

Welcome to Health Care Connect

Health Care Connect is designed to help you find a family health care provider. Here is information to help you understand how the program works. You will also find information and resources to help you access additional health care services in your community.

Getting started

Health Care Connect (the 'program') helps people without a family health care provider find one. You may want to consider registering for the program if:

- You are actively looking for a regular provider for ongoing family health care needs;
- You have a valid OHIP card (if you do not, you may contact Service Ontario INFO line at the number, below, where someone can assist you with this) and
- You are not currently enrolled with a family health care provider according to Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care records (i.e. you have not signed a Ministry enrolment and consent form)

More information about how the program works can be found in this brochure. For additional questions, please call Service Ontario INFO line at the number below.

To register with the program, simply call 1-800-445-1822. You will need a pen, some paper and your OHIP card when you call Health Care Connect.

How the Program Works

Health Care Connect helps you in your search for a family health care provider. How does the program do this?

- A health information questionnaire will be administered to you when you register for the program to determine your level of need for a family health care provider.
- This health information and your contact information will be given to a nurse in your community, called a Care Connector, who is assigned by the program to help you in your search for a provider.
- Your Care Connector will attempt to find a family health care provider for you by:
 - reviewing the health information you provided when you registered with the program
 - contacting you with additional questions, if needed
 - working with local family health care providers to determine who may be accepting new patients in your community

Health Care Connect attempts to find a provider for you but *priority is given to those with the most need for family health care.*

Other important things to remember about how the program works:

- Registering with the program does not guarantee that a family health care provider will be found for you, so you are encouraged to continue your own search.
- Health Care Connect does not provide health care advice, service or treatment. The program attempts to locate those services for you. If you need more immediate health care attention, information on how to access these health care resources can be found at the end of this brochure.



- The program relies on the accuracy of the information you provide to help find a family health care provider for you. Please contact your Care Connector if you have any changes or additional information about your health care needs.

Your Care Connector

Once you've registered with the Health Care Connect, you will receive contact information for your assigned Care Connector. Your Care Connector is your main point of contact for the program. If you have any questions about the program or changes to the information you provided when you registered, please contact your Care Connector. Accurate and current information is essential for Health Care Connect to work effectively.

If you find a family health care provider on your own while registered with the program, please contact your Care Connector as soon as possible so that program records can be updated.

Finding a Family Health Care Provider

Health Care Connect attempts to find family health care providers that may be accepting new patients in your community. Here's what happens if a provider is found for you:

- Your Care Connector will contact you with the name and contact information of the family health care provider. You will also receive this information by mail.
- You may be referred to a family doctor or a nurse practitioner, depending on local availability.
- For families who register together as a group, the program will try and find one family health care provider that can accept your whole family. However this may not always be possible.

Although the program will attempt to locate a provider for you, Health Care Connect cannot guarantee that this provider will meet the particular preferences you may have for family health care.

Contacting the Family Health Care Provider

Once you receive the contact information of a provider from your Care Connector, you will be responsible for calling to book an appointment.

A provider for ongoing family health care is a matter of personal choice. It remains your responsibility to determine if that provider is able to meet your health care needs. The program does not evaluate each provider before giving you his or her name and contact information.

A provider's regulatory College is required to maintain a public register containing information about the provider, including the provider's class of registration, and any terms, conditions and limitations that are in effect. For public information regarding a provider, please contact the provider's College directly at the number or website listed below.

It may happen that a health care relationship does not work between you and the provider. Family health care providers have the choice of accepting new patients subject to any applicable policy, guideline and/or standard of practice established by their respective college. If the provider cannot accept you as a patient, you may return to Health Care Connect by contacting your Care Connector.

You also may choose to refuse the family health care provider that the program finds for you. In that case, in order to return to Health Care Connect you would need to complete a new registration by calling the toll-free number directly.

Consent and Privacy Policy

Your consent is essential to the Health Care Connect program. If you choose to register with the program, you will be asked to consent to the Ministry collecting, using and disclosing your personal health information.

The Ministry needs to collect, use and disclose the personal health information it requests from you at registration in order to run the program properly and help you find a family health care provider. The Ministry may also need to access OHIP-related health information it has previously collected about you that is already in government databases.

The Ministry will provide your personal health information and your contact information to the Care Connector who has been assigned to you. This information will make your Care Connector aware of your particular health care needs, and how to get in touch with you.

You can withdraw your consent at any time, however withdrawing your consent means you can no longer participate in the program.

The Ministry will hold your personal health information in complete confidence, using the strictest security measures to protect it. Your personal health information will only be used or disclosed for the purposes described in this brochure, and for purposes that are specifically authorized under the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*, as set out in the Ministry's "Statement of Information Practices" which is available at www.health.gov.on.ca.

As well, the Ministry may contact you to get feedback on your experience with the Health Care Connect program.

Withdrawing from Health Care Connect

You can withdraw from Health Care Connect at any time by contacting your Care Connector or the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care at the contact information listed below.

Resources and Contact Information:

Here are some additional resources to help you access health care services in Ontario:

- Your Health Care Options website – <http://www.ontario.ca/healthcareoptions>
- Service Ontario INFO line – 1-866-532-3161

Regulatory Colleges:

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
1-800-268-7096
(416) 967 2617
<http://www.cpso.on.ca>

College of Nurses of Ontario
1 800 387-5526
(416) 928-0900
<http://www.cno.org>

Disclaimer:

Health Care Connect (the "**program**") will assist program registrants with their search for an available family health care provider. Despite a registrant's involvement in the program, finding, assessing and accepting a family health care provider remains the responsibility of the program registrant or that individual's substitute decision-maker (if applicable).

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the "**Ministry**") is not liable to any individual for any costs, losses, claims, liabilities or damages that may be caused by or otherwise related in any way to the program. Further, the Ministry is not responsible for finding a family health care provider for a registrant in the program or for any matter that may arise between a family health care provider and a registrant of the program.

The Ministry will attempt to verify the registration status of family health care providers prior to making a referral through the program. However, the Ministry makes no representations or warranties regarding the registration status of any family health care provider. Registrants in the program may independently confirm a family health care provider's registration status by contacting that provider's governing regulatory College.