

ONTARIO

Province Launches New Tool to Connect People to Nurses and Other Health Services from Anywhere at Any Time

April 25, 2022

As part of its plan to stay open, the Ontario government and Ontario Health have launched [Health Connect Ontario](#), a new tool that will allow Ontarians to call or chat online with a registered nurse and find the health care services and information they need all in one, easy-to-use website.

Health Connect Ontario will replace the former Telehealth Ontario, adding enhanced online tools and allowing individuals to call 811 or visit the website 24 hours a day, seven days a week to get health advice, help navigate health services and find information. This will help Ontarians avoid unnecessary visits to emergency departments and unneeded delays in accessing care, helping to preserve hospital capacity for when it is needed most so that the province can stay open.

"As part of our government's plan to stay open by building a better, more resilient health care system, we're connecting Ontarians with nurses and the high-quality health services they need from anywhere at any time," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "This new modern service offers more choice and convenience for Ontarians seeking care and information, whether they have a primary care provider or not. It will help keep more people out of hospital and preserve beds for those who need them most."

[Health Connect Ontario](#) brings patients to a single source where they can easily:

- Speak to or chat online with a registered nurse
- Get help with finding a primary care provider if they don't have one
- Get an initial assessment and health advice
- Use a symptom assessment tool to understand their health concerns and how to access care
- Get connected to mental health and addictions services
- Find local health services, such as home and community care or caregiver support
- Get connected to a specialized health professional if they have concerns about food and healthy eating, breastfeeding or how to quit smoking
- Get general guidance through their health care journey

By calling 811, Ontarians will be able to speak to a qualified health professional, such as a registered nurse, day or night, in English and French, with translation support also offered in other languages. Any calls made to Telehealth Ontario will be automatically re-directed to the new service.

The province will expand Health Connect Ontario's features and offerings over time to better coordinate care and services to Ontarians. Ontario will continue to work closely with health sector partners to harness their expertise and insights on how best to enhance Health Connect Ontario to better serve Ontarians.

"Health Connect Ontario has been designed in collaboration with patients and communities from across the province, creating a service that provides convenient, real-time access to health care information and services," said Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health. "This is part of our commitment to ensuring services are patient-centred and promote equitable access to health care for Ontarians."

Health Connect Ontario and 811 are for non-urgent health care information, advice and referrals, and personal health information of people using the services is secure and protected at all times. This service will not replace 911, which should still be used for a medical emergency.

Quick Facts

- The number for Health Connect Ontario is 811 and it can be accessed by mobile phone, telephone landline or teletypewriter (TTY.)
- Telehealth and other Ontario health care service numbers will continue to operate, including numbers to find a local doctor or nurse practitioner, support to quit smoking and a referral for vaping cessation services, nutrition counselling by a registered dietitian, breastfeeding assistance, colorectal cancer screening and refugee health supports. Those Telehealth and Ontario health care service numbers will reference the new service, and will be accessible via 811.
- The vision is for digital and virtual care initiatives led by Ontario Health Teams to operate in synergy with the new service the government is creating. Ontario Health Teams will continue to be key partners in governance and design as this service evolves over time.
- Better Access Alliance, led by Orion Health, was the successful bidder consortium to help develop Health Connect Ontario.
- Digital First for Health is part of Ontario Onwards: Ontario's COVID-19 Action Plan for a People-Focused Government which includes more than 30 projects that are changing the way people and businesses interact with government.

Additional Resources

- Improving health care in Ontario
- For resources in multiple languages to help local communication efforts in responding to COVID-19, visit Ontario's COVID-19 communication resources webpage
- Visit Ontario's COVID-19 information website to learn more about how the province continues to protect the people of Ontario from the virus.
- For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOLine at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)