

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Access to health care for uninsured and
precarious status migrants in Ontario



1. ACCESSING PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

What does “primary health care” mean?

Primary care is a broad term used in Canada to describe health services provided in the community eg. seeing a family doctor, nurse practitioner, social worker in a clinic. This includes diagnosis, treatment and management of health problems as well as disease prevention and health promotion services. This is often the place of first contact with the health care system.

A. COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

If you do not have health insurance, you can access Community Health Centres free of charge. They can see people without OHIP and provide doctors, nurses, social workers, tests, and specialist visits once you become a patient.

These Centres will see patients without OHIP living anywhere in Toronto:

Access Alliance

www.accessalliance.ca

Eligibility: Anyone without OHIP. Living anywhere in Toronto.

- Downtown Location (College & Bathurst): 340 College St., Ste. 500, Phone: 416-324-8677
- AccessPoint on Jane (Jane & St. Clair): 761 Jane St. 2nd Floor, Phone: 416-760-2801
- AccessPoint on Danforth (Danforth & Victoria Park): 3079 Danforth Ave. Phone: 416-693-8677

Queen West Community Health Centre

www.ctchc.com

- Imagine clinic: 168 Bathurst Street, Phone: 416-703-8480. Clinic runs Saturday from 10-2pm. Walk-in only, please ring the doorbell. *Eligibility: No OHIP required.*
- Same Day Clinic for People in Need: 168 Bathurst Street Phone: 416-703-8482 Ext. 2-100. Clinic runs Monday and Wednesday 1-3pm, Walk-in only. *Eligibility: For homeless and street-involved youth (Ages 16-24), uninsured. No OHIP required, no catchment area.*

You may be able to visit other Community Health Centres in the area, but they may have certain rules about who can be registered as a patient. These rules are called *eligibility criteria*. The eligibility criteria for the next centres in this list are listed below:

These clinics tailor their services to patients of specific backgrounds to provide culturally appropriate care:

Anishnawbe Health Centre

www.aht.ca

Eligibility: For people who identify as Indigenous or Aboriginal. No catchment area. No OHIP required.

- Main office (Queen and Sherbourne)
225 Queen Street East
Phone: 416-360-0486
- Gerrard Site: (Jarvis & Gerrard) 179
Gerrard St. E. Phone: 416-920-2605
- Vaughan Site: 22 Vaughan Rd Phone: 416-657-0379

Women's Health in Women's Hands

www.whiwh.com

Eligibility: Women of Caribbean, Latin American, African, South Asian and Aboriginal descent only. No OHIP required. No catchment area.

- Women's Health in Women's Hands:
(Yonge & Carlton) 2 Carlton Street,
Suite 500 Phone: 416-593-7655 Ext. 7

These clinics' services are restricted to people living within certain areas, also called *catchment areas*.

Inner City Family Health Team

www.innercityfht.ca

Eligibility: Current or former resident of Seaton House Men's Shelter AND are experiencing homelessness or precariously housed AND do not have a family doctor.

- Inner City Family Health Team (Queen & Church) 69 Queen Street East, 4th Floor, Phone: 416-368-5666

Sherbourne Health Centre

www.sherbourne.on.ca

*Eligibility: **Newcomer Team:** Yonge Street and the Don River to the East, between Bloor Street and Lake Ontario to the south. **LGBT Family Health Team:** City of Toronto. Urban (including homeless and underhoused). **Family Health Team:** City of Toronto. No OHIP required.*

- Sherbourne Health Centre (Sherbourne and Carlton) 333 Sherbourne Street, Phone: 416-324-4180

Parkdale Community Health Centre

www.pchc.on.ca

Eligibility: Bloor to the North, Lakeshore to the South, Parkside to the West and Dovercourt to the East, unless homeless. No OHIP required.

- Parkdale CHC (Queen and Dufferin) 1229 Queen Street West, Phone: 416-537-2455

Edge West

www.edgewest.ca

Eligibility: Living between Bathurst and Islington; Eglinton to Bloor. Mount Denis included. Serving youth 13-29 years, No OHIP required.

- Edge West 1900 Davenport Road, Phone: 416-652-4363

Regent Park Community Health Centre

www.regentparkchc.org

Eligibility:

For those with OHIP: South of Gerrard, North of King, West of the Don River, East of Sherbourne.

For those without OHIP: South of Bloor, North of Lake Ontario, West of the Don River, East of Yonge Street. No OHIP required.

- Regent Park CHC (Dundas and Parliament) 465 Dundas Street East, Phone: 416-364-2261

South Riverdale Community Health Centre

www.srchc.com

Eligibility: Don River to the West, Lakeshore to the South, Coxwell to the East, O'Connor to the North. No OHIP required.

