

GUIDE TO OUR HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES



ABOUT HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

We're here to help. Ontario's 14 Home and Community Care Support Services organizations coordinate in-home and community-based care for over 400,000 patients every month.

Our mission is to help everyone be healthier at home through connected, convenient and accessible patient-centred care.

We assess patient care needs, and deliver in-home and community-based services to support your health and wellbeing. We also provide access and referrals to other services in the community, and manage Ontario's long-term care home placement process.

We collaborate with Ontario Health Teams, primary care providers, hospitals, and many other health system partners to support high-quality, integrated care planning and delivery.

We help patients, their families and caregivers when they need services, support and guidance to:

- Remain safely at home with the support of health and other care professionals
- Return home from hospital and recover at home
- Find a family doctor or nurse practitioner
- Find services in the community that support healthy, independent living
- Connect caregivers with support and respite care
- Transition to long-term care or supportive housing
- Die with dignity, in the setting of their choice

This booklet is a guide to our home and community care services and includes other important information related to patient care. Patients are encouraged to share this information with their family members or caregivers who will be involved in their care.



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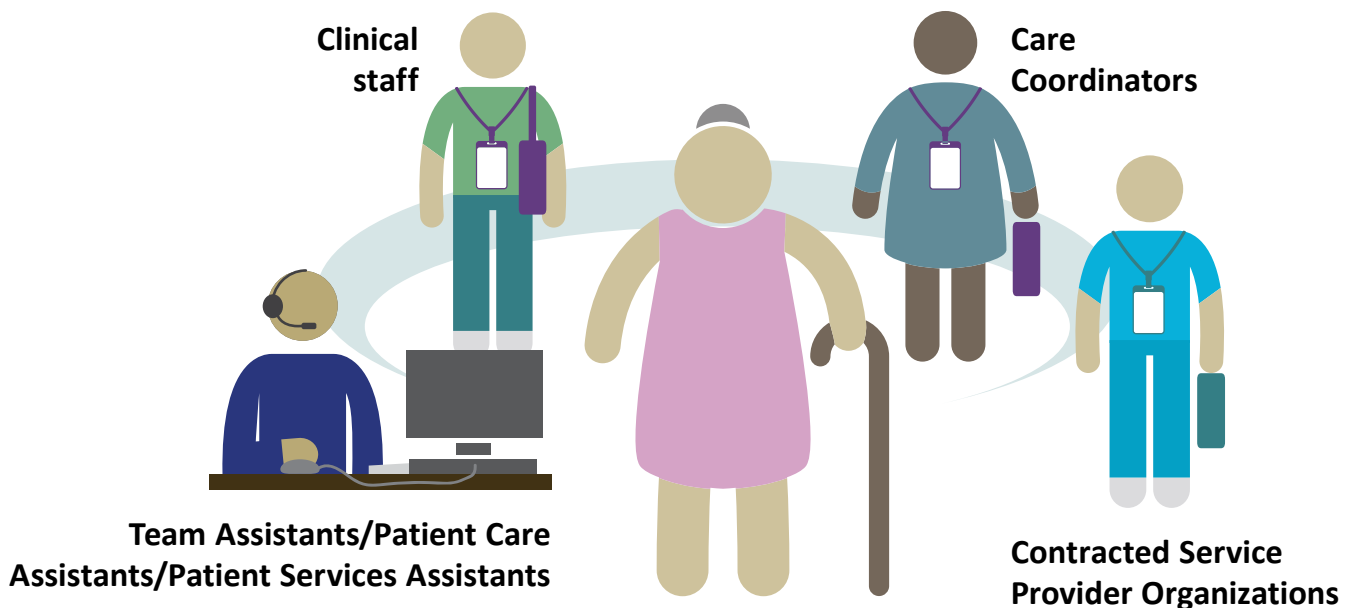
THE PATIENT SERVICES TEAM

The Patient Services team at Home and Community Care Support Services includes Care Coordinators, Team Assistants/Patient Care Assistants/Patient Services Assistants and Clinical staff who work collaboratively with you and your family/caregivers to ensure you get the care and support you need. The Patient Services team works closely with our contracted service provider organizations, who are responsible for delivering the services identified in your care plan. The Patient Services team also remains in contact with your Primary Care Provider where applicable to ensure they are aware of the care plan.

