

# Frequently Asked Questions About Personal Health Information and Health Records



## 1. What is Personal Health Information (PHI)<sup>1,2,3,5</sup>?

*Personal health information is any health information that identifies the specific individual, may be used or manipulated to identify the individual or connect them to other information that identifies them. This may relate to your:*

- *Medical history, including your family health history;*
- *Health services you have received;*
- *Payments for health care services provided to you;*
- *Information that relates to payments, or eligibility for health care or for coverage for health care;*
- *Information related to the donation of any body part or bodily substance, or derived from the testing or examination of any such body part or bodily substance;*
- *Health care provider's identity.*

*This definition may also include general information about you, such as your name, address, gender and date of birth, since this information is usually collected during a health care service or in payment for a health care service and can be linked to your health information.*

## 2. What is an Electronic Health Record (EHR)?

*An Electronic Health Record is a secure, integrated collection of data about your interactions with the health system (similar to a bank statement that records your financial transactions) and provides a comprehensive digital view of your health history.*

## 3. What is a Trustee/Custodian?

*Generally speaking, we refer to a "Trustee/Custodian" to describe an individual or an organization (e.g., government institutions, regional health authorities, health care organizations and community clinics)<sup>5</sup> who has custody and control of health record(s), and who has accountability for the protection of PHI.*

*Some provinces and territories use the term "Trustee" for this definition, while others use the term "Custodian." In some provinces and territories, these words are used interchangeably, while in others, the term "Custodian" refers to an individual or an organization who holds the information, and the term "Trustee" refers to an individual or an organization who has control of the information and is responsible for managing it.*



#### 4. Why would I want to access my PHI?

There are a lot of reasons you might want to access your PHI, including<sup>2</sup>:

- Learning more about your medical history and treatments
- Providing information to another health practitioner
- Getting information for life and health insurance purposes
- Preparing for a legal claim
- Filing a complaint against a health care provider

#### 5. What rights do I have in relation to my PHI?

Health information privacy laws in Canada support the rights of individuals/patients:

- You have a right to understand the purposes for the collection, use and disclosure of your PHI.
- You have a right to request access to your own PHI. As a patient, you have a right to see the content of your health record at any time and for any reason.
- You have a right to request corrections to your PHI if you believe your information is incorrect or incomplete.
- Your PHI and privacy should be protected by the health care provider or organization that collects, uses and/or stores your information.

Please see this [link](#) for more information on health privacy legislation in your province or territory.

#### 6. Does the right to access include the right to request removal of my data from the organization's records?

The right to access includes the right to see or get a copy of your PHI. This does not allow for removal of information from the trustee or custodian's original records, as it helps ensure that health care providers have the information they need to provide you services in the future, support care decisions made in the past and satisfy the retention requirements (data must be retained for a certain time period) imposed by regulatory bodies<sup>2</sup>.

#### 7. How can I access my PHI?

In most cases, you can access your PHI by requesting a copy from the trustee or custodian (e.g., hospital, family physician) that created that data. In addition, residents in some provinces (e.g., British Columbia, Quebec, Saskatchewan) can access portions of their health data online through province-wide health databases. For more information about how to access your PHI, please see this [link](#).

#### 8. Can I get a copy of my PHI?

Provincial and territorial health information and privacy laws give you the right to request a copy of your PHI. See this [link](#) for information around health information privacy legislation across Canada.



## 9. Do I have to pay any fees for requesting a copy of my PHI?

Depending on the requested information, trustees or custodians may charge a fee for providing a copy of your health records. The fees are charged to cover administrative and printing costs and are determined based on provincial or territorial legislation.

## 10. Can I correct my PHI?

Provincial and territorial health information and privacy laws give you the right to request corrections to your PHI. See this [link](#) for information about health data privacy laws across Canada.

If you believe that your PHI is inaccurate or incomplete, you can connect with the trustee or custodian to make a correction request. See this [link](#) to learn more about how to request corrections to your PHI.

## 11. Will it cost me anything to request a correction?

No, requests to make a correction to your PHI are free, but you must be able to demonstrate that the information you wish to correct is inaccurate or incomplete.

## 12. How long will it take to get a copy of the information I requested?

The time required to get a copy of your PHI depends on a number of factors, including the timing of the request (i.e., if information is requested during or after the treatment), the type of records you requested (i.e., are they available in electronic or paper format) and the type of trustee/custodian who holds the records you wish to access (e.g., hospital, public health agency, private clinic).

In general, timelines can be as short as 24 hours for records about care you are receiving in a hospital at the time of the request, or as long as 30 days for records about a treatment or care received in the past.

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### References:

1. Government of Manitoba: [Frequently asked questions about PHIA](#)
2. Information and Privacy Commissioner Ontario: [Personal Health Information Act, December 2004](#)
3. Government of British Columbia: [Personal Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act, May 2008](#)
4. Office of the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner: [IPC Guide to HIPA, December 2016](#)
5. Information and Privacy Commissioner Ontario: [Frequently Asked Questions Personal Health Information, September 2015](#)



# How Can I Be Proactive About Managing My Health?



## Proactive Health Management and its Importance

Proactively managing your health means regularly taking steps to improve your general well-being instead of waiting to treat a health condition after receiving a diagnosis. Taking actions to track and manage health can help you stay healthy and may reduce the risk of severe or chronic health conditions. For example, about one in five of all cancers can be prevented by eating well, being active and maintaining a healthy body weight<sup>1</sup>. Some of the benefits of proactively managing your health include being able to identify early-stage medical issues, potentially preventing disease or illness, and savings on medical expenses that come with managing illnesses and chronic conditions.

## How Can I Proactively Manage My Health?

Investing in lifestyle changes, and when possible technology solutions, can help you better manage your health. Please make sure to consult your primary care provider to find out which of the following lifestyle changes or solutions could work for you.

## Lifestyle Practices You Can Adopt

Below is a list of lifestyle practices that may advance your journey to better health.



### Sleep

Ensuring you get enough sleep and giving your body and mind the rest they need is critical to staying healthy. According to StatsCan, adults should get seven or more hours of sleep each night<sup>2</sup>.



### Exercise

Physical activity can help with mental and physical health. The amount of physical activity you need depends on your age. Adults aged 18-64 years are recommended to have at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week<sup>3</sup>.



### Eat well

Maintaining a healthy diet that is rich in fiber, whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, “good” or unsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids is one of the best things you can do to take a proactive role in your health.<sup>3</sup> By nourishing your body with the right food, you can reduce the likelihood of chronic illnesses and diseases.



### Meditation and Breathing

Studies indicate that breathing can improve cognitive function, encourage positive thought processes, reduce the symptoms of anxiety and much more.<sup>4</sup> Taking full breaths can help you calm and focus your thoughts, which can help you better care for your mental well-being.<sup>5</sup>





### **Educating Yourself**

Taking opportunities to learn and educate yourself on different health topics (e.g., nutrition, meditation), can help you better understand how to be proactive about your well-being.



### **See Your Care Provider Regularly**

Attending regular checkups with your care provider can help you better understand your current health and develop a personalized plan to proactively manage it.

## **Digital Products and Services You Can Explore**

To support lifestyle practices, you can also explore digital products and services to better manage your health.



### **Health Tracking Applications**

Health tracking applications can be used to store information from conventional tools (e.g., weight scales, thermometers and blood pressure cuffs) and provide you with a simple way to monitor and manage your health.



### **Smartwatches**

Smartwatches can allow you to track a variety of health metrics like activity level, heart function and stress levels. These metrics can help you be more aware of your general health and make adjustments as necessary.



### **Smartphones and Smartphone Applications**

Many smartphones now come with built-in activity tracking that can be used to monitor data, like the number of steps you take in a day. In addition, there are many free or paid health applications ranging from guided meditation, to nutrition tracking, to virtual health coaching that can be added to your device to support you in taking more control of your health.



### **Websites**

Websites exist (including this one!) that you can use to educate yourself and learn more about different health topics, including mental health, gut health, managing chronic conditions and more. These can help you learn the basics of health management and keep up-to-date with advancements in the respective areas.

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#### **References:**

1. Canadian Cancer Society: [Health Living](#)
2. StatsCan: [Duration and quality of sleep among Canadians aged 18 to 79](#)
3. Canada's Food Guide: [Physical activity and healthy eating](#)
4. Canada School of Public Service: [Mindfulness – Finding Peace in a Changing Environment](#)
5. Canadian Medical Association: [How to incorporate resilience strategies into health care training and workplace practice](#)



# How to Prepare for a Virtual Appointment



Virtual appointments are a little different from in-person appointments. Learning about and preparing for these differences can help you make the most of your appointment. Based on the [June 2020 Canadian Medical Association \(CMA\) Virtual Care Guide for Patients](#), you can take the following steps to set-up and prepare for your appointment.

## Setting up an Appointment



### Book a virtual appointment

There are two ways to book a virtual appointment:

1. **Directly with a practitioner with whom you already have a relationship (e.g., family physician, general practitioner).** In most cases you can call your practitioner's office to book the appointment or use their online booking system.
2. **Through an online virtual health platform with a new practitioner.** Learn more about virtual health platforms covered under your health plan [here](#). Please note that coverage for these services might change based on factors such as legislation changes.

There are additional virtual health platforms that you can access but are not covered by provincial or territorial health plans. You will need to pay for these services out-of-pocket or check with your private insurance (e.g., via employer) for coverage.



### Complete and submit required forms

You may be asked to fill out forms (e.g., consent for virtual visit, health assessments) in advance of the meeting. Completing and submitting these forms before the appointment can prevent delays during the appointment.



### Confirm questions with the practitioner's office or the virtual health platform helpline

You should connect with the practitioner's office or the virtual health platform helpline to confirm any questions (e.g., how to share any helpful documents, log-in best practices) in advance of the appointment.



# Getting Ready for the Appointment



## Set up your technology

1. Choose your preferred device (e.g., phone, tablet, computer) and ensure that it is fully charged or plugged in.
2. Video visits require high-speed and stable internet connection. Check that the internet connection to your device is stable in the room that you plan to use for the appointment. Have a backup plan in case internet does not work during the meeting (e.g., using cellular data instead of WiFi).
3. Practitioners may use a secure video/teleconference platform for virtual visits. They will share details about the platform before the appointment, and you must follow the applicable instructions (e.g., downloading the required software). It is recommended that you test the software in advance of the call to minimize potential disruptions.
4. If possible, use earphones or headphones because they provide a better microphone and sound, as well as greater privacy.



## Find an appropriate location

Choosing a location that is private and free of distractions can enhance the quality of your appointment. Try to find a location where:

1. You can have a comfortable seat.
2. There is adequate lighting so that the practitioner can see you (if the appointment is over video).
3. Other people can't see or hear the conversation.
4. Background noise can be minimized.



## Gather important items

As with in-person appointments, there are items you must have readily available for the virtual visit. These include:

1. Health insurance card. If your health card doesn't include a photo, you must have a supporting photo ID.
2. A list of symptoms, including when they started and how severe they are.
3. Any recorded health data such as weight, temperature, blood pressure and pulse reading.
4. If the appointment is your first interaction with the practitioner, you should have your relevant health history readily available, including:
  - Existing health conditions or illnesses
  - Medications (prescription containers with the pharmacy labels)
  - Allergies
  - Immunizations
  - Past surgeries and hospitalizations
  - Family health history (e.g., parents and siblings)









## Arrange for family/other members to join the appointment

If there is someone you would like to have at your appointment, you should provide them with your appointment details and ensure they can be available during the meeting time. Note that for video visits for children, the child must be on camera for at least part of the appointment.