- South Riverdale CHC (Queen and Broadview) 955 Queen Street East, Phone: 416-461-2494

Flemingdon Community Health Centre

www.fhc-chc.com

Eligibility: Laird Drive to the West, Lawrence Avenue to the North, Victoria Park to the East and O'Connor Drive to the South. No OHIP required.

- Flemingdon CHC (Don Mills & Eglinton) 10 Gateway Boulevard, Phone: 416-429-4991
- Fairview Community Health 5 Fairview Mall Dr., Suite 359 Phone: 416-640-5298

Davenport Perth Community Health Centre

www.dpnchc.com/

Eligibility: Bathurst to East, railway tracks to West, Rogers Rd. to North, Bloor Street to South. No OHIP required.

- Davenport Perth CHC (Lansdowne & Davenport) 1900 Davenport Road, Phone: 416-658-6812

If you don't see a community health centre in your area, you can call 416-236-2539 to find one in your area, or look at a full list of CHCs here:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/chc/locations.aspx>

Some health centres can get **professional translators** if you are more comfortable speaking in a language other than English. Try to ask when you make your appointment if translation services are available.

B. COMMUNITY FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS

These are health centres where you can access a family physician and other health professionals. These teams have agreed to provide care for the uninsured, although in practice they may not get this request often. If you try to access a FHT and are denied care, please contact us at ohipforall@gmail.com to report the case. If you don't see a team near you, look at a full list at <https://www.aohc.org/community-family-health-teams>

Bluewater Family Health Team

6 Goshen Line
Zurich, ON N0M 2T0
Tel: 519-236-4314/1-855-236-4314
Fax: 1-877-658-2141
Website: www.bluewaterhealthteam.ca

Sauble Family Health Team

672 Main Street
Sauble Beach, ON N0H 2G0
Tel: 519-422-1321
Fax: 519-422-3568
Website: www.saublefht.ca

Delhi Family Health Team

105 Main Street
Delhi, ON N4B 2L8
Tel: 519-582-2323
Fax: 519-582-1513
Website: www.dchc.ca

Leeds & Grenville Community Family Health Team

Brockville Site: 2235 Parkdale Avenue,
Brockville, ON, Tel: 613-342-4076
Gananoque Site: 338 Herbert Street,
Gananoque, ON, Tel: 613-382-7383
Website: www.lgcfht.ca

East Wellington Family Health Team

Erin Clinic: 6 Thompson Crescent, Unit 1,
Erin, ON, Tel: 519-833-9396
Rockwood Clinic: 175 Alma Street,
Rockwood, ON, Tel: 519-856-4611
Website: www.ewfht.ca

Équipe de santé familiale communautaire de l'est d'Ottawa

Eastern Ottawa FHT: 1811 St-Joseph
Blvd, Tel: 613-590-0533
Overbrook-Forbes FHT: 225 Donald
Street, Suite #120, Tel: 613-745-2228
Website: www.esfestottawa.ca

Windsor Family Health Team

2475 McDougall Street, Unit 245
Windsor, ON N8X 3N9
Tel: 519-250-5656
Fax: 519-250-5864
Website: www.windsorfht.ca

Kawartha North Family Health Team

Bobcaygeon Site: 100 East St. South,
Bobcaygeon, ON, Tel: 705-738-5575
Fenelon Falls Site: 50 Colborne St. East,
Box 129, Fenelon Falls, ON Tel: 705-887-
3636 Website: www.knfht.ca

Don Mills Family Health Team

20 Wynford Drive, Suite 200
Don Mills, ON M3C 1J4
Tel: 416-444-6161
Website: www.donmillshealth.com

North Hastings Family Health Team

1P Manor Lane, Box 418
Bancroft, ON K0L 1C0
Tel: 613-332-5692
Fax: 613-332-5749
Website: www.northhastingsfht.ca

CLINICS FOR THE UNINSURED

These clinics do not require you to be a patient in advance. These clinics will do their best to help you get the tests you need.

Canadian Centre for Immigrant and Refugee Health

<http://healthequity.ca/>

What: Drop-in clinic that sees people who do not have health insurance on a first come, first serve basis. A non-emergency children's clinic is held once a month.

When: The clinic runs Tuesday and Thursday evenings only, from 5pm-8:00pm

Where: 4158 Sheppard Ave East, Scarborough, ON. 647-267-2176.