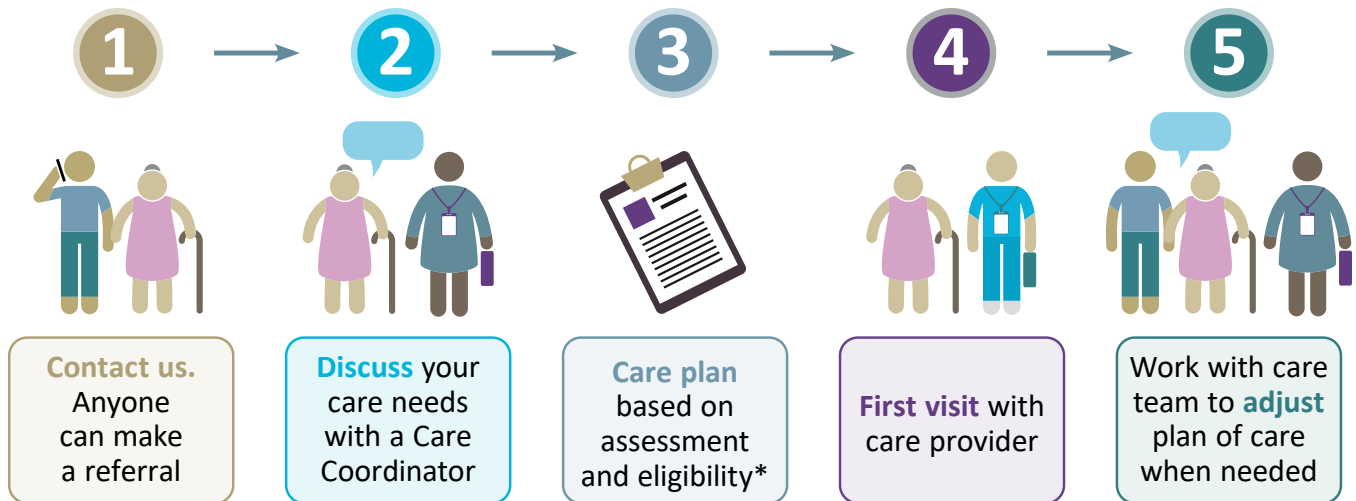
Supporting our diverse patient population

As a Government of Ontario Crown agency, we are committed to actively offering our services in both official languages and to providing high-quality home and community care for our Francophone population under our responsibility to Ontario's French Language Services Act, 1990, and in accordance with regulations under the Connecting Care Act, 2019. We also endeavour to support our diverse patient population by providing information in other languages upon request and by connecting with interpretation services where appropriate.

- **Care Coordinators** work directly with you and your family/caregivers to coordinate your care and to develop a custom care plan that meets your assessed needs.
- **Team Assistants/Patient Care Assistants/Patient Services Assistants** support Care Coordinators by booking visits, and by communicating with patients, service providers and others as needed.
- **Clinical staff** provide direct patient care through our specialized clinical care programs. They use their expert knowledge, skill and judgement to improve patient health and wellbeing.
- **Contracted Service Provider Organizations** deliver care to patients, including nursing, personal support services, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and more.



HOW WE COORDINATE CARE



*If you are not eligible for our home and community care services, the care coordinator will explain why and will help you find alternatives to meet your needs. They will also connect you with services in your community that are right for you, such as meal services, friendly visiting and adult day programs.

OUR HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

We provide a wide range of health care services and resources to support people at home, at school or in the community. Our home and community care services are covered through the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). Based on your assessment, we may provide you with the following services which are delivered by the contracted service provider:

- Nursing
- Personal support (bathing, dressing, etc.)
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech-language therapy
- Medical supplies and equipment (additional rental fees may apply)
- Social work
- Nutrition Counselling
- Palliative and end of life care
- Other specialized programs and nursing services available as needed

A Care Coordinator can provide more information and answer any questions that you and your family may have about our services and your care.