## What to expect during the appointment

While seeing a health care provider virtually is very similar to seeing them in person, there are a few differences that you should be aware of:

-  If a secure video/teleconference platform is used for the appointment, you may have to wait “on the line” before the practitioner joins or admits you into the virtual meeting room.
-  If the practitioner is calling you on your phone, the call may come from an unknown or blocked phone number.
-  The practitioner may ask you to confirm your location and health card information.
-  If the visit is over video, you should remain in front of the camera and speak clearly.
-  If there is anyone else (e.g., caregiver, family member) joining the appointment, you should introduce them to the practitioner.
-  If there is background noise, you should mute your microphone, if possible, when not speaking to enhance sound quality.

## After the Appointment

After the appointment, the practitioner might share a summary of the appointment via secure messaging. You should review the summary and ask the practitioner if anything is unclear or incorrect.





# Laws Protecting Your Health Information



Protection of your personal health information (PHI) is a priority for governments across the country. The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) is a federal law that sets national standards for personal information protection in the private sector. In addition, almost every province and territory has their own health-related privacy laws that govern how health care organizations should manage and protect health information. In a few provinces (e.g. Ontario, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia) these laws were deemed substantially similar to PIPEDA, which means that in many instances the provincial laws apply instead of PIPEDA. In other jurisdictions, the PIPEDA may apply instead of the provincial laws<sup>1</sup>.

While the specifics of health information legislation vary by province and territory, in general they cover a few key topics, including:



## Individual Rights

Your rights as they relate to your PHI and medical records, including:

- You have a right to understand the purposes for the collection, use and disclosure of your PHI.
- You have a right to request access to your own PHI. As a patient, you have a right to see the content of your health record at any time and for any reason.
- You have a right to request corrections to your PHI if you believe your information is incorrect or incomplete.
- Your PHI and privacy should be protected by the health care provider or organization that collects, uses and/or stores your information.



## Data Storage and Protection

Rules and policies regarding where your PHI should be stored and how it should be safeguarded.



## Information Disclosure or Data Sharing

Circumstances under which a health care organization or provider can disclose and/or share your PHI with other parties, and consent requirements associated with different purposes for appropriate data sharing.



## Record Retention

A time period for which a health care organization retains your medical record(s).



# Laws That Protect Your Personal Health Information

Learning about health information protection and privacy legislation in your province or territory can help you better understand how your PHI is protected and what health privacy rights you have in Canada and in your province or territory specifically.

Click on your jurisdiction to learn more about the Health Care Privacy and Protection Legislation that govern PHI in your province or territory:



Every province and territory has an Information Protection/Privacy Commissioner or Ombudsman, and a Health Ministry and/or eHealth Agency responsible for overseeing privacy legislation. A full list can be found [here](#).

\* Nunavut does not have its own health information privacy law, but access to information (including PHI) is governed by [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(ATIPPA\)](#), and for data in the private sector the federal law [Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act \(PIPEDA\)](#) (PIPEDA) applies.

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#### Reference:

1. Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada: [Summary of Privacy Laws in Canada](#)



# Personal Health Information: Where is it Stored and How Can I Access It?

Digitization of health care has made health records and personal health information (PHI) more accessible than ever in Canada. Access to health records is a fundamental patient right; however, before we talk about where your PHI is stored and how you can access it, let's clarify a few terms:



## Trustee/Custodian

A “Trustee/Custodian” generally refers to an individual or an organization who has custody and control of health record(s), and who has accountability for the protection of PHI. Examples include government institutions, health regions/authorities, health care organizations, and community clinics.<sup>1</sup>

Some provinces and territories use the term “Trustee” for this definition, while others use the term “Custodian”. In some provinces and territories, these words are used interchangeably, while in others, the term “Custodian” refers to an individual or an organization who holds the information, and the term “Trustee” refers to an individual or an organization who has control of the information and is responsible for managing it.



## Personal Health Information (PHI)<sup>2,3,4,6</sup>

Personal health information is any health information that identifies the specific individual or may be used or manipulated to identify the individual or connect them to other information that identifies them. PHI includes information related to your:

- Health or health care history;
- Medical history, including family health history;
- Health services received;
- Payments for health care services;
- Eligibility for health care or for coverage for health care;
- Donation of any body part or bodily substance, or derived from the testing or examination of any such body part or bodily substance;
- Health care provider's identity.

PHI may also include general information about an individual (e.g., name, address, gender, date of birth) that is collected during or for payment of health care services that can be linked to the individual's health information.

## Where is My PHI Stored?

Your PHI may be stored across several different sources: with the trustee and/or custodian that created the data (e.g., family physician, walk-in clinic or hospital), or with provincial or territorial agencies designated to store PHI.

Provincial and territorial health information privacy laws govern how PHI is collected, used, stored and disclosed. These laws give you the right to access and request changes to your PHI. See [link](#) for privacy laws across Canada.

## Who Can Access My PHI?

PHI can be shared by your trustee/custodian with other health care providers when that information is required for delivery of care, and other third parties (e.g., insurance companies) per consent from you or your substitute decision maker. The information may also be shared with other parties if authorized by law or a court order.

## How Can I Access and/or Correct My PHI?

To access your PHI or request a correction if your PHI is inaccurate or incomplete, you must submit a request to the trustee/custodian that created the health data (e.g., family physician hospital, specialist), or the provincial or territorial agency responsible for storing your health data.

**Click on your province or territory below to find out how to do this in your province or territory.**

Alberta

British Columbia

Manitoba

New Brunswick

Newfoundland and Labrador

Nova Scotia

Ontario

Prince Edward Island

Quebec

Saskatchewan

Northwest Territories

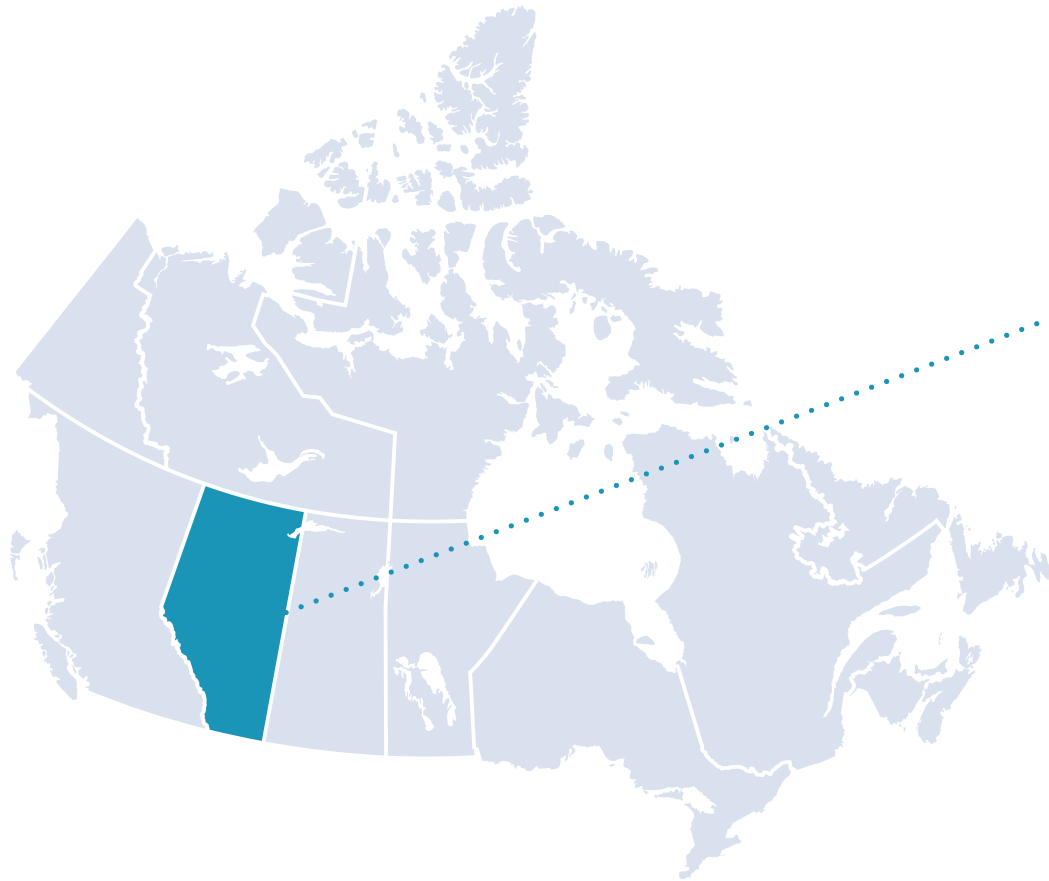
Nunavut

Yukon

### References:

1. Office of the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner: [IPC Guide to HIPA, December 2016](#)
2. Information and Privacy Commissioner Ontario: [Personal Health Information Act, December 2004](#)
3. Government of Manitoba: [Frequently asked questions about PHIA](#)
4. Government of British Columbia: [Personal Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act, May 2008](#)
5. Canadian Medical Protective Association: [Releasing a patient's personal health information: What are the obligations of the physician?, October 2012](#)
6. Information and Privacy Commissioner Ontario: [Frequently Asked Questions Personal Health Information, September 2015](#)

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Alberta**



**Click on the links below to learn more:**

You can get access to your immunizations, medications, and lab test data online through the [MyHealth Records](#) application.

For access or corrections to information not covered in MyHealth Records, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Government of Alberta](#) website for more information.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **British Columbia**



Click on the links below to learn more:

You can access data on prescription medications, COVID-19 test results, immunization records, and health visits through the [Health Gateway](#).

For access or corrections to information not contained in Health Gateway, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [HealthLink BC](#) website for more information around accessing your data.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Manitoba**



**Click on the link below to learn more:**

You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Government of Manitoba](#) website for more information.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **New Brunswick**



**Click on the link below to learn more:**

You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick](#) website for more information.



# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in Newfoundland and Labrador



## Click on the links below to learn more:

You can access immunization, medication, laboratory, medical imaging and hospital encounters data through [HEALTHe NL](#) (contains information starting in 2015, and coverage may vary across Regional Health Authorities).

For access or corrections to information not contained within HEALTHe NL, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. See the [Newfoundland and Labrador Health and Community Services](#) FAQ document for more information.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Nova Scotia**



You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Ontario**



**Click on the link below to learn more:**

You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. See the [Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario](#) website for more information.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in Prince Edward Island



**Click on the link below to learn more:**

You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Health PEI](#) website for more information around accessing your data.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Quebec**



**Click on the link below to learn more:**

You can access data about medications, medical imaging results, results about your biological samples and a list of medical services received using the [Québec Health Booklet](#).

For access or corrections to information not covered in the Quebec Health Booklet, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Saskatchewan**



## Click on the links below to learn more:

You can access your lab test results, immunization history, medical imaging reports, clinical visits and prescriptions data using the [MySaskHealthRecord](#).

For access or corrections to information not covered in MySaskHealthRecord, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Government of Saskatchewan](#) website for more information.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Northwest Territories**



**Click on the link below to learn more:**

You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Northwest Territories Health and Social Services](#) website for more information.

# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in **Nunavut**



You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.



# How to Access or Correct my Personal Health Information in Yukon



Click on the link below to learn more:

You must fill out the form on the [Government of Yukon](#) site and share the same with your health care provider to access your data. For corrections, please direct requests to the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.

