid replacement cycle **re-starts** when lost, stolen or damaged hearing aids are replaced.

# Billing and fees



Billing and fees (continued)

Service	Payment Structure	Payment Trigger	Audiologist	Hearing instrument specialist
Initial bundle	Paid one time in year one of device	<ol> <li>Submission of outcome report</li> <li>Direct billing for outcome report completion</li> <li>Direct billing for hearing aid(s)</li> </ol>	\$1600 (\$800 per side) BSHAINIL BSHAINIR	\$1500 (\$750 per side) BSHHINIL BSHHINIR
Ongoing bundle	Paid two times per year after year one	<ol> <li>Submission of ongoing hearing services short form</li> <li>Direct billing for ongoing hearing services short form</li> <li>Direct billing for ongoing bundle within appropriate timing</li> </ol>	\$710 annually (both ears) (split in two installments of \$355 billed every 180 days for both ears, or \$177.50, per ear)  BSHCONGL (left) BSHCONGR (right)	\$710 annually (both ears) (split in two installments of \$355 billed every 180 days for both ears, or \$177.50, per ear)  BSHCONGL (left) BSHCONGR (right)
Mini service bundle (with our pre- approval)	Pre-approval required via prescription change request	<ol> <li>Pre-approval of prescription change</li> <li>Direct billing for new hearing aid(s)</li> </ol>	\$620 (\$310 per side) BSHAMINL BSHAMINR	\$520 (\$260 per side) BSHHMINL BSHHMINR
Audiologist	Paid once during initial or mini bundle	Submission of the prescription to WSIB	\$60 BSHAUCON	N/a
Hearing services outcome reports: initial or mini bundle	Paid after form submission and billing (one time)	<ol> <li>Submission of outcome report</li> <li>Submission of manufacturer invoice</li> <li>Direct billing for outcome report completion</li> </ol>	\$40 BSHORCOS (INITIAL) BSHORMIN (MINI)	\$40 BSHORCOS (INITIAL) BSHORMIN (MINI)
Ongoing hearing services short form	Paid after form submission and billing during the ongoing bundle (two times annually)	Submission of outcome report     Direct billing for outcome report completion	\$10 twice per year, aligned to ongoing bundle billing (not to be billed per side)  BSHORONG	\$10 twice per year, aligned to ongoing bundle billing (not to be billed per side)  BSHORONG

For bundled services, we will process the bundled fee payment after we receive both the completed form or report, and the associated provider bill(s) for the form (if applicable) and service. See our website for more information about billing and fees.

## Registering to deliver services



## Become a registered provider with us

## Registration opens Monday, October 21, 2024

- Providers interested in delivering the new hearing services program must register with us on our website.
- Providers who were registered to deliver the noise-induced hearing loss program of care must reregister to deliver the hearing services program.
- Providers can be registered as clinics, but all individuals within the clinic delivering the service must be included in the registration (by designation – i.e., audiologist or HIS).
- If you work in multiple clinics, you must register each location.
- Once registered, you will be listed in our hearing services provider directory on our website.
- Patients will use this directory to locate providers in their area that are registered with us to deliver and bill for these services.

#### Contact us

For questions about registration, check out the FAQs on our website or email programofcare@wsib.on.ca



## Getting started: registration requirements

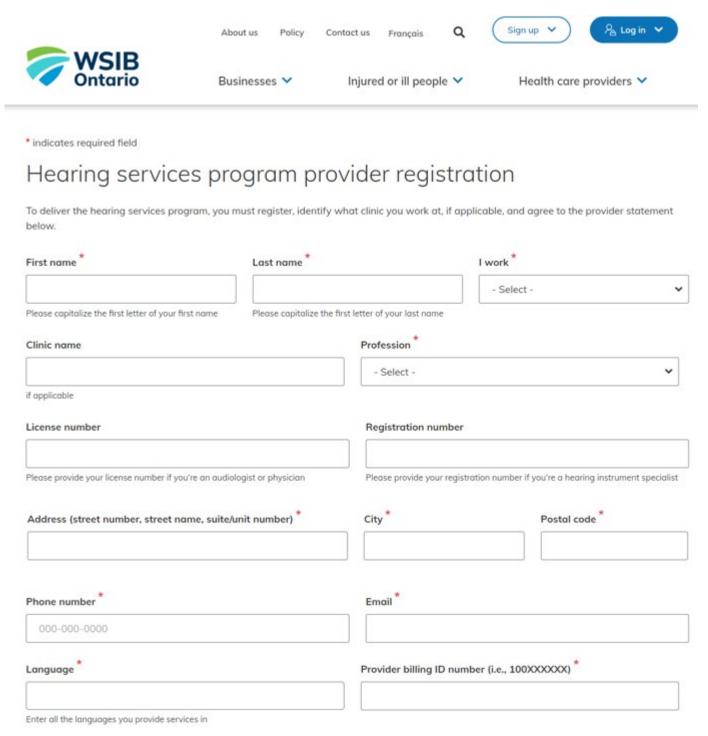
## To deliver the hearing services program, you must:

- Review all program material available on your Association and the WSIB website.
- Register for a provider ID through the <u>TELUS Health provider portal</u>, if you do not already have one.
- Sign up for a WSIB online services account, if you do not already have one.
- Complete the online hearing services program provider registration form.
- Contact us if your registration information changes.



## How to register to deliver the hearing services program (1 of 2)

Visit our website to complete our **new** online provider registration form.



## How to register to deliver the hearing services program (2 of 2)

Please review the provider statement on the registration form carefully and check the box before you click 'Submit'.

#### Provider statement:

- I confirm that I have the scope of practice, knowledge and skill to deliver the hearing services program.
- I agree to read all program materials on the WSIB website and deliver all services in person to the patient. I will complete all forms and reports in accordance with submission timelines as per program requirements and submit them through the WSIB's online services.
- I agree to make sure the designated clinic area is safe, and appropriate for delivering care and implement appropriate accessibility measures as outlined by the AODA.
- I provide consent for the WSIB to list my professional contact information on their hearing services program directory, acknowledging that the WSIB is not responsible for any consequences resulting from the use by third parties of this information.
- I will use the WSIB online services via TELUS Health to electronically bill for services performed.
- I agree to act in a respectful, courteous, and collaborative manner with the patient, the WSIB and other health professionals involved in the person's care.
- I understand that the WSIB will conduct quality assurance activities and I agree to participate in any related discussions.
- I agree to update the WSIB if any of my registration information or qualifications change.

	By checking this box,	l am confirming and	agreeing to the a	ıbove provider s	statement.	l understand that if l	do not adhere to the abo	ve
$\cup$	statement, it may resu	ılt in my removal fro	m delivering the h	nearing services	s program o	and its directory.		

Submit



## Registering for a WSIB provider ID with TELUS Health

Register for a WSIB provider ID through <u>TELUS Health</u> if you do not already have one.

Starting on the provider registration page:

- Select your provider type (head office, organization or independent provider) and click Next
- Fill in your business and user profile information to create a Provider Portal account
- Once your registration is processed by TELUS Health, you will receive an email with a welcome package containing your user login details and a quick start guide
- If you have questions, call TELUS Health at 1-866-240-7492



# Transitioning to the new program



## **Transition scenarios**

The new hearing services program takes effect on November 18, 2024.

#### What does this mean?

- November 17, 2024, is the last date in which the noise-induced hearing loss program of care (NIHL POC) can start.
  - Services that are in progress under the previous program of care as of November 18, 2024, will continue until the conclusion of the year of these services.
  - o Providers will continue to use existing NIHL outcome report forms for aids dispensed prior to November 17, 2024
- ➤ All cases with an initial or five-year renewal device dispensed on November 18, 2024, aligns to the new services bundled program. .
- Fee-for-service under the old program will continue until November 17, 2024, after which all cases will move into the ongoing bundle, a minimum three months after the last fee-for-service was billed.

## What happens if an NIHL POC claim is still active on/after November 18?

#### Example 1:

- If the claim was started April 1, 2024, then the NIHL POC will continue until March 30, 2025 (both block 1 and block 2 payments have been processed).
- Once the program of care expires, the ongoing bundle can be billed as of April 1, 2025, driven by the patient's visit in year two.

#### **Example 2:**

- If the claim started September 1, 2024, and block 1 has been paid.
- Providers will need to submit for block 2 and the NIHL outcome report (post 90-day trial period) online (use current process).
- Once the program of care expires, the ongoing bundle can be billed as of September 2, 2025, driven by the patient's visit in year two.



# Forms and reports



## Summary of hearing services forms and reports

- 1. Used for initial entitlement:
  - Hearing assessment form
- 2. Used during the **initial bundle**:
  - Hearing services initial bundle outcome report
  - Hearing aid selection change form (if required)
- 3. Used during **ongoing bundle**:
  - Ongoing hearing services form
- 4. Used when there is **approved prescription change**:
  - Hearing services mini bundle outcome report
- Request for general hearing aid replacements, and exception requests
  - Hearing aid replacement/clinical exception request form (updated)

Our new and updated forms are available on our website.