What is a Care Coordinator

Home and Community Care Support Services Care Coordinators act as your primary point of contact while receiving care in the community, at home, or even if you return to hospital. Our caring and knowledgeable staff are regulated health care providers, including nurses, occupational therapists, social workers or one of many other health care professions who work directly with you, your family and your caregivers to develop a customized care plan that meets your care needs. Our expertise, in-depth assessment process and strong community partnerships will support you through your health care journey.



Information and Referral

We are a resource for information and can connect you to other programs and services available in your community. If you are not eligible for our services, or if you require additional supports that are not part of the services we offer, we can help connect you with other community supports including meal delivery services, Adult Day Programs, transportation services, caregiver support, respite care and more.

thehealthline.ca

Thehealthline.ca puts accurate and up-to-date information about health and community services at the fingertips of patients, doctors and health care providers across Ontario. Visit thehealthline.ca to find health and community services near your home.

Community Nursing Clinics

Home and Community Care Support Services offers nursing services, such as wound care and Intravenous Therapy, in community nursing clinics. If a Care Coordinator assesses you for nursing services and you are able to access community based services, you will receive your care in one of our clinics.

Visits to a nursing clinic are by appointment only and are not the same as visiting a walk-in medical clinic. Nursing clinics allow for independence. With nursing clinics located throughout Ontario, patients can arrange for required care at a time and location most convenient for them and design their care schedule to best suit their personal needs. For more information, please visit healthcareathome.ca. If your situation changes and you're no longer able to attend a clinic, please speak with your Care Coordinator to discuss alternative options.

Placement Services and Alternatives to Care at Home

Home and Community Care Support Services can help you understand your long-term care options. We arrange short stay respite, convalescent care and when you can no longer manage at home, we can facilitate the application and admission process for long-term care homes.

All applications and admission to long-term care homes within Ontario are arranged by Home and Community Care Support Services. To access admission to a long-term care home within your area or across Ontario, a Care Coordinator or Placement Coordinator can:

- Provide information about long-term care homes
- Determine eligibility for placement
- Provide assistance in the application and admission process

See the [**Guide to Placement in Long-Term Care Homes Booklet**](#) for more information.

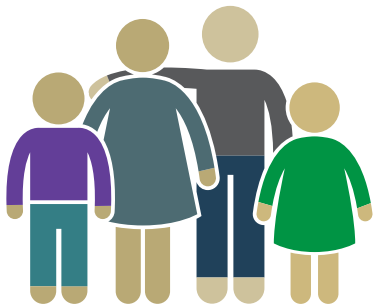
Child and Youth Services

Home and Community Care Support Services can provide services to children/youth at home or in school, including mental health and addictions nursing. The School Health Support Services program provides services in school to assist students up to age 21 with medical and/or rehabilitation needs that are beyond the range and responsibility of school staff. Through this program, students are able to attend school along with their peers.

In-home services, including medical and/or rehabilitation services are available to children/youth. Services may include: nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech-language pathology, dietitian, social work, personal support workers, medical supplies, medical equipment, drug card.

Care Coordinators support children and their families to transition to adult services.

*For local child and youth services in the Champlain area, contact CHEO by visiting cheo.on.ca.



For additional information about programs and services, including Assisted Living, Hospice and other specialized programs and nursing services, visit our website at healthcareathome.ca

Do you need a family doctor?

We have a program designed to help people who do not have a family doctor or nurse practitioner. We match your information with doctors or nurse practitioners accepting new patients in your area.

For more information, call 811 or visit ontario.ca/page/find-family-doctor-or-nurse-practitioner



Ontario  Health811

Health811 helps people connect to care day or night, 24/7. By calling 811 or visiting ontario.ca/Health811, people can confidentially talk with a registered nurse by phone or by chat online about non-urgent health issues, advice and to navigate health care services and referrals. Health811 also includes an easy-to-use search function for people to find health care services close to home, including community health centres, walk-in clinics and mental health supports among many others.