Muslim Welfare Centre

<http://www.muslimwelfarecentre.com/causes/free-clinic/>

What: Free Health Clinic for those who are not covered by OHIP such as refugees, students, visitors or new immigrants who are waiting for OHIP coverage.

When: By appointment only.

Where: Two locations: 1) 780 Burnhamthorpe Road West, Unit 4, Miss. ON. 905-306-8371 2) 100 McLevin Avenue, Unit 2A, Scarborough, ON, 416-291-1027

West End Non-Insured Walk-in Clinic

What: A walk in clinic for people with no status or in the 3 month OHIP wait period and have no primary care provider (doctor or nurse practitioner). They do not accept anyone who already has OHIP, IFHP or private insurance or visitors or students.

When: Monday & Thursday from 4:00 pm until 7:30 pm (last client at 7:15 pm)

Where: AccessPoint on Jane, 761 Jane Street (at Woolner), 2nd Floor. 416-760-2810

FCJ Refugee Centre Primary Care Clinic

What: All who are uninsured including those in the 3 month wait period, students, and visitors.

When: Fridays 1pm to 5pm, Saturdays 10am to 1pm. By appointment only.

Where: 208 Oakwood Ave. Phone: 416-469-9754

OTHER OPTIONS FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE:

- **Nurse Practitioner-led Clinics:**

Persons without OHIP are also eligible for primary care services at Nurse Practitioner-led Clinics. These clinics deliver comprehensive primary care, health promotion, chronic disease management, support with persons with mental illness and integrated care. There are various clinics across the province. To find one near you, visit <https://www.aohc.org/nurse-practitioner-led-clinics>

- **Aboriginal Health Access Centres:**

If you self-identify as Indigenous or Aboriginal (regardless of your country of origin), you are eligible to access primary care, with no OHIP required, from any Aboriginal Health Access Centre in Ontario. At these Centres, laboratory tests, specialist appointments and visits to hospitals may or may not be covered. Ask for more information during your primary care appointment. For a full list of Aboriginal Health Access Centres, visit: <https://www.aohc.org/aboriginal-health-access-centres>

- **Telehealth Ontario:**

Telehealth Ontario is a free, confidential telephone service you can call to get health advice or general health information from a registered nurse. You do not need a health insurance number to call nor do you need to provide any personal contact information if you do not want to. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can offer translation support in multiple languages.

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000.

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/telehealth/>

2. ACCESSING SEXUAL HEALTH CARE

Primary health care services can also provide sexual health care. There are also health clinics that are more specific to sexual health services. You do not need a referral or OHIP to visit Toronto Public Health sexual health clinics. Regardless of your immigration status, you can visit a Toronto Public Health sexual health clinic for:

- Birth control counselling
- Low cost or free birth control
- Free condoms
- Plan B (emergency contraceptive pill)
- STI testing and free treatment
- HIV testing
- Pregnancy testing, counselling and referral
- Sexuality and relationship counselling

Birth Control and Sexual Health Centre

960 Lawrence Avenue W, Suite 403

Toronto, ON M6A 3B5

Phone: 416-789-4541

Clinic Hours By Appointment:

Mon: 2-5 pm; Tue: 4-7 pm; Wed: 12-5 pm; Thu: 5-8 pm; Fri: 12:30-4:30 pm

- Anonymous HIV testing (including the rapid HIV test)

Crossways Clinic

2340 Dundas Street W

Toronto, ON M6P 4A9

Phone: 416-392-0999

Drop in: Mon: 9:30-12 pm, 2-6:30 pm;

Tue: 1-5:30 pm; Wed: 9:30-11:30 am, 1-3:30 pm; Thu: 12-4 pm; Fri: 9:30-12pm

- Rapid HIV testing available

Sexual Health Clinic — Black Creek Community Health Centre (Sheridan Mall site)

North York Sheridan Mall, Unit 5

2202 Jane Street, Toronto, ON M3M 1A4

Phone: 416-249-8000

Call or Drop-in: Tue: 3:30-7 pm; Thu: 3-6 pm

Gate Sexual Health Clinic

Flemingdon Health Centre

10 Gateway Boulevard

Toronto, ON M3C 3A1

Phone: 416-429-4991

Drop in: Mon, Thu: 3-5 pm

Note: New clients arrive before 4:30 pm

Sexual Health Clinic — Black Creek Community Health Centre (Yorkgate Mall site)

1 York Gate Boulevard, Suite 202

Toronto, ON M3N 3A1

Phone: 416-246-2388

Call or Drop-in: Mon: 2-5 pm; Wed: 2-5:30 pm

New clients arrive before 5 pm

Hassle Free Clinic

66 Gerrard Street E, 2nd Floor

Toronto, ON M5B 1G3

Phone: 416-922-0566

Men/Trans (Drop-in): Mon, Wed: 4-8 pm;

Tues, Thurs: 10-3 pm; Fri: 4-7 pm; Sat:

10-2 pm. Women/Trans (Drop-in): Mon,

Wed, Fri: 10 am until full; Tue, Thu: 4 pm

until full. Anonymous HIV testing available by appointment.