# Using our online services Submitting documents



## Online services

Log in or sign up for a free online services account with us at wsib.ca/onlineservices.



Français Ex

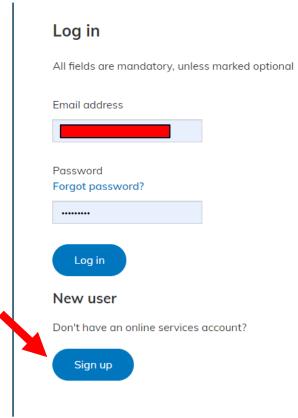
#### Submit documents and reports

Log in to your online services account to submit claim documents and reports. If you don't have an account, sign up.

#### Support

If you have questions or trouble submitting a document, visit our frequently asked questions page for help.

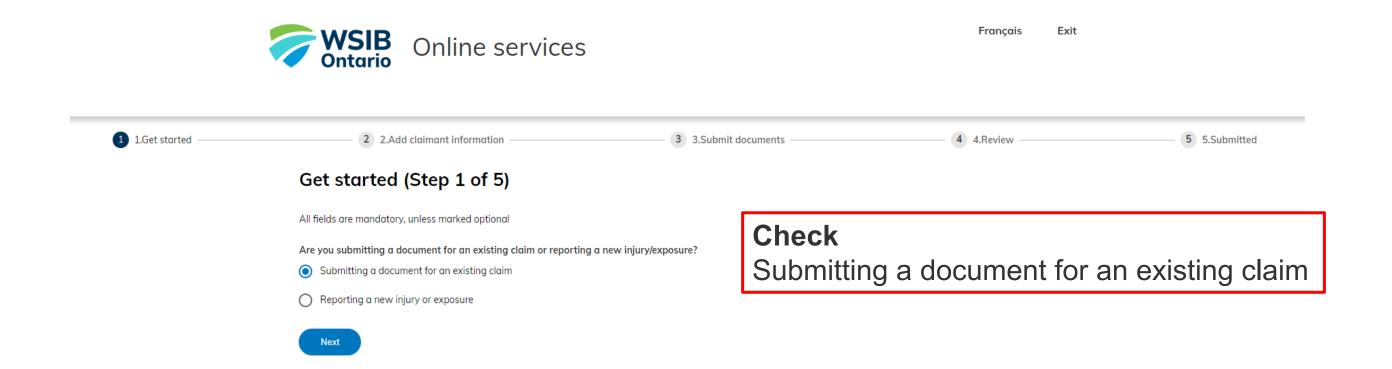
For more immediate support or to report a fatal or catastrophic workplace accident, call us at 1-800-387-0750, Monday to Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.





## Online services

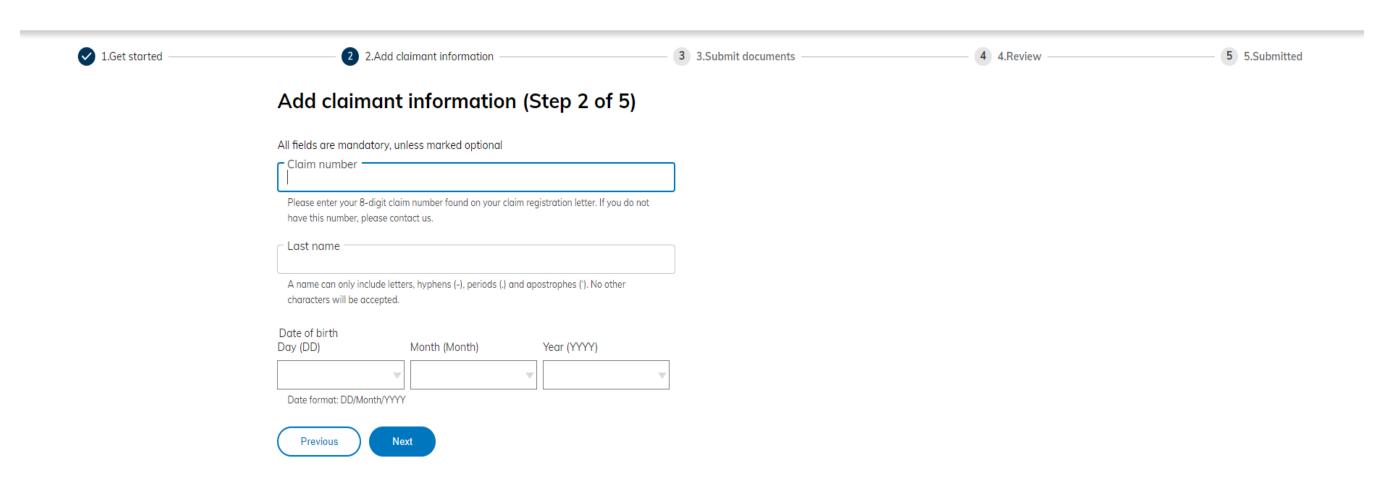
Step 1: Get started by telling us what you need to do





