

OHIP Community Physio for Seniors and Kids: A Primer for Caregivers and Parents

By Dr. Connie D'Astolfo, DC, PhD (candidate)



SPINEgroup® provides both private and publicly-funded clinical programs that combine rehabilitation with a focus on chronic disease prevention and management. When it comes to OHIP-funded physiotherapy for seniors and kids, for many years we have worked closely with family doctors and referring physicians in the community and hospitals as a Community Physiotherapy Clinic.

For children of senior parents, POAs for seniors, caregivers, personal support workers (PSWs), guardians and parents wishing to access care under this program, this article provides all the basic information you will need to get you moving in the right direction!

Background

Back on August 1, 2013, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care introduced a new and comprehensive program for community (non-hospital) physiotherapy in order to improve access to physiotherapy services across Ontario. Unlike the old program, the new program was funded under private contracts with Community Physiotherapy Clinics while the old program was delisted as insured service under the Health Insurance Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.6.

By contrast, if someone 65 or older needs physiotherapy (whether inside their own home or in a retirement home), that person, if qualified, must contact the nearest Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) for arrangements and not a Community Physiotherapy Clinic by calling (905)-310-CCAC (2222) for arrangements (Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-physiotherapy>).

Who Is Eligible?

For patients that meet OHIP's criteria, the model of care provides for a 'block' of physiotherapy treatments (known as an "Episode of Care"). However, each Community Physiotherapy Clinic has a maximum number of annual treatments that can be delivered to patients. As a result, this means that some clinics may have a Wait List for patient enrollment because there are a limited number of publicly-funded OHIP physiotherapy clinics in Ontario.

More specifically, if a person has a valid OHIP card and a proper written referral from a physician or nurse practitioner, that person is eligible if and only if he or she:

- 1) is age 19 or younger;
- 2) has been discharged from a hospital as an inpatient after an overnight stay and needs physiotherapy for the same condition, illness or injury requiring hospitalization;
- 3) is age 65 or older; or
- 4) receives income from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

After enrollment and OHIP card validation, each patient is first assessed at the clinic to determine the best treatment plan. A registered physiotherapist will meet with the patient one-on-one to supervise the course of physiotherapy treatment and process (e.g. rehabilitation following an injury or

hospital stay) in order to improve, develop, or rehabilitate physical function and/or promote mobility. Each patient or parent of a child will be required to sign-off on the treatment plan.

The Focus of OHIP Physiotherapy Services

Under OHIP community physiotherapy, the focus of care is on; (1) treatment for specific conditions or diagnosis; (2) time-limited, goal oriented care; (3) education and self-management after discharge; (4) home exercise programs; and (5) discharge to community programming or resources, all directed at avoiding costly unnecessary visits to the Emergency Department (ED) or repeat visits to the family doctor. For example, if you are 65 or older, you may benefit from exercise classes designed to keep you healthy, active and "independent". At SPINEgroup®, we will send a discharge summary report to the referring family physician or nurse practitioner. Each patient or parent of a child enrolled will be asked to sign-off on the discharge summary.

It is however important to note that although there are no pre-set limits to the number of visits or maximums that an eligible patient can receive as part of one, single EOC, your child or senior will be discharged at the clinical discretion of the attending physiotherapists when:

- 1) therapeutic objectives identified in treatment plan have been achieved;
- 2) when any reasonably equivalent gains could be achieved through self-care or self-management through an exercise, falls prevention, activation, or similar program in the community or at home; or
- 3) when no further gains are likely to be achieved from continuing the physiotherapy services.

At SPINEgroup®, all patients referred under OHIP Community Physiotherapy are initially assessed upon intake, triaged to a registered physiotherapist and case-managed throughout the entire "Episode of Care" to discharge. To inquire about our current wait times, please call us toll-free at **1-888-386-1421** or local at **905-850-7746** or **905-850-SPINE**.

