

# OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare

## Key Facts for Patients and Families

### What is OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare?

Beginning January 1, 2018, the province will provide free prescription drug coverage for children and youth aged 24 and under, regardless of family income.

Under OHIP+, over four million Ontario children and youth will have access to over 4,400 medications and other drug products. This will help many families access medications their children need to stay healthy at no cost – no co-payment or annual deductible.

Enrollment in OHIP+ will be automatic, based on age. There are no upfront costs for eligible medications. Those who are eligible for OHIP+ will only need their health card number and a valid prescription from their doctor or nurse practitioner when they visit their pharmacist.

### What drugs will be covered?

OHIP+ will cover all drugs currently covered through the Ontario Drug Benefit program. This includes more than 4,400 drug products listed on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary/Comparative Drug Index. Additional drugs are also eligible for funding through the Exceptional Access Program.

Examples of common drug products used by children and youth, age 24 and under that will be covered by OHIP+ include:

- Antibiotics to treat infections
- Inhalers for asthma
- Various insulins, oral diabetic medications and diabetes test strips
- Antidepressants
- Epilepsy drugs
- Medications to treat mental health conditions
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) drugs
- Drugs to treat some childhood cancers and other rare conditions

Visit the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary/Comparative Drug Index at [www.formulary.health.gov.on.ca/formulary/](http://www.formulary.health.gov.on.ca/formulary/) to find out if a drug is listed on the formulary or ask your pharmacist for help.

### What is the Exceptional Access Program?

The Exceptional Access Program enables access to drugs not funded on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, for example, some medications used to treat inflammatory bowel disease, juvenile arthritis, cancer and other conditions, or where no appropriate alternative is available on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary.

Under OHIP+ doctors and nurse practitioners are required to submit a request for coverage through the Exceptional Access Program process on behalf of their patient.

Children/youth with an approved Exceptional Access Program request will be fully covered for the cost of their medications.

For more information on the Exceptional Access Program, visit [ontario.ca/page/applying-exceptional-access-program](http://ontario.ca/page/applying-exceptional-access-program).

### **My child is currently on a drug that is funded by a private insurance plan. Will my child still be covered under OHIP+?**

If the drug is listed on the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary/Comparative Drug Index, coverage will be provided through OHIP+.

If the drug is available through the Exceptional Access Program, your child must qualify for coverage.

If the drug is not currently funded through the Ontario Drug Benefit program, it will not be funded through OHIP+. In this case, you are encouraged to speak with your prescriber about other treatments which may be covered.

Alternatively, the drug may be covered by a third party, such as private insurance.

### **If my child was already receiving drug benefits through the Ontario Drug Benefit program, what does OHIP+ mean for my family?**

Your child may currently receive drug benefits through the Ontario Drug Benefit program if:

- Your child or family receives social assistance (Ontario Disability Support Program and/or Ontario Works)
- They reside in a home for special care or long-term care home
- They receive professional home care services
- Your family is enrolled in the Trillium Drug Program.

Children and youth already enrolled in the Ontario Drug Benefit program will continue to have access to the same medications that they are currently covered for. They will also benefit from the introduction of OHIP+, which would eliminate any upfront costs such as co-payments and/or an annual deductible. These changes will be automatic – there is no need to contact the Ontario Public Drug Programs to ensure that your child will benefit.

### **How does OHIP+ affect the Trillium Drug Program?**

The Trillium Drug Program is for people who spend approximately 3 to 4 per cent or more of their after-tax household income on prescription-drug costs. For Trillium Drug Program recipients, there would be no change to their annual deductible as a result of the introduction of OHIP+.

Trillium Drug Program households with members age 24 and under would still have their incomes factored into deductible calculations (income of all household members will count towards establishing the deductible). However, Trillium Drug Program households would have no out-of-pocket expenses for children age 24 and under to contribute toward meeting the deductible.

Individuals who are 24 years of age and are currently enrolled in the Trillium Drug

Program will have OHIP+ coverage beginning January 1, 2018, until their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Ontario government will contact individuals prior to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday to ensure those who still need drug coverage enrol in the Trillium Drug Program.

### **Can you opt out of OHIP+?**

All Ontario children and youth between the ages of 0-24 will automatically be covered under OHIP+. An individual who does not wish to receive coverage can opt-out by contacting: ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161

### **For more information:**

General OHIP+ questions or comments:  
Email us at [OHIPplus@ontario.ca](mailto:OHIPplus@ontario.ca).

Ontario Drug Benefit program:  
Visit [www.ontario.ca/page/get-coverage-prescription-drugs](http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-coverage-prescription-drugs)

Ontario Drug Benefit  
Formulary/Comparative Drug Index:  
To learn more about the 4,400+ drug products covered through the Ontario Drug Benefit program, visit:  
[www.formulary.health.gov.on.ca/formulary/](http://www.formulary.health.gov.on.ca/formulary/)

Ontario Health Card:  
If you need information on how to get an Ontario Health Card please visit:  
[ontario.ca/page/health-cards](http://ontario.ca/page/health-cards) or contact ServiceOntario at 416-327-7567 (GTA), 1-800-664-8988 (toll-free in Ontario only) or 1-800-387-5559 (TTY).