PATIENT BILL OF RIGHTS

As a patient, family member, substitute decision maker or caregiver, you have the right to expect that every Home and Community Care Support Services employee, Board member and contracted health service provider shall respect and promote your rights as follows:

To be dealt with in a respectful manner

and to be free from physical, sexual, mental, emotional, verbal and financial abuse.

To be dealt with in a manner that respects **your dignity and privacy**, and that promotes **your** autonomy and participation in decision-making.

To be dealt with in a manner that recognizes **your individuality** and that is sensitive to and responds to **your** needs and preferences, including preferences based on ethnic, spiritual, linguistic, familial and cultural factors.

To receive home and community care services free from discrimination as per the *Human Rights Code* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

A patient who is First Nations, Métis or Inuk has the right to receive home and community care services in a **culturally safe manner**.

To receive clear information about **your** home and community care services in a format that is accessible to **you**.

To participate in the assessment and reassessment of your needs, as well as the development and revision of **your** care plan.

To designate a person to be present with you during assessments, and to **participate in the development**, evaluation and revisions to **your** care plan.

To receive assistance in coordinating your services.

To give or refuse consent to the provision of any home and community care service.

To raise concerns or recommend changes related to the services that **you** receive, and with policies and decisions that affect **your** interests, without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal.

To be informed of the laws, rules and policies affecting the delivery of the home and community care services, including this Patient Bill of Rights, and to be informed, in writing, of the procedures for initiating complaints about the services **you** are receiving.

PATIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Your responsibility as a Home and Community Care Support Services patient is to:

1. Treat Home and Community Care Support Services and service provider staff with courtesy and respect, free from discrimination, harassment and acts of violence (e.g. yelling, name calling, threats). Home and Community Care Support Services will not accept discrimination that violates an employee's rights and safety.
2. Provide a safe working environment for Home and Community Care Support Services staff and service providers by:
 - Providing a smoke and vape free environment
 - Securing pets during visits
 - Ensuring that walkways to the home are well lit and clear of ice and snow
 - Securing all illegal and potentially harmful materials (including weapons)
3. Participate in developing your service plan
4. Keep your care coordinator and/or direct clinical nurse informed about any changes to your health status and/or support system.
5. Be available and prepared to receive service.
6. Inform your care coordinator, direct clinical nurse and/or service provider in advance if you are not available to receive service.
7. Inform us of any changes to your contact information and/or treatment address.
8. Work together with your Care Coordinator and service providers to identify and resolve any concerns related to your care.

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR SAFETY

We want to ensure the safety and security of our patients. Whether we are visiting you at home, arranging services for you with our service providers, or you are visiting a nursing clinic, procedures are in place so you feel confident that we have your personal security in mind.

Arranging your home visit

When anyone representing Home and Community Care Support Services visits your home, we:

- Arrange our visit in advance. We will often call before we arrive at your home.
- Carry identification that includes our name, picture and the name of our organization.

Ensuring your security

Services are covered through the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). At no time will you be required to provide banking information such as bank account, credit card, debit card and PIN numbers to a Home and Community Care Support Services staff member or service provider. Patients applying to long-term care homes may be asked to provide some financial information such as Old Age Security, but never bank accounts, credit cards or debit cards. If we ask for your personal information, we will explain why we are collecting it and ask your permission to use the information for those reasons.

Protect yourself and your home

You and your family play a key role in keeping you safe at home. Your care team can offer suggestions to make your home safe and secure.

Always inspect the identification of any stranger who comes to the door. Keep valuables such as credit cards, bank cards and cash safely hidden or locked away in your home when you have visitors. NEVER give out your PIN numbers over the phone. If you suspect someone is not who they say they are, do not let them into your home. Contact the local police immediately.