## Online services (1 of 6)

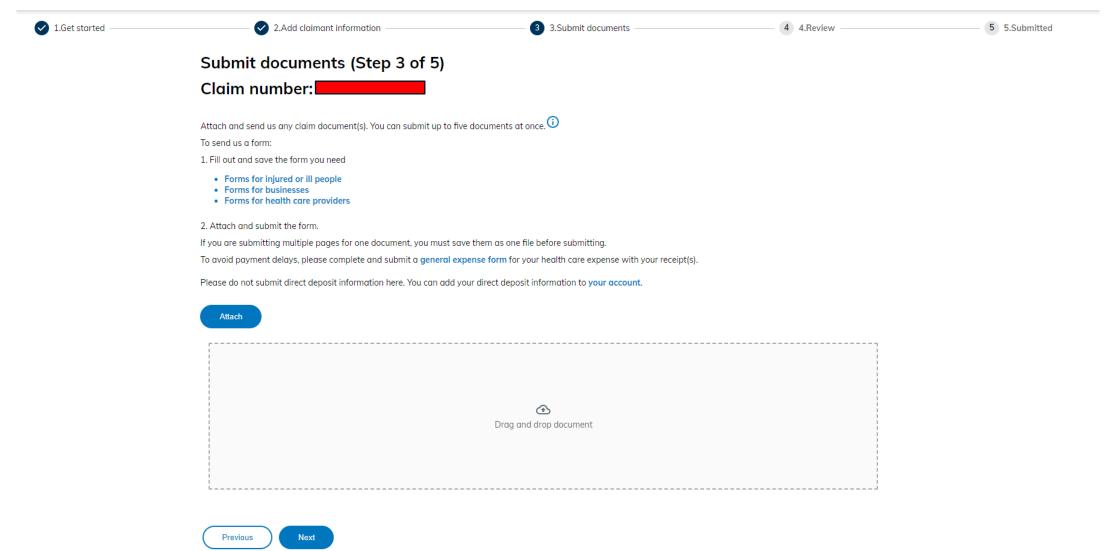
## Step 2: Add claimant information





## Online services (2 of 6)

## Step 3: Submit document(s) by attaching your completed file(s)





## Online services (3 of 6)

Tell us about your document by indicating if it's a form. If it's a different kind of document, select an option from the dropdown.

## Tell us about your document

background.jpg 5 KB	Remove
Submission progress: 100%	
Is this a WSIB form? (i) Yes (ii) No	
What type of document are you submitting?	
Choose one	▼
Name & Date of birth verification or death certificate	
Earnings or payment information	
Expense receipt	
Quality of life information	
Request a device, benefit or service	
Request for a copy of claim file	
Return to work, recovery or medical information	
Second Injury Enhancement Fund (SIEF) information	
Other	



## Online services (4 of 6)

If you're submitting a completed form, select the name of the form/report from the dropdown.