How to Enroll – A Step by Step Guide

1. Once the Physician or Nurse Practitioner has referred a patient for physiotherapy, you will need to bring the original and proper written Referral from the doctor, hospital or nurse practitioner. Your written Referral may only be used at one clinic. However, a person may be declined for OHIP physiotherapy enrollment if the written Referral is improper, incomplete or unsigned by the referring Physician or Nurse Practitioner. If so, please speak to the referring physician, etc..
2. Contact the Community Physiotherapy Clinic of your choice to book an enrollment appointment and intake session. Note that there are no fees for physiotherapy services if you are eligible for OHIP physiotherapy services.
3. Always bring and show your valid On-

tario Health Card to each appointment.

4. You must sign all enrollment documents and provide intake information prior to starting the program (e.g. consent, etc.). If the patient requires translation or other assistance with enrollment, please ensure that a caregiver (e.g. child of senior parent) is available to assist in order to expedite the process.
5. Each Community Physiotherapy Clinic may have its own patient policies. Please ask about these policies so that you may become familiar with them (e.g. only one family at a time member can be with the patient during assessment, diagnosis or treatment encounter) for translation, etc.

If you are not eligible for publicly-funded physiotherapy, you can visit SPINEgroup® for private rehabilitation. At SPINEgroup®, we also offer fee-based services such as registered massage therapy, chiropractic services, foot care services, therapy for sports injuries, nursing services, occupational therapy and psychological counselling. **In addition, we offer comprehensive clinical programs for spine pain conditions, vestibular therapy and chronic pain management. In particular, we have a specialized spine care program designed for seniors at affordable rates.**

What OHIP Community Physiotherapy does NOT cover → group exercise classes; falls prevention classes; ongoing treatment to maintain an existing function; the cost of equipment or supplies; supplements; and any physiotherapy treatment, at the same time, for an injury that is funded by another source (i.e. worker's compensation, CCAC, motor vehicle accident benefits or private health insurance plans.)

SPINEgroup®: Dedicated to Excellence for Spine Care

At SPINEgroup®, we strive for the highest possible standards in spine care. We are a unique clinic in Ontario that brings together a team of clinical experts trained in spine and spine related conditions targeted at diagnosing and managing chronic and complex spine pain disorders through coordinated programs of care. This means the treatment is aimed at getting you better, faster and at the lowest cost. Our chiropractor, physiotherapist, massage therapist and/or psychologist deliver the program of

care and you are case managed by our staff registered nurse in conjunction with your family doctor and/or specialist(s).

WE ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED AND REFERRED BY MEDICAL PHYSICIANS ACROSS THE GREATER TORONTO AREA"

SPINEgroup® Vaughan Clinic is located at Unit 1, 7611 Pine Valley Drive, Woodbridge, Ontario, L4L 0A2 centrally located at the southeast corner of Highway 7 & Pine Valley Drive in the corner unit located next to TD BANK. Parking is free.

Our Unique Treatment Approach

The private Spine Care program has a high success rate for complex spine pain and conditions including spinal stenosis, scoliosis, herniated and bulging discs, moderate to severe disc degeneration, with on our evidence based, team modelled and self-management approach. Treatment management typically includes spinal manipulation, spinal rehabilitation, laser therapy, spinal decompression, massage therapy and psychotherapy. In most cases patients are able to receive reimbursement for the program cost through their extended benefit insurance plans. The program length is 16 sessions over 8 weeks, followed by a consult at one month and at three months post discharge. Patients thereafter will receive assessments (in person or through teleconference) every year to ensure continued compliance, motivation and clinical outcomes. Your medical physician will receive reports on your progress.

→ **For clinical program information please contact us at 905-850-7746 or email at: info@spinegroup.ca.**

OHIP PHYSIOTHERAPY AVAILABLE NOW

@ SPINEgroup for SENIORS (65+),
CHILDREN (UNDER 19)
POST HOSPITALIZATION
ODSP/OW

Call: 905-850-7746

Languages Spoken include Italian, Spanish, Hindi