

Personal Health Visit

There is evidence that an annual physical examination is ineffective in finding hidden disease in healthy people.

Based on the evidence the annual physical examination has been replaced by the personal health visit for patients with no apparent medical problems. The personal health visit is insured by OHIP once per patient per 12 month period, the same as the annual physical examination. If a physician determines a complete history and physical examination is necessary, like for patients with chronic illness and/ or health issues, the full physical exam will be insured by OHIP.

The personal health visit is for healthy patients who have no apparent medical problems, the physician and patient can use the appointment to discuss prevention like screening for cancer and other health issues relevant to the individual patient's medical history and lifestyle. In addition, any examination required can be focused on the individual needs of the patient relevant to their risk profile depending on their age, sex and health history.

The OHIP fee for the personal health visit vary by age range because there are health risks for otherwise healthy individuals that differ in complexity depending on age. The introduction of the personal health visit provides the physician with more choices to appropriately assess their patients by including a service that focuses on prevention, moving away from a one size fits all approach of the annual physical examination.

What does OHIP fund?

OHIP funds physical reviews or exams for each patient by a physician, up to once a year, regardless of patient's medical history.

What changes are included in the 2012 Physician Services Agreement and why?

- The agreement is changing the way physicians bill OHIP for providing their patients with medical assessments.
- For healthy patients, the fee for the annual health exam of \$72.20 will be replaced with several different fees for the personal health visit. The new fees will be:
 - Age 2 to 11:\$41.60
 - Age 12 to 17:\$77.20
 - Age 18 to 64:\$50.00
 - Age 65 and over:\$77.20

- This new personal health visit has been introduced because patients have different needs depending on their age and other risk factors, and this should be reflected in the annual visit.
- A visit for a healthy adult takes less time than a visit for a patient who has a chronic illness or other medical condition, and a healthy adult needs fewer tests. Healthy adults also may not need to have a full assessment every year, based on a recommendation from their physician.
- This change will help to reduce unnecessary tests for healthy patients where evidence does not show that a test is needed, and will reduce the time required for both patient and physician.

Will patients continue to be funded by OHIP for an annual review of their health?

Yes, OHIP will still fund an annual physical reviews or exams for each patient by a physician, regardless of the patient's medical history.

What are the savings from this change in the first and second years of the Agreement?

- Physician fee savings: \$7.3 million (2012/13); \$29 million (2013/14)
- Savings or efficiencies in the healthcare system: \$2.7 million (2012/13); \$10.7 million (2013/14)

When is this change effective?

This change is effective on Jan. 1, 2013.

Supporting Evidence and For More Information

OHIP InfoBulletin #4585

Implementation of 2012 Physician Services Agreement – Amendments to the Schedule of Benefits for Physician Services – Effective January 1, 2012

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/ohip/bulletins/4000/bul4585.pdf>

The Cochrane Library: General Health Checks in Adults for Reducing Morbidity and Mortality from Disease

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD009009.pub2/abstract;jsessionid=53C3360857C2E2AC3DE4012D34C67F01.d01t04>