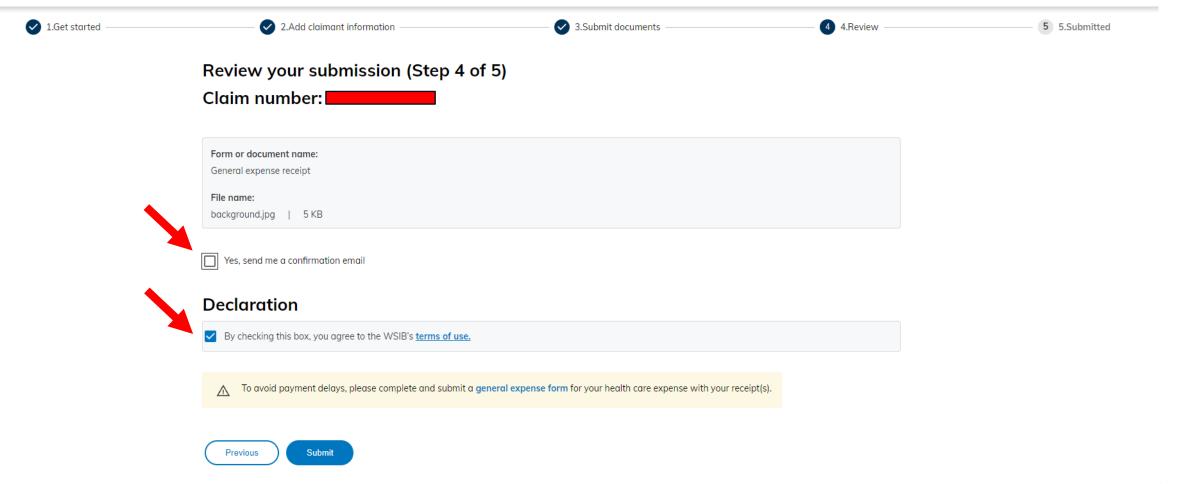
#### Tell us about your document





## Online services (5 of 6)

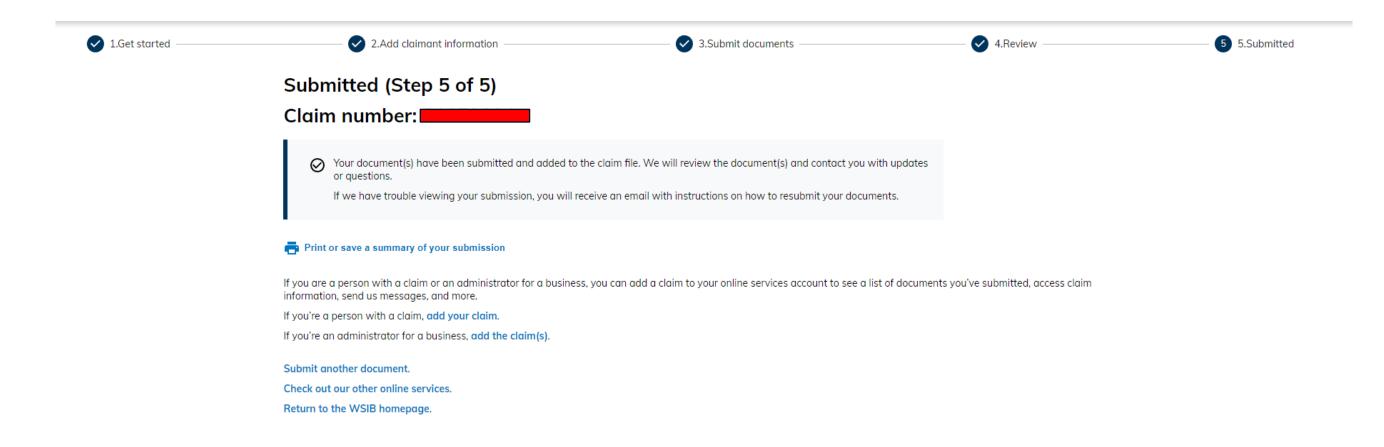
Step 4: Review your submission, check the box for a confirmation email and agree to our terms of use before clicking 'Submit'





## Online services (6 of 6)

## Step 5: You've submitted your document(s)







# Appendix



## What is included in each bundle?

Bundle	Services		
Initial services bundle First year	<ul> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Audiometric testing (if not already conducted in the last 6 months)</li> <li>Prescription (by an audiologist or a physician)</li> <li>Selection of hearing aid technology</li> <li>Evaluation of communication needs</li> <li>Pre-fitting counselling and information</li> <li>In house services (maintenance visits)</li> <li>Cleaning per instrument</li> <li>Minor repairs and parts replacements service</li> <li>Impressions clinic service and Material fees</li> <li>Wax removal</li> <li>Other services as required</li> <li>Batteries included in initial bundle</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Listening check and electroacoustic measures</li> <li>Hearing aid programming</li> <li>Hearing aid physical fit and sound quality</li> <li>Hearing aid instructions (e.g., use, care, maintenance)</li> <li>Worker education (e.g., counselling, education, information and social supports)</li> <li>Verification using real ear measurements</li> <li>Electroacoustic Analysis</li> <li>Programming (includes wireless pairing)</li> </ul>	
On-going bundle	Includes but not limited to:  Partial hearing test In-house services (as needed) Electroacoustic analysis Programming Verification using Real Ear Measurement Maintenance visits Cleaning per instrument Minor repairs and parts replacement Repair and remakes – Clinic services/handling Impressions clinic service and Material fees Wax removal	Minimum services delivered with each visit:  physical inspection of the hearing aid (including receiver), minor repairs and parts replacement cleaning and maintenance of the device physical ear check	
Mini services bundle	<ul> <li>Hearing aid selection</li> <li>Prescription (by an audiologist or a physician)</li> <li>Selection of hearing aid technology</li> <li>Dispensing/fitting</li> <li>Programming</li> <li>Verification using Real Ear Measurement</li> </ul>		