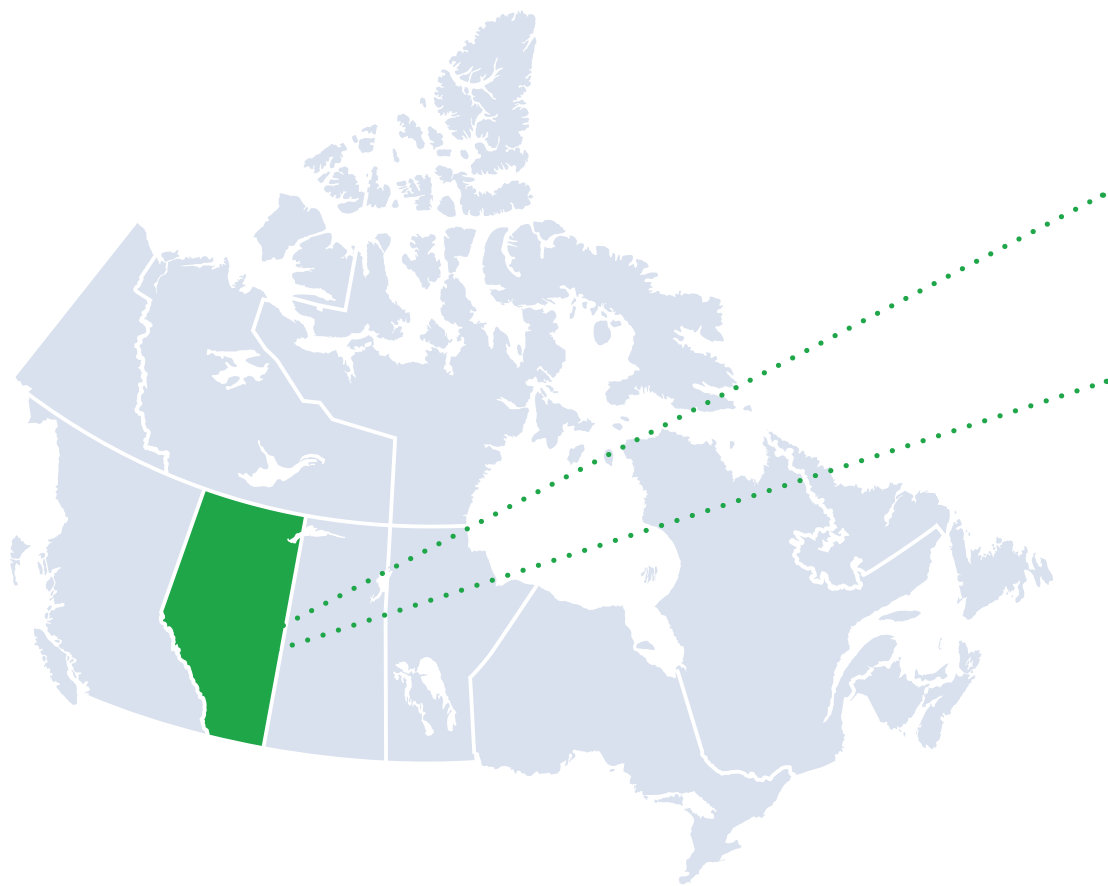
# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access Across Canada

Provincial and territorial health information privacy laws govern how personal health information (PHI) is collected, used, stored, and disclosed across Canada.

**Click on your province or territory to learn more about the privacy laws and steps to access or correct your PHI in your jurisdiction.**



# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Alberta**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

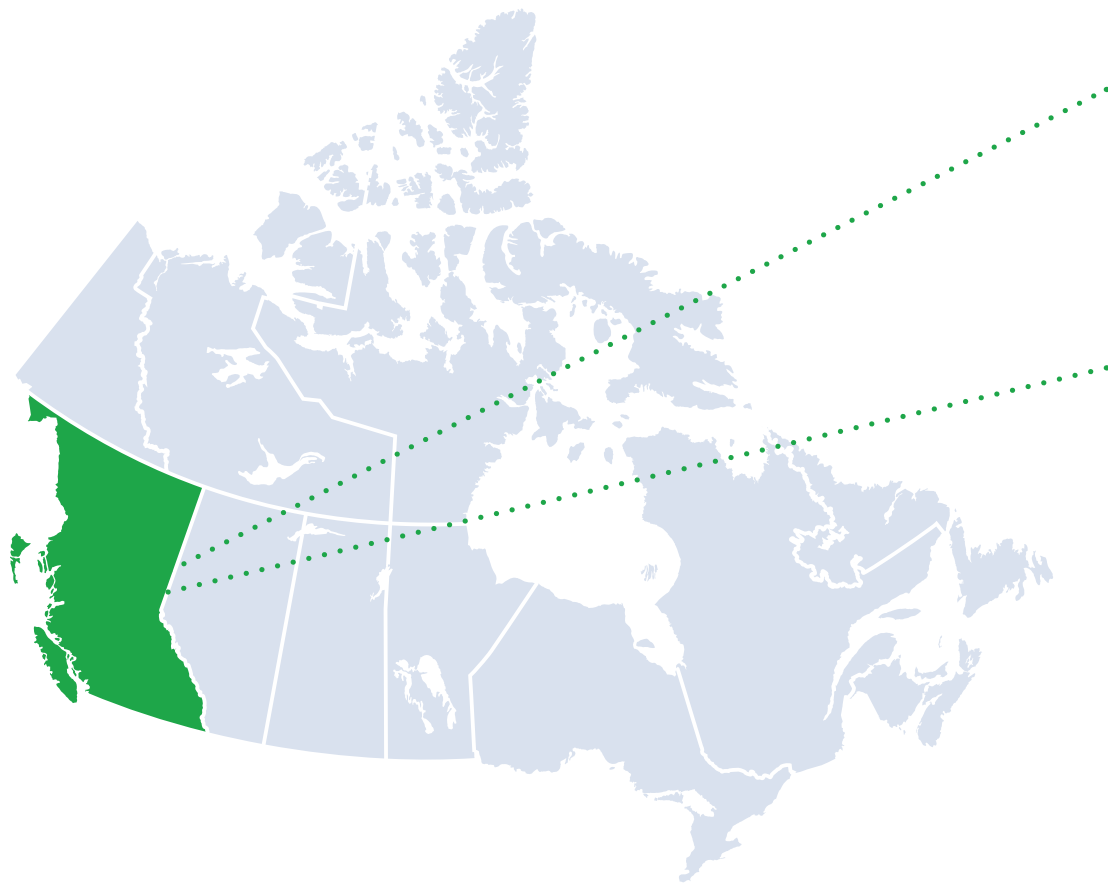
Health Information Act (HIA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You can get access to your immunizations, medications, and lab test data online through the MyHealth Records application.
- For access or corrections to information not covered in MyHealth Records, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the Government of Alberta website for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **British Columbia**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

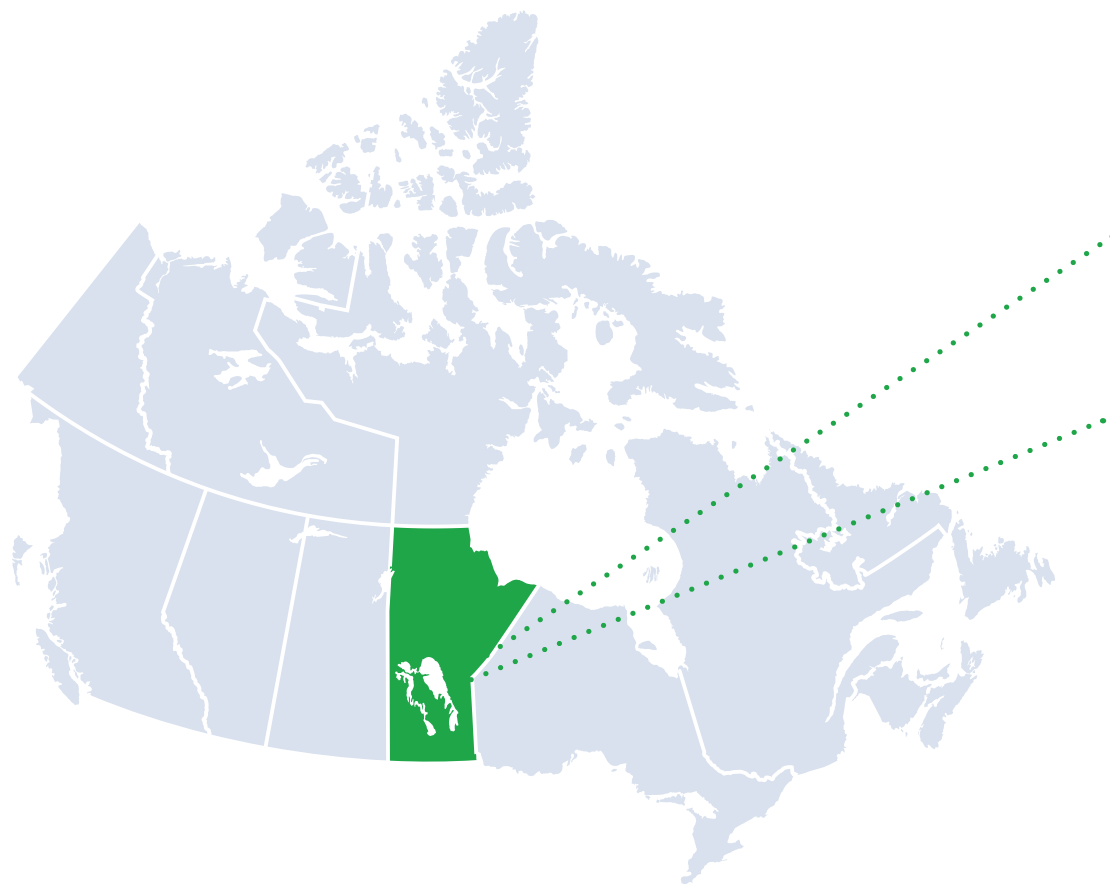
[E-Health \(Personal Health Information Access and Protection of Privacy\) Act](#)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You can access data on prescription medications, COVID-19 test results, Immunization Records and Health Visits through the [Health Gateway](#).
- For access or corrections to information not contained in Health Gateway, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [HealthLink BC](#) website for more information around accessing your data.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Manitoba**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

Personal Health Information Act  
(PHIA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Government of Manitoba](#) website for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **New Brunswick**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

Personal Health Information Privacy and Access Act (PHIPAA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick website for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in Newfoundland and Labrador



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

[Personal Health Information Act \(PHIA\)](#)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You can access immunization, medication, laboratory, medical imaging and hospital encounters data through [HEALTHe NL](#) (contains information starting in 2015, and coverage may vary across Regional Health Authorities).
- For access or corrections to information not contained within [HEALTHe NL](#), you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. See the [Newfoundland and Labrador Health and Community Services FAQ](#) document for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Nova Scotia**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

Personal Health Information Act  
(PHIA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.



# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Ontario**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

Personal Health Information  
Protection Act (PHIPA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. See the [Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario](#) website for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in Prince Edward Island



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

Health Information Act (HIA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Health PEI](#) website for more information around accessing your data.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Quebec**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

The Act respecting the sharing of certain health information;  
Regulation respecting the application of the Act respecting the sharing of certain health information.

