

# Health Care Providers

## Welcome to Toronto Package

### What is Primary Care?

Primary Care is the term used to describe the health providers that help people stay healthy and prevent illness. This can be your family doctor, nurse, case worker, etc.. Having a family doctor is important because this is how you can get connected to other services and supports that help you stay healthy.

### Who Are the Health Care Providers I Can See?

When you need access to health care services in Canada, you are likely to meet a variety of professionals who will manage your health. This list provides a brief explanation of health care providers and their roles.

Health Care Providers	
Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Nurses hold a variety of responsibilities in their roles both in community health and hospital settings. Nurses examine and treat patients, as well as provide follow-up care, working closely with physicians.</li></ul>
Nurse Practitioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Nurse Practitioners are nurses with extra training. They can also order certain diagnostic tests, diagnose and prescribe medications.</li></ul>
Physician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Physicians are licensed to practice medicine. They order tests, diagnose, treat and prescribe medications.</li><li>Family physicians provide primary care to prevent or manage disease and maintain health.</li><li>Specialist physicians are trained in their fields for more complex problems. Often a referral is needed by a family physician to see a specialist.</li></ul>
Pharmacist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pharmacists review and dispense (give) medications ordered by physicians. Pharmacists also educate clients on medication information and provide instructions on prescribed and “over the counter” (do not need prescriptions) medications.</li><li>Once a physician gives you a prescription, it is your responsibility to bring it to a pharmacy where the pharmacist will dispense the medications. You can choose a pharmacy of your choice, but it is ideal to keep to the same pharmacy so the pharmacist can see and review all your past and present medications.</li></ul>
Dietician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dieticians are nutrition specialists trained to counsel and support clients in eating habits to promote health and prevent illness.</li></ul>
Medical Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Medical technicians are trained to operate diagnostic tools, such as ultrasound, X-rays, CT and MRI scanners.</li></ul>

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Medical Laboratory Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical laboratory technicians run medical labs in clinics and hospital settings. They take bloodwork and other lab samples for testing.</li> </ul>
Dentist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dentists are trained to examine, diagnose and treat problems with teeth, gums and underlying bones affecting the oral cavity.</li> </ul>
Dental Hygienist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dental hygienists are trained to maintain healthy oral care and prevent dental problems. They perform dental x-rays, provide dental cleaning and educate on proper dental hygiene.</li> </ul>
Physiotherapist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physiotherapists assist clients with physical difficulties from illness, injury, disability or aging. Physiotherapists are trained to assess and treat conditions related to body movement and function across the age span and within a multitude of systems.</li> </ul>
Counsellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counsellors are trained to help clients cope with stressful situations at any point in someone's life. Some counsellors are specialized in fields such as mental health, addictions and others.</li> </ul>
Psychologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychologists counsel in behavior, memory and mental health conditions. Psychologists may also be involved in research to promote the understanding of mental health.</li> </ul>
Psychiatrist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychiatrists are medical doctors who then do more schooling to specialize in mental health. They can prescribe medications for mental health and well-being</li> </ul>



Telehealth Ontario is a program that lets you speak to a nurse over the phone. Calls are free and you can ask to speak to someone in your language. 1-866-797-0007.

There are other professionals that can also be part of your care team:

Settlement Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Settlement workers help with resettlement and help newcomers understand their rights and responsibilities. Settlement workers assist clients in areas such as employment, education, housing, health cards, applying for citizenship and help accessing financial assistance.</li> </ul>
Case Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Workers help clients with a variety of issues like financial issues to referring to health care. They guide clients through information and services specific to their needs, such as employment, poverty, domestic violence and welfare.</li> </ul>

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Updated December 2015