

Understanding Your Health Care Options

You deserve high quality health care when you need it. It's important to learn about the choices you have to get the best care you can.



You and your health care

You, your family, your health care providers, the Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care all play a role making sure each person living in Ontario has quality health care.



Think about a plan that is right for you

It is important that you think ahead about your health care plans. The health care system is made up of many types of special health care services. These are designed to help as many people as possible at every stage of their lives. The goal is to work with your health care providers to make sure you get the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

How can I do this?

It helps to learn what services are offered in your community. These are here to help you stay healthy, live in your home, stay out of the hospital, or return home sooner after being in the hospital.

What types of services may be in my community?

Primary Health Care Provider

Primary health care providers such as family doctors and nurse practitioners help you look after your health and wellbeing throughout your life. They play an important role in working with you to help manage chronic diseases like asthma and diabetes. They work with you to prevent problems, detect them early, and monitor and resolve them. They can help you stay out of the hospital.

Walk-in or After Hours Clinics

You can see a nurse or doctor often without an appointment although you do have to wait for your turn after you arrive. These clinics offer assessment, treatment and advice for minor illnesses and injuries such as cuts, bruises, minor infections, sprains and skin complaints.

Use this option when:

- your problem is not urgent
- your primary health care provider's office is closed or if you do not have a primary health care provider
- you need care for minor illnesses and injuries such as an infection, rash, stomach upset, cut, bruise, or strain

If you need a primary care provider, call Health Care Connect
1-888-218-9929



To learn more,
call the CCAC
1-800-810-0000



Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)

The staff at the CCAC works with you and your family to plan and arrange the care you need to help you stay in your home as long as you can. CCAC case managers are regulated health professionals with backgrounds in nursing, social work and therapies.

The CCAC can connect you with community support services such as meal programs, friendly visiting and other types of services offered in your community. CCAC case managers can also help you get the personal support, nursing and therapy care you need. If it becomes too hard to live at home alone or with help the CCAC can explore long-term care options with you.

Community Support Services

Community support services help you maintain safety and independence while living at home. They can support you when you return home from a hospital stay. These services include things like transportation, meals, medication checks, adult day programs and caregiver support. To find out what Community Support Services are available to you, contact the CCAC.

Adult Day Programs

Adult day programs provide activities one or more days a week for individuals who meet program criteria. These activities may include meals, physical fitness programs and social events.

Short Stay and Respite Care

Some people need short term help when their caregiver needs a break or they do not have anyone at home to help after a hospital stay. This is called short stay or respite care. This type of care can be provided in your home, a retirement home or long-term care home.

To learn more about adult day programs and short stay and respite care, call the CCAC
1-800-810-0000



To learn
more about
supportive housing,
call the CCAC
1-800-810-0000



Supportive Housing

Supportive housing provides minimal to moderate care such as homemaking or personal care and support to help you live independently. This can be in a rental unit in an apartment building or a small group residence. Supportive housing buildings are owned and operated by municipal governments or non-profit groups.

Accommodations, on-site services, costs, and the availability of government subsidies vary with each building. The care arrangements between a tenant and a service provider are usually defined through a contract between the two parties.

Your local CCAC can get you started by giving you a list of supportive housing providers where you would like to live. You can then apply to the supportive housing provider that you pick.

Retirement Homes

Retirement homes are privately owned and operated. Residents pay for their accommodation, care and services. A retirement home is a good choice if you can live with only a small amount of support and do not need 24-hour nursing care. To select a place to live, you need to visit retirement homes where you want to live.

Long-Term Care Homes

Long-term care homes operate under the direction of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Rates are set by the government. Long-term care homes provide 24-hour nursing care and supervision within a secure setting. Services include nursing care, medical care, physiotherapy, dietary support and recreation. CCAC can help you decide if a long-term care home is right for you.

To learn more about retirement homes and long-term care, call the CCAC
1-800-810-0000



What types of emergency care may be in my community?

Urgent Care Centres

Urgent Care Centres provide diagnosis and treatment for many types of injuries and illnesses. There is a team of emergency trained doctors and health care providers to look after you. Only some Urgent Care Centres offer follow-up appointments. Most Urgent Care Centres are not open 24 hours.

Emergency Departments in Hospitals

Emergency Departments treat patients with serious illnesses or injuries. They are open 24 hours a day every day of the year. A doctor or nurse practitioner will assess you and decide on your treatment along with members of the health care team.

Some reasons to go to an Emergency Department are:

- loss of consciousness
- pain not relieved by pain medication
- feeling confused
- constant or severe chest pain
- trouble breathing

You should visit an Urgent Care Centre when you have an urgent but non life-threatening injury like a sprain or strain.



In a life-threatening medical emergency, call 9-1-1

Hospitals

Hospitals can provide many different types of programs and services ranging from acute short-term care to acute or specialized mental health, rehabilitation and/or complex care. All programs and services are tailored to meet specific needs.

A team of health care professionals like doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dietitians, social workers, pharmacists, discharge planners, and CCAC case managers, support you in going home.

Your health care team begins planning your return home the day you arrive at the hospital.

The hospital health care team can help you prepare for returning home by:

- Providing you and your family information, help or advice to help you manage at home
- Arranging any equipment you need for going home
- Arranging for support services that you need in your community once you get home

If you or your family have any questions about returning home, a member of your health care team will be happy to talk with you.



Being home is better for you because you will have:

- Support from caregivers, family and friends
- Service(s) from home care or support from community agencies as needed
- Reduced risk of getting the kind of infections that can occur in hospitals
- Familiar environment where activities of daily living promote greater physical mobility and independence.

If your health care team thinks you could benefit from alternate living arrangements, you can still go home to wait for arrangements to be put in place.

What is Alternate Level of Care (ALC)?

When a patient in the hospital is designated 'ALC' it means this person no longer requires this level of care and is waiting to move to an Alternate Level of Care.

Alternate Levels of Care may include:

- home with community supports
- rehabilitation unit
- retirement home
- long-term care home

From the day you arrive at the hospital, members of your health care team begin planning the type of supports you may need to be able to return home. You and your family have a role to play in these plans too.

The hospital health care team can help you prepare for returning home by:

- providing information, help or advice to help you manage at home
- arranging for equipment needed at home
- arranging for community support services

Helpful Resources

Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)

Find health care, community services and alternate care places

Call: 1-800-810-0000

Visit: www.ccac-ont.ca

To find health and community care services in Ontario visit:

www.310CCAC.ca

Health Care Connect

Find a primary health care provider

Call: 1-888-218-9929

Telehealth Ontario

Get health care advice from a registered nurse

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Call: 1-866-797-0000

Older Adult Programs and Services

Database for areas in the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant

Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN)

Visit: www.rgpc.ca/oapsd

Call 1-800-810-0000



Ontario

Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant
Local Health Integration Network

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