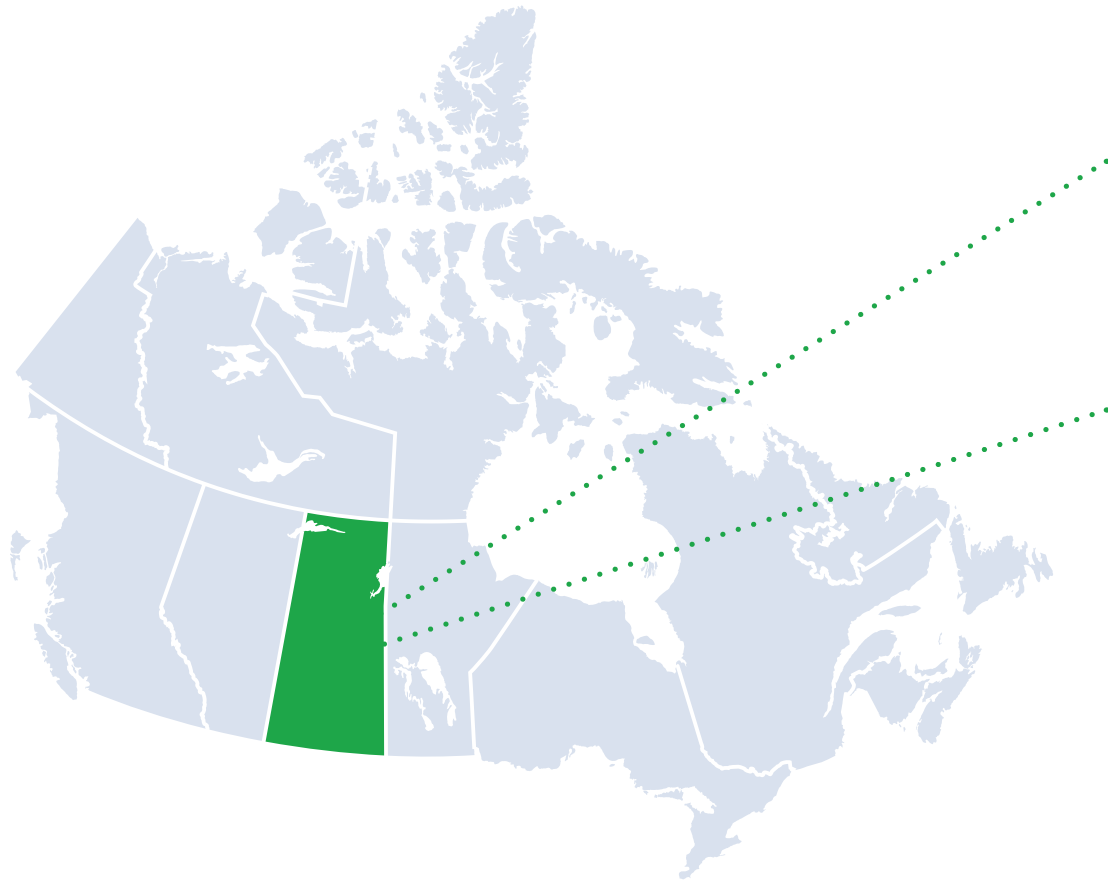


## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You can access data about medications, medical imaging results, results about your biological samples and a list of medical services received using the Québec Health Booklet.
- For access or corrections to information not covered in the Quebec Health Booklet, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.



# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Saskatchewan**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

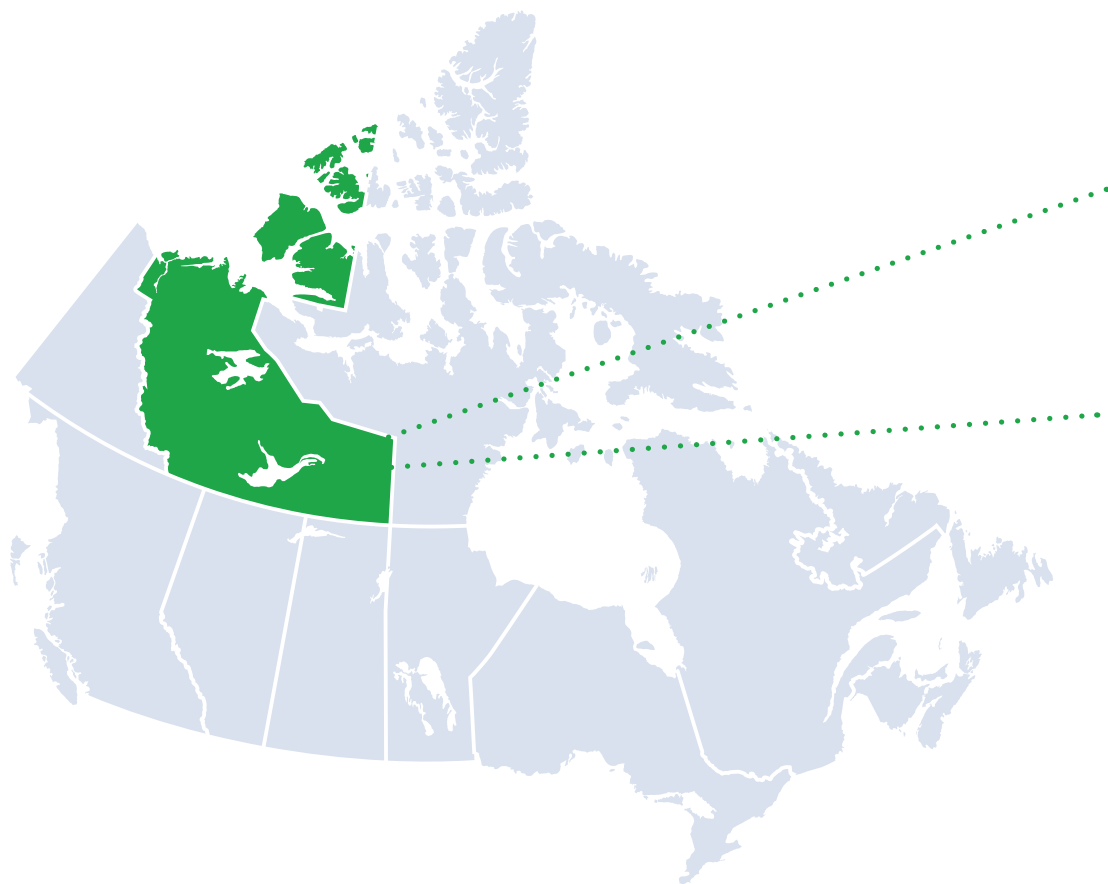
[Health Information Protection Act  
\(HIPA\)](#)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You can access your lab test results, immunization history, medical imaging reports, clinical visits and prescriptions data using the [MySaskHealthRecord](#).
- For access or corrections to information not covered in MySaskHealthRecord, you must contact the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Government of Saskatchewan](#) website for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in the Northwest Territories



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

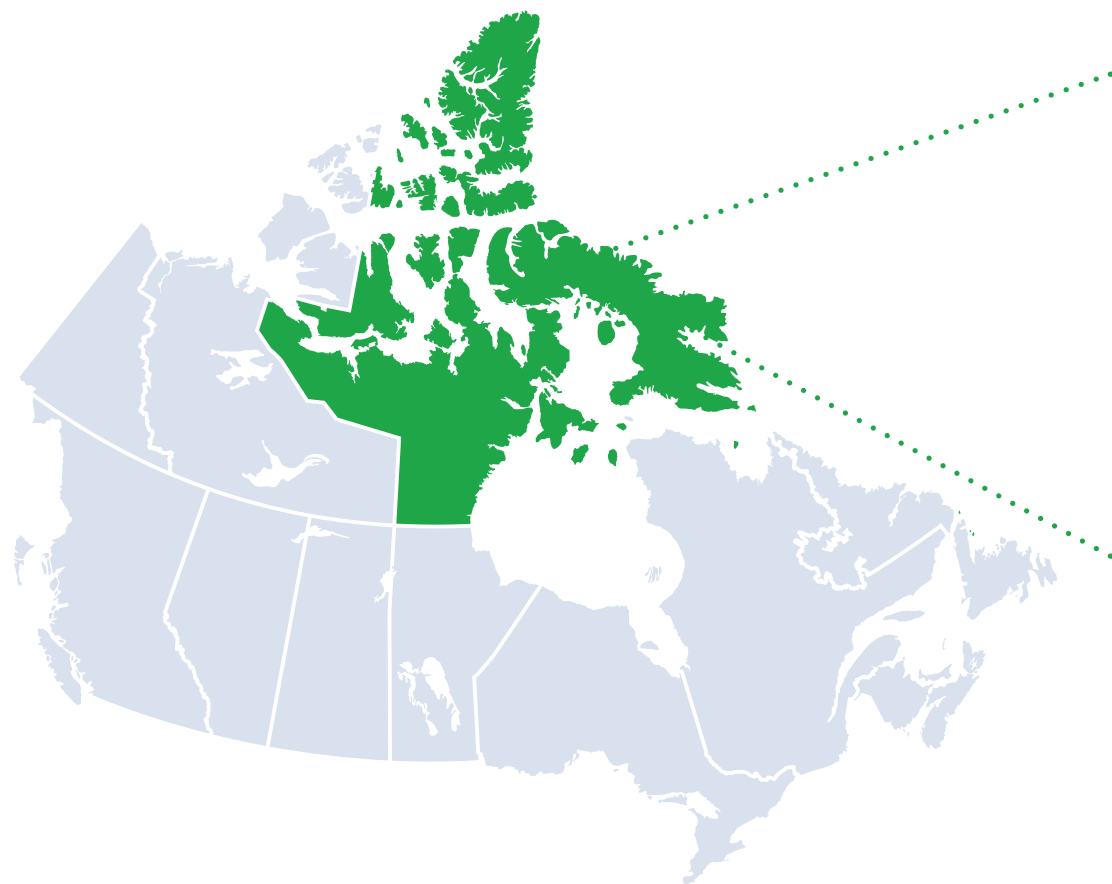
[Health Information Act \(HIA\)](#)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI. Visit the [Northwest Territories Health and Social Services](#) website for more information.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in **Nunavut**



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

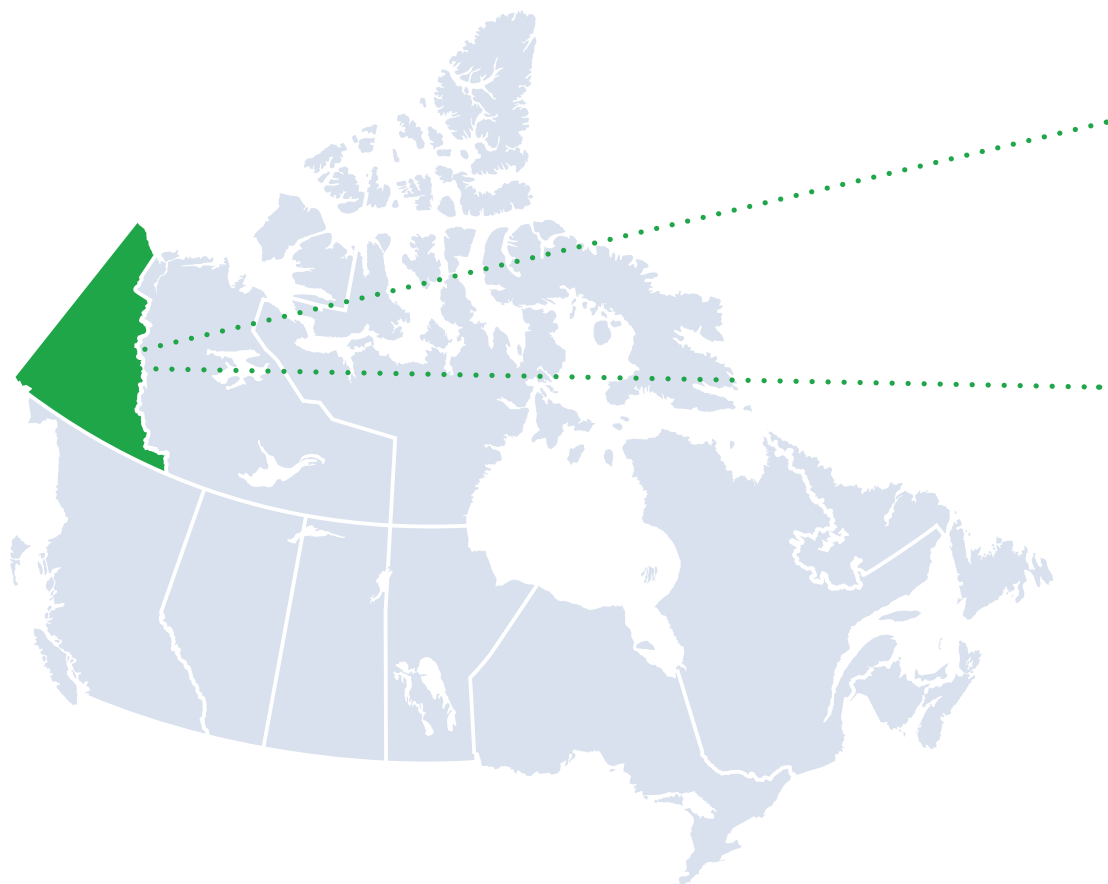
The territory does not have their own health information privacy law, but access to information (including PHI) is governed by Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPP), and for data in the private sector the federal law Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) (PIPEDA) applies.