Infection Prevention and Control

Our staff and service providers are committed to identifying, controlling, and minimizing exposure to infectious diseases for both patients and employees. Our staff and service providers follow infection prevention protocols to help prevent the

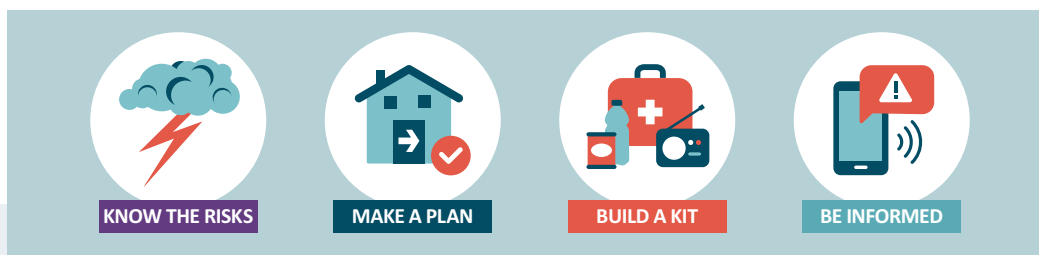
spread of disease and infection, including hand-washing and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment such as masks, gloves and gowns where required.

- **Hand Hygiene**

Clean hands are the best way to prevent infections. Use soap and water or a 70% alcohol hand rub to wash your hands. Making sure family and visitors, including health care providers wash their hands when entering and leaving your home, and before providing care is also important.

- **Staying Immunized**

Vaccinations are an easy way to prevent illness. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about the flu shot and other vaccinations to protect your health.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

If there is an emergency in your community that could make it difficult for your care to be delivered or put your safety at risk, it is important to be prepared and have a safety plan in place to ensure relatives, friends or neighbours can provide support if needed. Your safety plan should take into account any medications you may need and that you have battery backup for essential medical equipment if needed.

For more information about emergency preparedness, visit ontario.ca/page/a-safe-practiced-and-prepared-ontario.





MEDICATION SAFETY AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Everyone plays a role in medication safety. Knowing what medications you are taking and what they are for is an important first step.

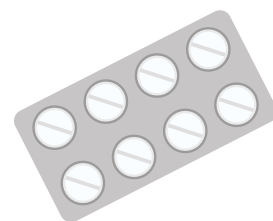
How to Safely Manage Your Medications

- Keep an up-to-date list of all your medications such as prescriptions, vitamins, over-the-counter medications, or natural health products. Include the medication name, dose, and how and when you are taking the medications.
- Keep this list with you at all times so that you can easily share it with your health care team, such as in your wallet.
- Keep the name and telephone number of the pharmacy you use in a handy spot, such as posted on your fridge.
- If you have any questions about how to manage your medications at home, speak to your health care team.

How to Safely Store and Throw Away Your Medications

- Keep medications out of sight and reach of children and adults who may become confused.
- Use cabinets with safety locks or locked boxes, and always put medications away after each use.
- Store medications in their original containers and keep them separate from your family members' medications so they do not get mixed up.
- Do not throw out any unused medications at home. Bring them to your pharmacy to be thrown away safely. Check this link for more info:

healthsteward.ca/returning-medications/



Do You Know About MedsCheck?

You may be able to have a free one-on-one meeting with a pharmacist through a program called MedsCheck. The pharmacist will go over all your medications and make sure you know how to take them properly, including how to use your inhalers, possible side effects, and how to avoid bad interactions with other medications.

You are able to get a MedsCheck at your pharmacy if you live in Ontario and have a valid Ontario Health card and:

- Take three (3) or more prescription medications for an ongoing chronic health condition; OR
- Have been diagnosed with type one (1) or two (2) diabetes

If you are unable to go to a pharmacy, a pharmacist maybe able to visit you at home. Speak to your pharmacist or health care team about booking a MedsCheck.



The Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program covers most of the cost of approximately 5,000 prescription drug products for eligible individuals that receive services through Home and Community Care Support Services. The Care Coordinator will assess for ODB eligibility as part of the initial and ongoing assessments.

What if You Take too Much of Your Medication

Medications, especially those injected, can be harmful if they are not taken or given as instructed by your health care team. A medication overdose can happen because there is too much of a medication in your body at once. This can happen either by accident or on purpose. Too much of a medication in the body can lead to unwanted symptoms or side effects.

