

# INFOBulletin

Keeping health care providers informed of payment, policy or program changes

**To:** Physicians

**Published By:** Health Services Branch

**Date Issued:** December 20, 2013 **Bulletin #:** 4620

**Re:** Changes to Publicly Funded Physiotherapy

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## Changes to publicly funded physiotherapy services

Further to [INFOBulletin #4595](#) (issued on April 18, 2013), all non-hospital physiotherapy services have been removed from the *Health Insurance Act* effective August 22, 2013. However, publicly funded physiotherapy services continue to be available in communities across Ontario at participating clinics, in Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs) and in patients' homes when necessary.

## What do the changes mean to me as a physician?

In the past, you may have referred patients for access to OHIP insured physiotherapy services in their home, in a LTCH or at a Designated Physiotherapy Clinic. Now, you no longer need to provide a referral for patients needing physiotherapy in their home or residing in a LTCH.

Your referral is only required for an eligible patient to receive publicly funded physiotherapy services when those services are provided in a participating clinic. Patients needing physiotherapy services in their home, including a LTCH, will still get them through their Community Care Access Centres or directly from the LTCH.

### Eligibility for **clinic-based** physiotherapy services

Based on your assessment that the patient requires physiotherapy, patients may be eligible for publicly funded physiotherapy in a participating clinic with your referral if they are:

- covered by OHIP and are:
  - age 65 or older;
  - age 19 or younger ;
  - recently discharged as an inpatient of a hospital and in need of physiotherapy clinic services that are directly connected to the condition, illness or injury for

- which the person was admitted to the hospital and for which they are not otherwise eligible through other publicly funded programs; or
- any age and a client of either the Ontario Works (OW) or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

In addition, the treatment must meet the requirements of the program's service description as defined below and in the attached Question and Answer document. The program is not for maintenance or solely for exercise classes.

#### Service description for funded physiotherapy services in participating clinics

The physiotherapy services funded under the program include assessment(s), diagnosis and treatment to improve, develop or rehabilitate physical function and/or promote mobility when that function and/or mobility has been lost or impaired as a result of a debilitating event or disease, pain, injury or surgical procedure. **Please bear in mind this service description when considering a referral for your patient.** The assessing physiotherapist will make the final determination as to your patient's eligibility under this program and while the patient may meet eligibility requirements (e.g., over 65 years of age) their condition may not fall under the definition of the service description (e.g., patient could benefit from exercise or maintenance therapy which are not funded under this program).

#### Participating clinics

Clinics participating in the provision of publicly funded physiotherapy services are under contract to provide these services. A list of participating clinics is available at the ministry's public internet site at [http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/physio/pub\\_clinics.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/physio/pub_clinics.aspx).

#### Eligibility for physiotherapy services in LTCHs or in patients' homes

Your patients residing in a LTCH will have their physiotherapy needs assessed by staff in the home; no referral is needed. Your patients that cannot leave their homes will be assessed by the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) case manager to determine physiotherapy needs in the home. No referral is needed and patients can contact the CCAC directly.

#### **Other Changes:**

The Ministry is expanding the number of publicly-funded physiotherapy clinics to improve access across the province. New locations will be announced and posted on the public website ([http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/physio/pub\\_clinics.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/physio/pub_clinics.aspx)) accordingly.

Funding has also been provided to expand access to falls prevention and exercise classes in communities across Ontario. Your patients do not need a referral to access these services. A list of locations where these services are available can be found at the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) internet sites. Find your LHIN at: <http://www.lhins.on.ca/>

See the corresponding Questions and Answers for additional information.