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must request access or corrections by contacting the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family physician) that created or holds your PHI.

# Personal Health Information Privacy and Access in Yukon



## Healthcare Privacy and Protection Legislation

Health Information Privacy and Management Act (HIPMA)



## Accessing and Correcting Personal Health Information (PHI)

- You must fill out the form on the Government of Yukon site and share the same with your health care provider for accessing your data. For corrections, please direct requests to the health information custodian (e.g., hospital, clinic, family doctor) that created or holds your PHI.

# Proactively Managing **Your Health**

## Lifestyle Practices You Can Adopt\*



### Sleep

Ensuring you get enough sleep and giving your body and mind the rest they need is critical to staying healthy. According to StatsCan, adults should get seven or more hours of sleep each night<sup>1</sup>.



### Eat Well

Maintaining a healthy diet that is rich in fiber, whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, “good” or unsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids is one of the best things you can do to take a proactive role in your health.<sup>2</sup> By nourishing your body with the right food, you can reduce the likelihood of chronic illnesses and diseases.



### Educating Yourself

Taking opportunities to learn and educate yourself on different health topics (e.g., nutrition, meditation), can help you better understand how to be proactive about your well-being.



### See Your Care Provider Regularly

Attending regular checkups with your care provider can help you better understand your current health and develop a personalized plan to proactively manage it.



### Exercise

Physical activity can help with mental and physical health. The amount of physical activity you need depends on your age. Adults aged 18-64 years are recommended to have at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week<sup>2</sup>.



### Meditation and Breathing

Studies indicate that breathing can improve cognitive function, encourage positive thought processes, reduce the symptoms of anxiety and much more.<sup>3</sup> Taking full breaths can help you calm and focus your thoughts, which can help you better care for your mental well-being.<sup>4</sup>

\*Please make sure to consult your primary care provider to find out which of the above lifestyle changes or solutions could work for you.





# Digital Products and Services You Can Explore\*



## Health Tracking Applications

Health tracking applications can be used to store information from conventional tools (e.g., weight scales, thermometers and blood pressure cuffs) and provide you with a simple way to monitor and manage your health.



## Smartwatches

Smartwatches can allow you to track a variety of health metrics like activity level, heart function and stress levels. These metrics can help you be more aware of your general health and make adjustments as necessary.



## Smartphones and Smartphone Applications

Many smartphones now come with built-in activity tracking that can be used to monitor data, like the number of steps you take in a day. In addition, there are many free or paid health applications ranging from guided meditation, to nutrition tracking, to virtual health coaching that can be added to your device to support you in taking more control of your health.



## Websites

Websites exist (including this one!) that you can use to educate yourself and learn more about different health topics, including mental health, gut health, managing chronic conditions and more. These can help you learn the basics of health management and keep up-to-date with advancements in the respective areas.



\*Please make sure to consult your primary care provider to find out which of the above digital products and services could work for you.

### References:

1. StatsCan: [Duration and quality of sleep among Canadians aged 18 to 79](#)
2. Canada's Food Guide: [Physical activity and healthy eating](#)
3. Canada School of Public Service: [Mindfulness – Finding Peace in a Changing Environment](#)
4. Canadian Medical Association: [How to incorporate resilience strategies into health care training and workplace practice](#)



# Provincial and Territorial Digital Health Priorities

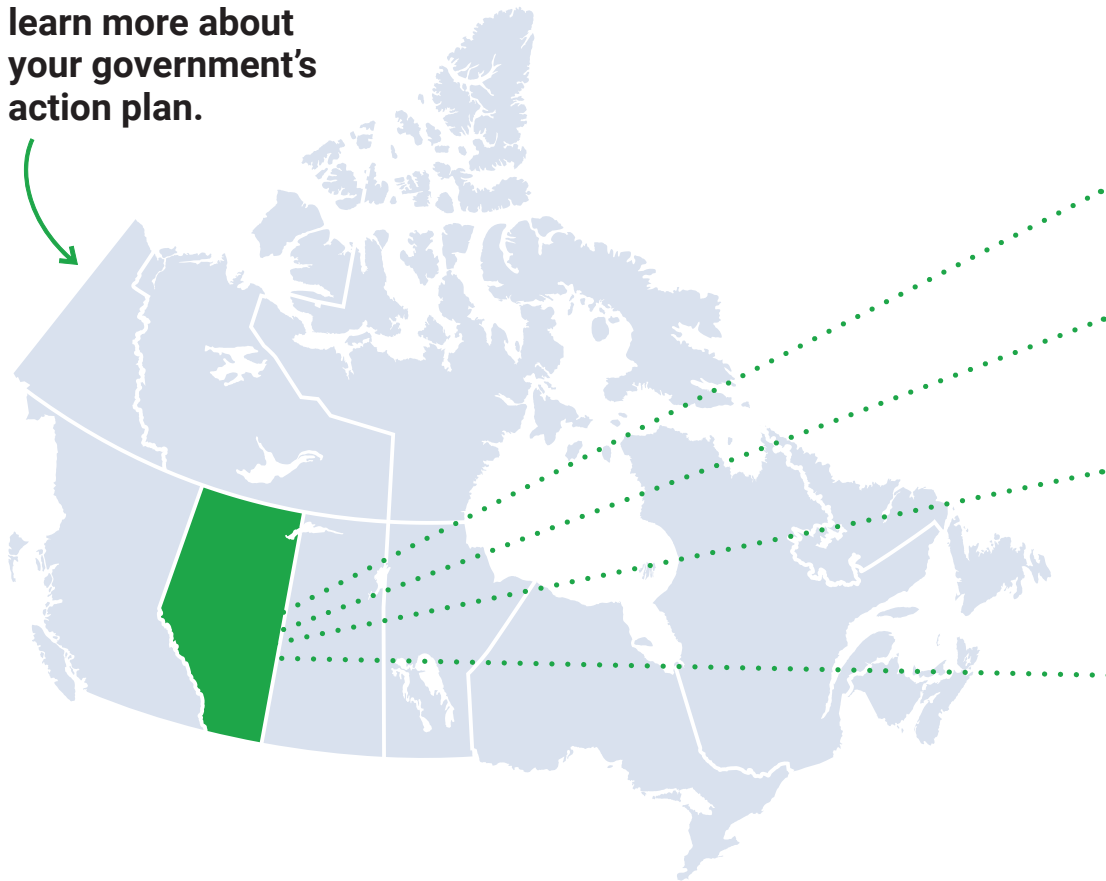
On May 3, 2020, the Prime Minister allocated \$150 Million to help provinces and territories accelerate the adoption of virtual health care tools and approaches across Canada.

**Click on your province or territory to learn more about how this money is being allocated in your region.**



# Digital Health Priorities in **Alberta**

Click on your province or territory in the map below to learn more about your government's action plan.



Establishment of an eHealth Strategy that includes virtual care



Expansion of MyHealth Records patient portal information and capabilities



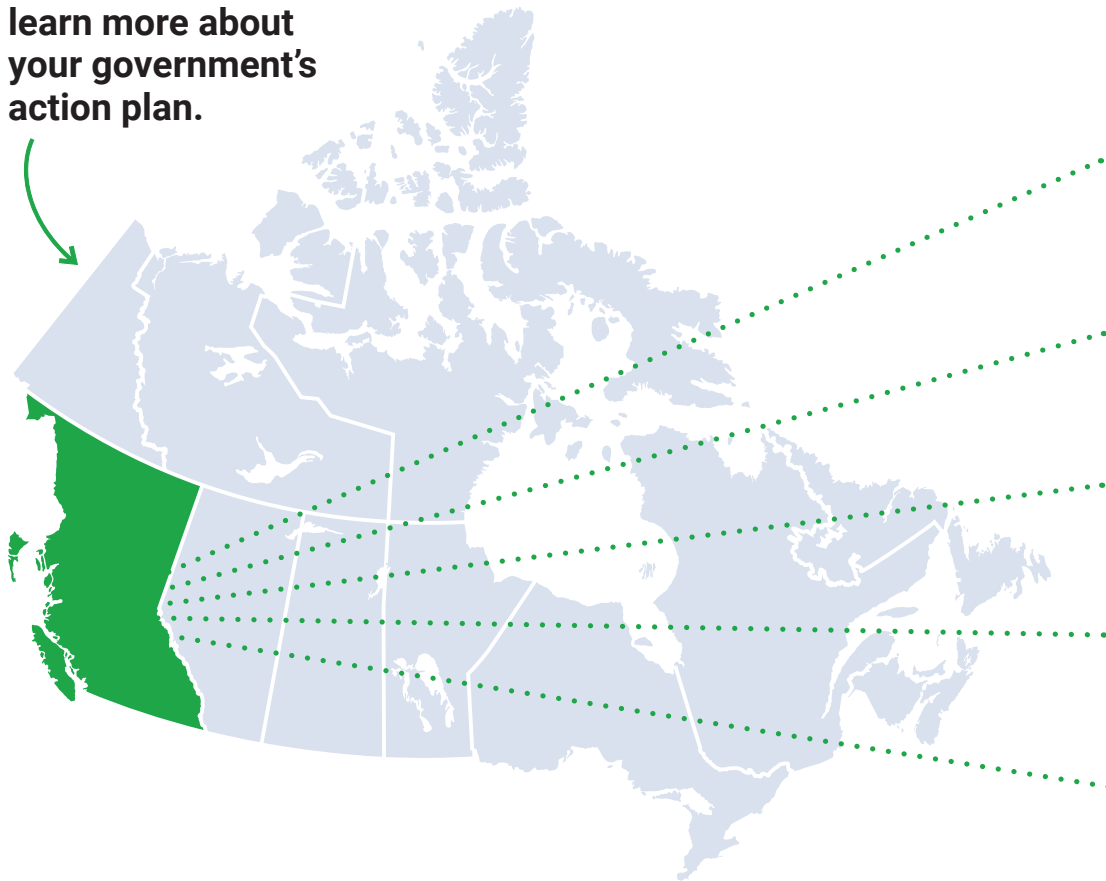
Development of secure messaging and collaboration services for Alberta



Development of a privacy and security framework for virtual care

# Digital Health Priorities in **British Columbia**

Click on your province or territory in the map below to learn more about your government's action plan.