Immigrant Women's Health Centre

489 College Street, Unit 200
Toronto, ON M6G 1A5
Phone: 416-323-9986
Drop-in: Mon & Tue: 9:30-5 pm; Wed: 1-8 pm; Thu: 10-3 pm
Please arrive at least 1 hour before end of clinic time.

The Jane Street Clinic

662 Jane Street
Toronto, ON M6N 4A7
Phone: 416-338-7272
Drop-in: Tue: 1-5:30 pm; Wed: 2-6:30 pm; Thu: 9:30-11:30 am
o Rapid HIV testing available

Sexual Health Clinic — Rexdale Community Health Centre

8 Taber Road
Etobicoke, ON M9W 3A4
Phone: 416-744-0066
By Appointment:
Wed: 1:30-5:30 pm
*Anonymous HIV testing

Sexual Health Clinic — Rexdale Youth Resource Centre

1530 Albion Road
Toronto, ON M9V 1B4
Phone: 416-741-8714
By Appointment: Thu: 2:45-5:30 pm
Anonymous HIV testing (including the rapid HIV test) *Must be 28 years old or under

Scarborough Sexual Health Clinic— Scarborough Civic Centre

160 Borough Drive
Scarborough, ON M1P 4N8
Phone: 416-338-7438
Drop-in: Mon: 9:30-12 pm, 2-6:30 pm; Tue: 1-3:30 pm; Wed: 9:30-12 pm, 2-6:30 pm; Thu: 9:30-11:30 am, 1-3:30 pm; Fri: 9:30-12 pm
*Rapid HIV testing available

Special Treatment Clinic

76 Grenville St, 3rd Floor
Toronto, ON M5S 1B2
Phone: 416-351-3800 Ext. 2207
Book an appointment by calling 416-351-3800 Ext. 2208 on Tues. and Thurs. between 9am-11am to be scheduled for same-day evening clinic at 4-7pm.

Sexual Health Clinic — Taibu Community Health Centre

27 Tapscott Road, Unit 1
Toronto, ON M1B 4Y7
Phone: 416-644-3536
By Appointment:
Tue: 2:30-6:30 pm

Talk Shop Sexual Health Clinic

5110 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON M2N 5E7
Phone: 416-338-7000
Drop-in: Mon, Thu: 2-6:30 pm
Wed: 9:30-11:30 am, 1-3:30 pm
*Rapid HIV testing available

You can also call the AIDS and Sexual Health Infoline Toll-free at: 1-800-668-2437. They are a province-wide free anonymous service staffed by professional, multidisciplinary, multicultural counsellors who offer assistance in different languages.

3. ACCESSING HEALTH CARE DURING AND AFTER PREGNANCY (ALSO KNOWN AS PRE- AND POST-NATAL CARE)

Midwifery care is free (no cost) for any woman who is a resident of Ontario.

It does not matter what your immigration status is, as long as you are a resident of Ontario. To find a midwife near you, visit:

http://www.aommembersonly.ca/find_a_midwife/Search.aspx

- * In addition to midwives, uninsured patients can go to community health centres to get care while they are pregnant. See above under *Primary Care*.
- * Midwives can care for women and order all necessary tests in a healthy, normal pregnancy – but pregnant women may need to pay for these tests.
- * Midwives in Ontario offer both home and hospital birth to their clients – if you have your baby in a hospital, you will be asked to pay the hospital fees. Different hospitals in the city charge different rates for uninsured patients. You might want to call a few hospitals to find out which ones have cheaper rates.
- * Research has shown that homebirth with a midwife is a very safe option for low-risk women (women with no health problems, or pregnancy related concerns). There are NO costs to having your baby at home with a midwife and research shows that women and babies who have a normal pregnancy are just as healthy with home birth with a midwife in Canada as they are if they give birth in the hospital.
- * When you are actually in labour or have another medical emergency, the hospital or doctor cannot refuse to care for you, even if you do not have any money. The hospital and doctor will bill you for the care they provide, but they will still provide you with the care you need in an emergency.
- * As above, the hospital may take you to a collection agency to collect the fees you owe them for any amount of time you stayed in the hospital. If they take you to a collection agency, this can affect your credit rating and ability to get a loan in the future.
- * Most hospitals will let you pay them in small amounts (even \$50 a month) instead of taking you to a collection agency – sometimes it is better to try to work this out with the hospital finance department instead of waiting until they go to a collection agency.
- * Many hospitals will not end up making you pay the full fee if they see that you can even pay part of it (e.g. half the fee). Doctors are unlikely to take you to a collection agency to collect their fee.
- * Canadian-born children to uninsured mothers have full access to OHIP and are eligible to receive a health insurance card.