The symptoms of over/under dosing will vary with each medication.

Symptoms may include:

- Severe chest pain
- Severe headache
- Anxiety
- Difficulty breathing
- Confusion
- Hallucination
- Extreme agitation
- Changes in body temperature
- Seizures
- Passing out or loss of consciousness
- Skin color changes (such as bluish tint or red/flushed)
- Abnormal breathing
- Fast, slowed, or irregular heart rate

IMPORTANT: If you suspect an overdose, get help right away by calling 911 or the Ontario Poison Control Center at: 1-800-268-9017. An overdose is a medical emergency, and prompt medical attention can help to prevent death or lasting health consequences.

PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY



Health care providers require your personal health information in order to deliver services. Home and Community Care Support Services staff collect personal health information from you, your substitute decision maker or other health care providers involved in your care.

Who we share information with

Personal health information is shared with those involved in providing health care services to you. This might include doctors, therapists, nurses, hospitals, long-term care homes or community agencies. We would also share your personal health information with your personal contacts and others with your permission.

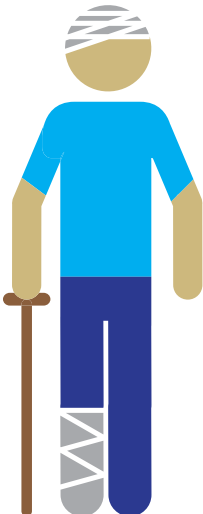


How we protect your personal health information

We use a variety of safeguards to keep your personal health information safe and secure. Examples include data encryption, access restrictions, policies and procedures, staff training and audits.

Want more information?

You can find our full Statement of Information Practices on our website: www.healthcareathome.ca/privacy



Questions or concerns about privacy?

If you have further inquiries regarding consent, the collection, use or disclosure of your personal health information, or you would like to request a copy of your personal health information, please visit our website or contact our Privacy team by calling 310-2222.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

One of the core values that guides our work at Home and Community Care Support Services is listening to feedback from patients and families. Your feedback will help us to improve our programs and services, and identify potential system-wide issues. We want to hear from you if you have questions, concerns or compliments regarding your service. Your feedback will not negatively impact the level or quality of care you receive.

YOUR CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

STEP 1

Contact your care coordinator to discuss any concerns or complaints. Your care coordinator is most familiar with your situation and wants to hear what is going well for you and also what can be improved. Your care coordinator will work with you, your family or your caregiver to address any concerns. Most patient complaints are successfully resolved at this level.

STEP 2

If, after speaking with your care coordinator, your complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, you can ask to speak to their manager. If, after speaking with a manager, your complaint remains unresolved, you may request a further review. The manager will inform you how to proceed with further review. You can also contact the Patient Relations team directly by calling 310-2222.

All feedback we receive will be:

- Received with courtesy, recorded accurately and protected.
- Acted upon promptly and fairly.

For more detailed information on how you can share your feedback, compliments or concerns, please speak with your Care Coordinator or visit our website.

We want to get you involved

Listening to, and learning from, the people we serve is essential to providing connected, accessible, and patient-centred home care.

Home and Community Care Support Services is proud to work with patients, families and caregivers through our Engagement Program to ensure we focus on your needs and values. By sharing your experiences and insights you will help support everyone to be healthier at home.

We are always looking at new ways to get you involved in developing programs, services, and policies that positively impact recipients of home and community care. Your involvement will be supported through onboarding, ongoing training, and regular networking opportunities.

To get involved, please visit healthcareathome.ca/community-engagement or you can email us directly at engagement@hccontario.ca



Exceptional care – wherever you call home.

Ontario's 14 Home and Community Care Support Services organizations coordinate in-home and community-based care for thousands of patients across the province every day.

For information and referrals related to home and community care or to learn more about long-term care home placement services, please call 310-2222 (English) or 310-2272 (French). No area code is required.

www.healthcareathome.ca