Secure messaging and file transfer platforms or supports to enable end-to-end messaging



Secure video-conferencing technology to deliver care to patients remotely



Remote patient monitoring technologies



Patient access to COVID-19 and other lab results



Back-end supports for integration of new platforms and supports, including hardware

# Digital Health Priorities in Nova Scotia

Click on your province or territory in the map below to learn more about your government's action plan.



E-Mental Health - improving access to mental health and addictions for children, youth and adults



Online appointment booking for lab tests and diagnostic services



Strategy for Virtual Care - videoconferencing and secure messaging

# Digital Health Priorities in Ontario

Click on your province or territory in the map below to learn more about your government's action plan.



Virtual care initiatives implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic



Seamless Care Optimizing the Patient Experience (SCOPE) Program



Supporting Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) investments in innovative virtual care models



Advancing provincial virtual visit solutions standards and verification of vendor technologies



Virtual urgent care and surgical care

# Digital Health Priorities in **Prince Edward Island**

Click on your province or territory in the map below to learn more about your government's action plan.



Growth and consolidation of video visit platforms



Secure patient-provider messaging



Equity of access measures



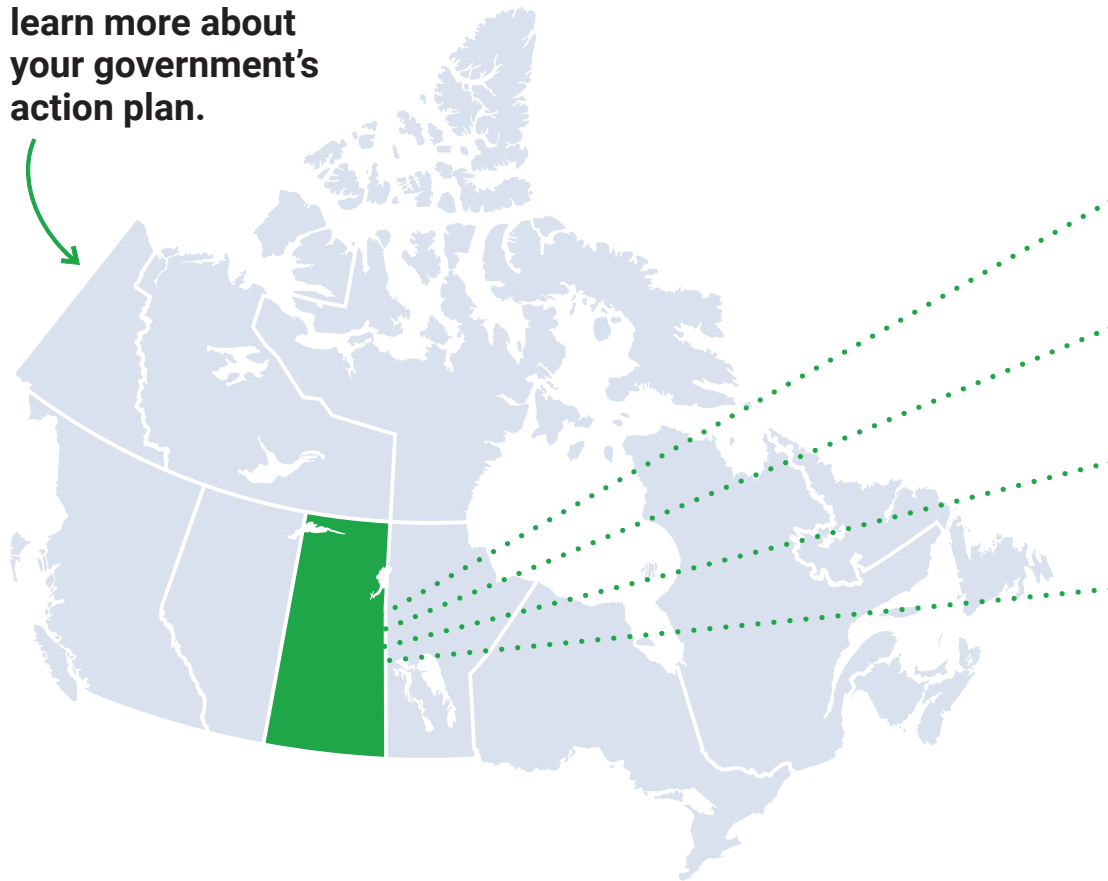
Expansion of Remote Patient Monitoring and Home Care



Infrastructure and support improvements

# Digital Health Priorities in **Saskatchewan**

Click on your province or territory in the map below to learn more about your government's action plan.



Secure clinical video conferencing



MySaskHealthRecord



Remote patient monitoring



COVID Auto dialer system



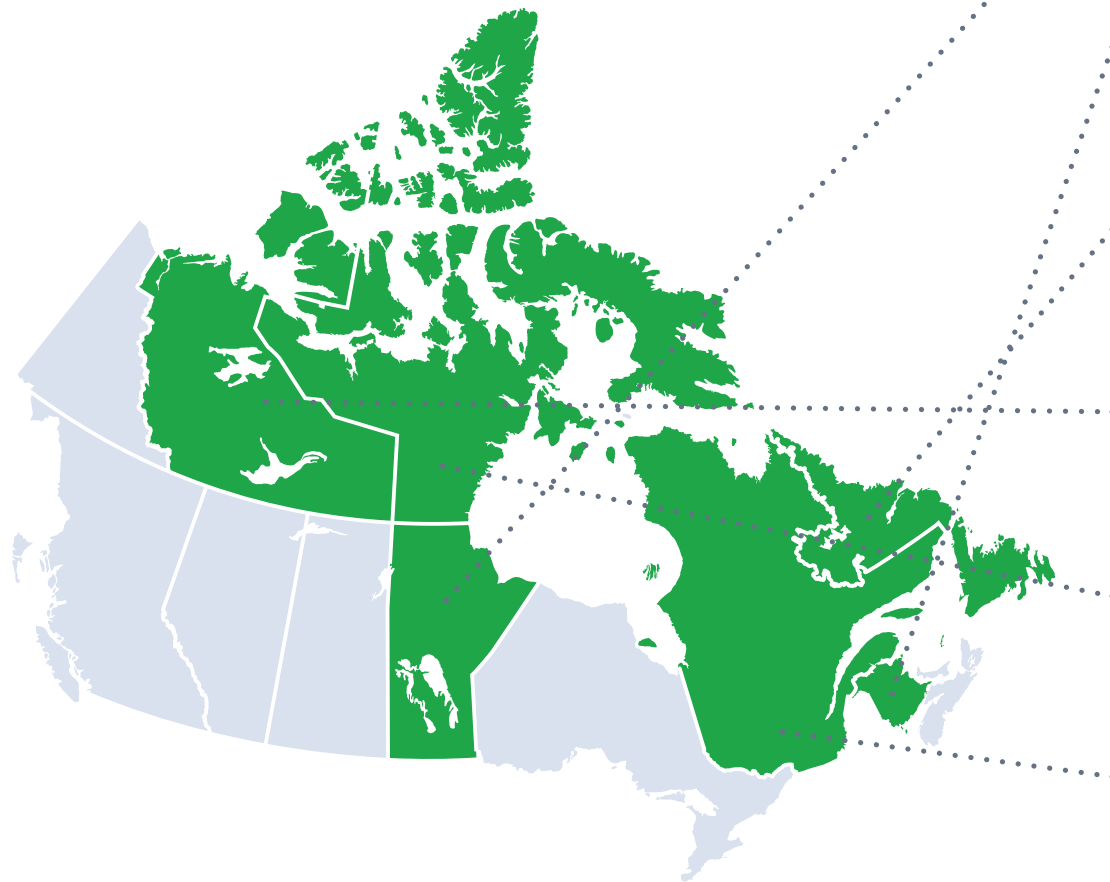
# Digital Health Priorities in Yukon

Click on your  
province or territory  
in the map below to  
learn more about  
your government's  
action plan.



1Health Yukon Initiative

# Virtual Care Action Plan Pending



## **Manitoba**

Please check link for updates on the province's action plan for the \$7M of federal funding.

## **New Brunswick**

Please check link for updates on the province's action plan for the \$5.3M of federal funding.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Please check link for updates on the province's action plan for the \$4.5M of federal funding.

## **Northwest Territories**

Please check link for updates on the territory's action plan for the \$3.1M of federal funding.

## **Nunavut**

Please check link for updates on the territory's action plan for the \$3.1M of federal funding.

## **Quebec**

No information on the action plan is available through Health Canada as of August 2021. Please check [Health Canada's website](#) for additional updates.

# The **Benefits** of Receiving Healthcare Virtually

Your ability to connect with health care providers, including doctors, nurse practitioners or therapists virtually has brought care closer to home. As virtual medical appointments become more common, Canadians' experiences have highlighted benefits you can look forward to with virtual care.

#### References - Statistics:

1. Canada Health Infoway - [Analysis of the current and potential benefits of virtual care in Canada](#)

#### References - General:

- Ontario Telehealth Network: [Virtual Doctor Appointments | eVisit for Patients - OTN.ca](#)
- Government of Quebec: [Telehealth | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)
- eHealth Saskatchewan: [Residents Telehealth \(ehealthsask.ca\)](#)
- Nova Scotia Health: [virtual\\_care\\_patient\\_information\\_guide\\_2.pdf \(nshealth.ca\)](#)



## Increased Access to Care

Virtual appointments allow you to interact with health care providers (e.g., specialists) that might have been inaccessible in the past due to distance or availability.



## Time and Money Savings

Attending an appointment from a location of your preference (e.g., home, work) can save you time and money from the reduced need to travel and take time off from work or other responsibilities. In 2019, virtual care saved Canadians 11.5 million hours and \$595 million in avoided travel costs<sup>1</sup>.



## Reduced Risk of Disease Transmission

Seeing a health care provider virtually can protect you from being exposed to potential viruses or other illnesses found in hospitals and clinics.



## Your Family's Presence

Virtual appointments make it easier for you to have support from your family or other important people (e.g., home care staff, social worker), as less travel is required on their part, and they can join the appointment from wherever is most convenient.



## More Convenient Support

Meeting with your health care provider virtually can improve support and convenience, especially if you have a chronic condition.

# Understanding Virtual Care: The Benefits and Considerations



## The Benefits of Virtual Care

As virtual medical appointments become more common, Canadians' experiences have highlighted some key benefits you can look forward to with virtual care:



### Increased Access to Care

Virtual appointments allow you to interact with health care providers (e.g., specialists) that might have been inaccessible in the past due to distance or availability.



### Time and Money Savings

Attending an appointment from a location of your preference (e.g., home, work) can save you time and money from the reduced need to travel and take time off from work or other responsibilities. In 2019, virtual care saved Canadians 11.5 million hours and \$595 million in avoided travel costs<sup>1</sup>.



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### More Convenient Support

Meeting with your health care provider virtually can improve support and convenience, especially if you have a chronic condition.



# What to Consider when using Virtual Care

Canadians' experiences with virtual care have shown that they also come with a few key considerations.



## Some Health Needs Cannot be Addressed Virtually

While seeing health care providers virtually is convenient, some health needs and conditions require in-person examinations, so virtual appointments may not be suitable in all cases.

See the [patient guide](#) from the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) for conditions that are suitable / not suitable for virtual care.



## Comfort with Technology and Technical Issues

Technology might pose challenges for new users, and come with potential technical issues (e.g., losing connection, device running out of battery). Please see our [tips](#) on setting up your technology for a virtual appointment.