- * Even if your baby needs to stay in the hospital because it is sick, you might not have to stay in the hospital as a patient if you are healthy - this can save you costs of having to stay in the hospital.
- * Many hospitals have 'sleeping rooms' where parents can stay for one or two days if their baby is in the nursery. These sleeping rooms mean you are not a patient, but you can stay to help care for your baby (e.g. breastfeed). If you stay in a sleeping room, you do not need to pay. You can only stay in the sleeping room for 1 or 2 days if it is free. If your baby needs to stay in the hospital you might not be able to stay.

KYR for uninsured pregnant women courtesy of: Manavi Handa, Registered Midwife, Assistant Professor at Ryerson University

Prenatal and Post-Partum services

Public Health Nurses and/or registered Dietitians offer:

- Education and support during the pregnancy, before birth and after birth
- Telephone assessments and counselling
- Home visits
- Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program
- Prenatal programs
- Breastfeeding support
- Information and referrals to appropriate community resources

Patients can refer themselves by calling
 Toronto Public Health, 416-338-7600
 Monday to Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Provides a free home-visiting program that is voluntary and does not require an OHIP card in order to receive services.

You may be eligible to receive these services, if you are

- living in Toronto;
- available for home visits during our hours of operation and;
- pregnant or recently had a baby or are parenting a child who is 0-3 years old.

You must also meet one or more of the following:

- A newcomer to Canada, here less than 3 years and having your first baby in Canada
- Concerned about or have questions about your child's growth, development and behaviours
- Feeling alone with very few or no support from family or friends
- Experiencing or have a history of a physical and/or mental health illness
- A first time or experienced parent with questions about parenting and building a healthy relationship with your child
- Facing challenging life situations (e.g. homelessness, domestic violence, no OHIP)

4. ACCESSING OTHER HEALTH SERVICES

These are various services that are covered by the city that you can access without an OHIP card and regardless of immigration status.

Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Program

Talk to your health care provider about TB prevention, testing, and treatment, and a referral to Toronto TB clinics (including coverage for patients with no health insurance).

Dental Services

Children under 18 years of age or seniors 65 years and older, live in the City of Toronto, lack private dental insurance, and are unable to afford a private dentist can access free TPH dental clinics.

For a list of Toronto Public Health dental clinics, see:

<http://www.toronto.ca/health/dental/locations.htm>

If you do not meet the criteria above, you can still access low-cost dental services here:

http://www.toronto.ca/health/dental/ds_low_cost.htm

Harm Reduction Programs

A needle exchange program is offered for drug users through “The Works.” Services include distribution of injection and other safer drug use equipment and condoms, education, counselling, lab testing, and vaccination. The Works also offers a low threshold methadone clinic for opiate users: 416-392-0520, or if busy 416-392-0521.

Immunization

To receive vaccine information and to report children’s immunizations, the public may call: 416-392-1250.

5. ACCESSING EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE

- If you are in critical condition...
you cannot be refused emergency medical care based on your ability to provide a health card. You will, however, likely receive a bill afterwards. Rates vary at different hospitals for uninsured patients.
- If you walk in to the emergency room...
many hospitals charge a facility/registration fee upfront in cash. Some hospitals are known to not do this eg. St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. You will however be billed by the hospital. Rates vary at different hospitals for uninsured patients.
- If you have been hospitalized...
you will likely receive a bill on discharge or be sent one in the mail, and if you do not pay, the hospital can sometimes contact a collections agency which can affect your credit rating. Many hospitals have an equity/diversity office. Ask to speak with them as they may be able to help you negotiate payment in installments with the hospital's finance department. Ask them to bill you as a medically uninsured "Ontario resident" as opposed to a medically uninsured traveller. Hospitals are not required to do this, but they may oblige if you ask. If you are a patient of a community health centre, contact them to help you navigate the financial situation.
- While in the hospital...
Ask for translation services via telephone if you prefer another language, although not all health care providers will know how to access such services.

Disclaimer: This guide was originally developed and maintained by Health4All. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact ohipforall@gmail.com.