

Bridging to Adulthood Tips: Primary Care

Finding a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner for Adulthood

In Ontario, Canada, **children's healthcare ends at 18 years old** (i.e. the day before the child's 19th birthday). **Adult healthcare begins at age 19**. It is highly recommended that you start planning for the transition to adult medical services, including adult primary care, in advance.

What is primary care?

Primary care is usually provided by a **family doctor or nurse practitioner** who helps you manage new (non-emergency) or ongoing conditions and promotes wellness.

How can I search for a primary care provider for adulthood?

<p>Ask your current medical team</p>	<p>Ask your current community primary care provider if they can still see you as an adult. If not, they may be able to recommend an adult provider. Or, ask your Holland Bloorview medical team for any suggestions.</p>
<p>Sign up for related Holland Bloorview supports:</p>	<p>A. Attend the Transitions Pop-Up: Connect with Primary Care group event. Sign up here.</p> <p>B. Ask your Holland Bloorview clinician for a referral to the OnTrack: Transition Navigation Hub for help searching for primary care.</p>
<p>Primary care offices for adults with physical disabilities in Ontario</p> <p>(Within catchment only)</p>	<p>1. Adults with physical disabilities in Toronto: consider contacting Vibrant Healthcare Alliance (416) 486-8666. Catchment: Hwy 401 (north) to Bloor St (south), Bathurst St (west) to Bayview Ave (east).</p> <p>The primary care office is fully physically accessible with ceiling lifts and attendant services e.g. for assistance with transfers, washroom, clothing. Services with other providers (e.g. social workers, OTs, PTs, dietician) are sometimes provided. There are also wellness programs.</p> <p>2. Adults with mobility disabilities in Waterloo Wellington LHIN: consider the Centre for Family Medicine (Family Health Team, Mobility Clinic). The facility is fully physically accessible and includes a physician, nurse, chiropractor, pharmacist, OT and social worker.</p>

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

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A teaching hospital fully affiliated with the University of Toronto.

<p>Use search directories</p>	<p>Options include signing up for Health Care Connect (if not currently enrolled with a family doctor or nurse practitioner).</p> <p>Another option is the Find a Doctor search tool.</p>
<p>Consider a Family Health Team</p>	<p>Family Health Teams provide coordinated primary care with different team members such as physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, dietitians, social workers, pharmacists, respiratory therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and others. Contact your local team to learn about available services. Inquire about accessibility needs if applicable.</p>
<p>Consider a Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic</p>	<p>Nurse practitioner led clinics provide primary care, health education, and prevention services in Ontario. Inquire about accessibility needs if applicable.</p>
<p>Consider a Community Health Centre</p>	<p>Community Health Centres provide healthcare and wellness programs for individuals and communities. Inquire about accessibility needs if applicable.</p>

Other things to consider:

- Ask that your **medical records be sent** to a new provider before your first appointment.
- **Ask questions to potential providers**
It is your right to ask about a provider's credentials expertise, wait times, office hours, communication style, experience with specific conditions etc.
- **Consider accessibility**
Will you be able to physically access the building's parking lot, walkways, entrance, hallways, washrooms, waiting area, exam rooms and exam tables? Is there an elevator, ramp, lift or stairs? Is there any special equipment like grab bars or overhead lifts? Will the sensory environment be okay or overwhelming? Can the office provide accommodations such as extra time for clothing management, assistance with transfers or waiting in a quiet area rather than the busy waiting room? What other accessibility features would be helpful for you?

The information provided in this handout is for reference only. It is not intended as a recommendation or endorsement of specific programs, or as a comprehensive resource list.

This handout is brought to you by Holland Bloorview's Transitions Team
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