## Privacy

There is a perception that communicating with a health care provider online may expose you to more privacy risks (as is the case with any online interaction) compared to an in-person appointment. Health care providers are required by provincial and territorial privacy legislation to use safeguards to minimize these risks. Learn more about privacy legislation across Canada [here](#). Additionally, you can take steps to protect your privacy. These include finding a private place where people can't overhear your conversation, using headphones during the appointment and keeping your passwords safe.

### References - Statistics:

1. Canada Health Infoway - [Analysis of the current and potential benefits of virtual care in Canada](#)

### References - Benefits:

- Ontario Telehealth Network: [Virtual Doctor Appointments | eVisit for Patients - OTN.ca](#)
- Government of Quebec: [Telehealth | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)
- eHealth Saskatchewan: [Residents Telehealth \(ehealthsask.ca\)](#)
- Nova Scotia Health: [virtual\\_care\\_patient\\_information\\_guide\\_2.pdf \(nshealth.ca\)](#)

### References - Considerations:

- Government of Alberta: [Learning About Virtual Care \(alberta.ca\)](#)
- Nova Scotia Health: [virtual\\_care\\_patient\\_information\\_guide\\_2.pdf \(nshealth.ca\)](#)
- eHealth Saskatchewan: [Residents Telehealth \(ehealthsask.ca\)](#)
- Canadian Medical Association (CMA): [Microsoft Word - Patient Virtual Care Guide\\_e04B.docx \(cma.ca\)](#)
- Mayo Clinic: [Telehealth: Technology meets health care - Mayo Clinic](#)



# Virtual Appointment. Checklist.

## Preparing for the Appointment

- Check any emails from your health care provider.
- Complete and submit any required forms (e.g., consent for virtual visit, health assessments) before the appointment.
- Ensure your device is charged.
- If required, download the software used by the practitioner for virtual visits, and test it in advance of the appointment.
- Try to be available 15 minutes before and 30 minutes after your appointment.
- Try to find a private, quiet, and well-lit place for your appointment.
- If anyone else is joining the appointment (e.g., family member, caregiver), make sure they are available during the appointment time and provide them with information (e.g., meeting link) to join the appointment.

## What to Bring to the Appointment

- Health insurance card. If your health card doesn't include a photo, you must have a supporting photo ID.
- Information related to your condition, including a list of symptoms and any recorded health data (e.g., weight, temperature, blood pressure).
- If the appointment is your first interaction with the practitioner, have your relevant health history readily available. This includes:
  - Existing health conditions or illnesses
  - Medications (prescription containers with the pharmacy label)
  - Allergies
  - Immunizations
  - Past surgeries and hospitalizations
  - Family health history
- Eyeglasses, hearing or walking aids, if needed.
- Pen and paper or other tools for taking notes.

## During the Appointment

- If the appointment is taking place over a video/ teleconference platform, log in 5-10 minutes before your meeting. Note that you may have to wait “on the line” before the practitioner joins or admits you into the virtual meeting room.
- If the appointment is over the phone, make sure you are available to answer the call. Note that the call may come from an unknown or blocked phone number.
- If asked by the practitioner, confirm your location and health card information.
- If the visit is over video, remain in front of the camera and speak clearly.
- If there is background noise, you should mute your microphone when not speaking to enhance sound quality.

## After the Appointment

- If the practitioner shares a summary of the visit following the meeting, review the summary and ask the practitioner if anything is unclear or incorrect.

### References:

- Canadian Medical Association (CMA): [Virtual Care Guide for Patients](#)
- Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre: [The ultimate checklist for virtual care appointments](#)



# Virtual Care Basics

## What is Virtual Care?

Any interaction between a patient and health care practitioner that doesn't involve direct contact. Virtual care includes video visits, telephone consultations and secure messaging (text messaging or emailing with a practitioner).



## How Can I see a Health Care Provider Virtually?

The most common forms of virtual care in Canada include phone, followed by video, and secure messaging<sup>1</sup>.

## What do Canadians Think of Virtual Care?

Canadians reported a 91% satisfaction rate when connecting with a doctor virtually, and 46% said that they would prefer a virtual method as their first option for contacting their doctor going forward<sup>2</sup>.

### References:

1. Canada Health Infoway: [Canadians' Health Care Experiences During COVID-19 | Uptake of Virtual Care](#)
2. Canadian Medical Association: [Virtual care is real care National poll shows Canadians are overwhelmingly satisfied with virtual health care](#)

## What Types of Practitioners Can I See Virtually?

You can see a variety of practitioners virtually, including:

### Physical Health:

- General Health (e.g., Family Doctors, General Practitioners, Nurse Practitioners)
- Specialist Physicians (e.g., Dermatologists, Cardiologists, Allergists, Pediatricians, Obstetrician-Gynecologists)
- Other Health Professionals: Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Dietitians, Chiropractors, Podiatrists, Osteopaths, Naturopaths, Optometrists, Pharmacists and Sleep Therapists.

### Mental Health:

- Psychotherapists
- Counselors
- Specialist Physicians (Psychiatrists)
- Psychologists
- Life Coaches

Connect with your practitioner's office to confirm if they offer virtual services.

## Learn More About Virtual Care

If you'd like to learn more, please see the links below for additional topics that can help you understand, setup, and prepare for your virtual appointments.

1. [What Should I Know Before Engaging with a Healthcare Practitioner Virtually](#)
2. [What Virtual Services Can I Access in My Province or Territory](#)
3. [How Can I Prepare for a Successful Virtual Appointment](#)
4. [Virtual Appointment Checklist](#)



# Virtual Health Services in my **Province or Territory**

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021

The demand for virtual care services increased exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to expanding services provided under public health and government funded offerings, some provincial and territorial governments extended coverage to include services provided by select non-public online virtual health platforms (websites or applications that provide access to a range of health care providers) to meet the increased demand.

While your primary health care provider (family physician or general practitioner) should be your first point of contact for ensuring continuity of care, you can also access care through public and government funded, or non-public online virtual health platforms.

**Click on the link of your province or territory for services that you can access for free with a valid health card.**



# Virtual Health Services in **Alberta** (1 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Health Link 811:** The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can dial 811 for access to registered nurses 24/7. Visit their website for more information about services provided.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

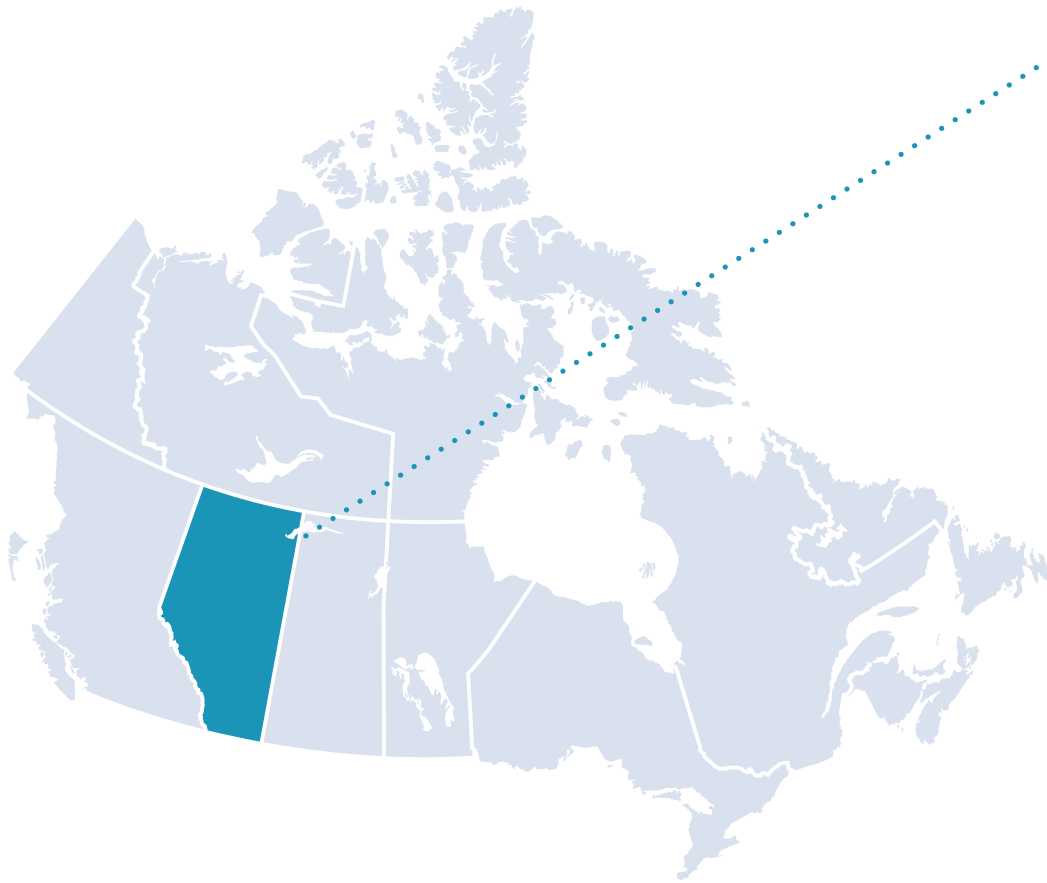
**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth)

# Virtual Health Services in **Alberta** (2 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Non-Public Virtual Health Platforms**

As of September 2021, you can access free services with a valid health card through the platforms below. These platforms are not endorsed by the province and coverage is subject to change. Hence, you are encouraged to confirm coverage prior to use.

**Maple:** The platform provides access to general practitioners. Services are available between 10 am and 8 pm MST. You can register and book an appointment through their website or app.

**Telus Health MyCare:** The application allows you to digitally monitor your health, check symptoms and connect with a medical professional. You can register and book an appointment through their app.

**Tia Health:** The platform provides access to a network of family doctors, specialists, dieticians, naturopaths, counselors, nurse practitioners, ophthalmologists, physiotherapists and more. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Virtual Clinics +:** The platform provides access to walk-in and family doctors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Walkinvirtualclinics:** The platform offers video and telephone consultations. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

# Virtual Health Services in **British Columbia** (1 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**HealthLinkBC 811:** The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can call 811 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7. Visit their website for more information about services provided.

**BounceBack:** The program provides British Columbians (15+ years of age) access to virtual mental health coaching (based on referral from a family physician, nurse practitioner, or psychiatrist) and a skill building program designed to help manage symptoms of mild to moderate depression and anxiety. Visit their website to register and for more information around services provided.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Foundry Virtual BC:** The service provides access to counselling, peer support, youth groups and caregiver groups to British Columbians aged 12-24. Download the Foundry BC App, or call 1-833-308-6379 to register or for more information.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kelty's Key:** The organization provides access to self-help mental health resources and online therapy. Visit their website for more information.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Self-Management British Columbia:** The organization provides online, telephone or mail health programs for adults living with one or multiple health conditions across BC. Visit their website or call 1-866-902-3767 for more information.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in **British Columbia** (2 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Non-Public Virtual Health Platforms**

As of September 2021, you can access free services with a valid health card through the platforms below. These platforms are not endorsed by the province and coverage is subject to change. Hence, you are encouraged to confirm coverage prior to use.

**Access Virtual:** The platform offers video visits with a family doctor or specialist. You can register and book an appointment through their website or app

**Maple:** The platform provides access to general practitioners online. Services are available between 7 am and 6 pm PT. You can register and book an appointment through their website or app.

**Medimap:** The platform offers video visits with walk-in doctors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Shopper's Drug Mart + Maple:** The company provides access to virtual care through in-store tablets at select Shopper's locations 7 days a week from 8 am to 9 pm PT. See their website to find a store offering this service near you.

**Telus Health MyCare:** The application allows you to digitally monitor your health, check symptoms and connect with a medical professional. You can register and book an appointment through their app.

**Tia Health:** The platform provides access to a network of family doctors, specialists, dieticians, naturopaths, counselors, nurse practitioners, ophthalmologists, physiotherapists and more. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Virtual Clinics +:** The platform provides access to walk-in and family doctors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Viva Care:** The platform offers access to general practitioners, specialists, pharmacists, walk-in doctors and certified counsellors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Walkinvirtualclinics:** The platform offers video and telephone consultations. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

# Virtual Health Services in **Manitoba**

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Health Links-Info Santé:** The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can call 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in **New Brunswick**

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Public and Government Funded Health Services**

**Tele-Care 811**: The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can call 811 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada**: The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line**: The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

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**Wellness Together Canada**: This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (1 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Telehealth Newfoundland 811**: The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can call 811 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada**: The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line**: The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

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# Virtual Health Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Non-Public Virtual Health Platforms**

As of September 2021, you can access free services with a valid health card through the platforms below. These platforms are not endorsed by the province and coverage is subject to change. Hence, you are encouraged to confirm coverage prior to use.

**Medicuro**: The platform offers virtual appointments with general practitioners and specialists. You can register and book an appointment through their website or app.

# Virtual Health Services in Nova Scotia

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Tele-Care 811:** The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can call 811 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).



# Virtual Health Services in **Ontario** (1 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Telehealth Ontario:** The line allows you to speak to a registered nurse who assesses symptoms and recommends next steps. Call 1-866-797-0000 to access services.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in Ontario (2 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Non-Public Virtual Health Platforms**

As of September 2021, you can access free services with a valid health card through the platforms below. These platforms are not endorsed by the province and coverage is subject to change. Hence, you are encouraged to confirm coverage prior to use.

**Appletree Medical Group:** The platform provides access to doctors (walk-in, family medicine), specialty care, and dental care. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Cover Health:** The platform provides virtual access to a doctor 7 days a week. The service is free if you're calling from Ontario and an OHIP card is not required. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**My Doctor Now:** The platform allows you to connect with a doctor online or over the phone. You can call 1-888-859-7160 or visit their website to book an appointment.

**Rocket Doctor:** The platform provides access to primary care consultations. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Telus Health MyCare:** The application allows you to digitally monitor your health, check symptoms and connect with a medical professional. You can register and book an appointment through their app.

**Tia Health:** The platform provides access to a network of family doctors, specialists, dieticians, naturopaths, counselors, nurse practitioners, ophthalmologists, physiotherapists and more. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Tulip Health:** The platform offers telephone appointments with Ontario doctors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Virtual Clinics +:** The platform provides access to walk-in and family doctors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

# Virtual Health Services in Prince Edward Island

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Telehealth PEI 811**: The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can call 811 to speak with a registered nurse 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada**: The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line**: The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone**: The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada**: This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in Quebec

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Info-Santé 811:** The line provides confidential telephone consultation service for non-urgent health issues. You can dial 811 for access to registered nurses 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). Residents of Québec can also call 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553) or text 1-855-957-5353 (24/7). Visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**LignesParents:** The organization provides parents in Quebec free and confidential mental health support. You can access help by calling 1-800-361-5085 (24/7), participating in a live chat (2 am to 10:30 pm ET) and writing to them through their website.

**Tel-Jeunes:** The organization provides young people in Quebec free and confidential mental health support. You can access help by calling 1-800-263-2266 (24/7), texting 514-600-1002 (8 am to 10:30 pm ET), participating in a live chat (8 am to 10:30 pm ET) and writing to them through their website.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in Saskatchewan (1 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Healthline 811:** The line provides confidential health and mental health information and advice. You can call 811 to speak with a registered nurse, registered psychiatric nurse or registered social worker 24/7.

**eHealth Saskatchewan:** The service links you to both specialized and general health care providers from across the province using highly secure videoconferencing technologies. The service is offered at 440 sites in 134 communities. Visit their website to find a Telehealth site near you.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

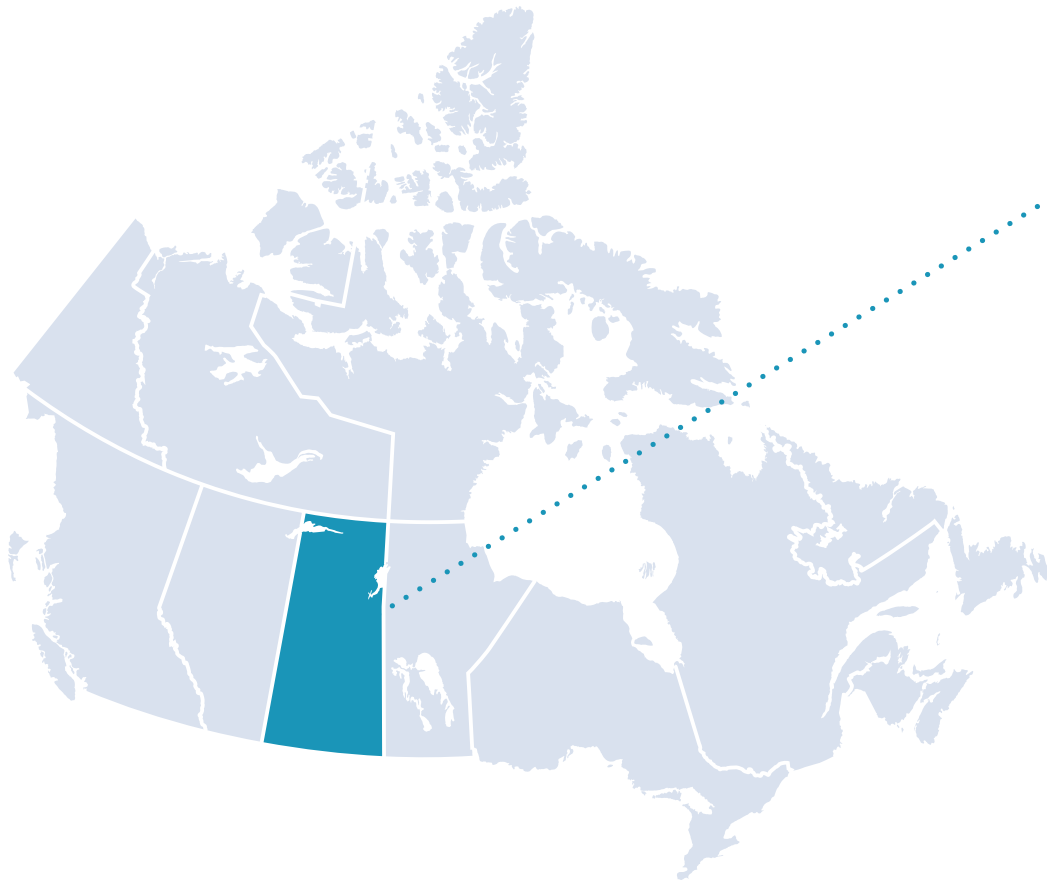
**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in **Saskatchewan** (2 of 2)

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Non-Public Virtual Health Platforms**

As of September 2021, you can access free services with a valid health card through the platforms below. These platforms are not endorsed by the province and coverage is subject to change. Hence, you are encouraged to confirm coverage prior to use.

**Lumeca**: The platform connects you to health practitioners, including doctors. You can register and book an appointment through their website.

**Telus Health MyCare**: The application allows you to digitally monitor your health, check symptoms and connect with a medical professional. You can register and book an appointment through their app.



# Virtual Health Services in the Northwest Territories

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**GNWT 811:** The line provides health information around COVID-19 and contact information for health care resources and services. You can call 811 or 1-833-378-8297 (if outside NWT) from 8 am to 6 pm MT to access help.

**NWT HealthNet:** The service connects you with health care providers in locations outside your home community through secure video conferencing. The service is available at 90 telehealth sites across NWT. Ask your health care provider for more information.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in Nunavut

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## **Public and Government Funded Health Services**

**Nunavut Telehealth:** The service provides you access to health services, including specialty care not available in your home community. Ask your health care provider for more information.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# Virtual Health Services in Yukon

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021



Click on the links below to learn more about the options available to you.

## Public and Government Funded Health Services

**Healthline 811:** The line provides confidential health information and advice. You can dial 811 or 1-604-215-4700 (when calling from a satellite phone) for access to registered nurses 24/7.

**Crisis Services Canada:** The line provides crisis support. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call the Canada Suicide Prevention Service at 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or text 45645 (4 pm to 12 am ET). You can also visit their website to find distress centers and crisis organizations near you.

**Hope for Wellness Help Line:** The line provides Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention with access to experienced and culturally sensitive counselors 24/7 by calling 1-855-242-3310 or visiting their website.

**Kids Help Phone:** The line provides Canadians aged 5-29 with access to confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 or texting CONNECT to 686868 across Canada.

**Wellness Together Canada:** This organization provides online resources, tools, applications and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals 24/7 across Canada. You can access services through their website, or by calling 1-866-585-0445 (Adults) or 1-888-668-6810 (Youth).

# What is Virtual Care?



## What is Virtual Care?

Advances in communication technology have allowed for the expansion of care beyond the four walls of a clinician's office, and today, virtual care is defined as: **any interaction between a patient and healthcare practitioner that doesn't involve direct contact. Virtual care includes video visits, telephone consultations and secure messaging (text messaging or emailing with a practitioner).**

While a variety of communication platforms can be used to deliver care virtually, the most common forms in Canada include phone, followed by video and secure messaging<sup>1</sup>.

## Brief History of Virtual Care

"Canada was an early pioneer in the development of virtual care through the work of Dr. Maxwell House of Memorial University of Newfoundland in the 1970s; he used the telephone to consult with patients in remote locations across Newfoundland and Labrador"<sup>2</sup>. While some forms of virtual care are decades old, this method of health care delivery wasn't widely adopted until the COVID-19 pandemic, when physical distancing measures to reduce virus transmission were implemented. In the first six months of 2021, 50 per cent of visits to family physicians were done virtually<sup>1</sup>.

## What Types of Health Care Providers Can I See Virtually?

As virtual care has become more common, many practitioners have adapted their practices to offer virtual appointments. Although the availability and type of virtual offerings vary across individual providers, examples of practitioners you might be able to see virtually include:



### Physical Health

- **General Health:** Family Physicians, General Practitioners and Nurse Practitioners
- **Specialist Physicians:** Dermatologists, Cardiologists, Allergists, Pediatricians and Obstetrician-Gynecologists
- **Other Health Professionals:** Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Dieticians, Chiropractors, Podiatrists, Osteopaths, Naturopaths, Optometrists, Pharmacists and Sleep Therapists.



### Mental Health

- Psychotherapists, Counselors, Specialist Physicians (Psychiatrists), Psychologists and Life Coaches.



# Can I Access Virtual Care Without a Smartphone or Computer?

Virtual care includes video visits and telephone consultations. While a smartphone, tablet or computer is required for a video appointment, virtual appointments can also be held over the phone. Contact your healthcare practitioner to discuss your situation and how they can accommodate you.

## Additional Resources

This article provides a high-level overview of virtual care. If you'd like to learn more, please read on for additional topics that can help you understand, set up and prepare for your virtual appointments.

1. [What Should I Know Before Engaging with a Healthcare Practitioner Virtually](#)
2. [What Virtual Services Can I Access in My Province or Territory](#)
3. [How Can I Prepare for a Successful Virtual Appointment](#)
4. [Virtual Appointment Checklist](#)

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### References:

1. Canada Health Infoway: [Canadians' Health Care Experiences During COVID-19 | Uptake of Virtual Care](#)
2. Canadian Medical Association: [Virtual Care in Canada](#)

