

BRIDGING GAPS

Equitable Healthcare Access for Migrants in Alberta



Educate - Organize - Mobilize

Why is This an Issue?

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- Many migrants who come to Canada legally lose their documentation status for various reasons:
 - Their visas are dependent on their employer, who have the power to revoke it
 - Many cannot to return to their countries for reasons (war, violence, or extreme poverty)
- There are approximately 70,000 undocumented migrant workers in Alberta and up to 500,000 in Canada, and many more documented migrants who face many social barriers to health care
- Without documentation, such as an Health Care Number, undocumented migrants lose the ability to access crucial programs such as:
 - Provincial insurance, which restricts access to or makes it unaffordable to visit:
 - Hospitals, family physicians and walk-in clinics
 - Publically funded vaccines (annual flu shot, COVID 19)
- #AHS4all
 - Sign the petition hosted by Migrante Alberta
 - To make healthcare accessible to uninsured individuals (migrant workers, newcomers)



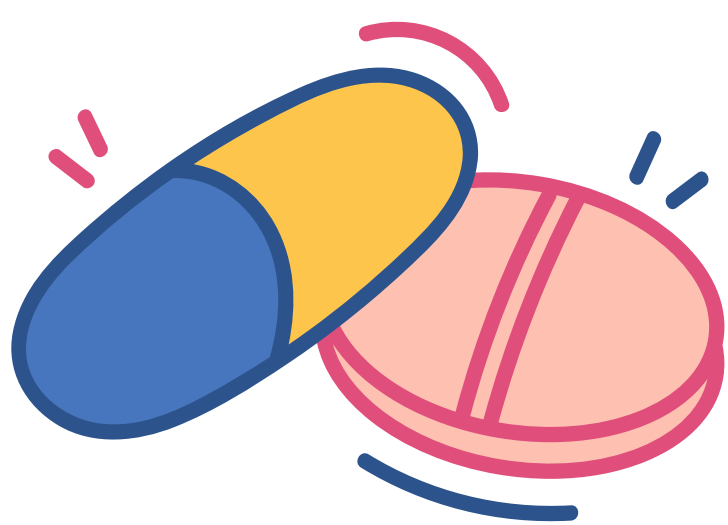
Pharmacy Services

What issues do pharmacies face?

- Many migrants lack both insurance and health care numbers, as a result, they cannot be charged for many services.
- Without a health care number, many services are restricted and continuity of care becomes difficult due to a lack of prior medical records - there is no NetCare to see prior medications, nor access to publicly funded vaccines!
- Pharmacists are unable to prescribe medications such as narcotics and other restricted medications. This poses a risk of under-treatment of very real conditions!

How can pharmacists help?

- Pharmacists can provide care in minor ailments, and some pharmacists provide specialized care in areas such as hypertension and diabetes. These services can be provided for free, and without identification (most of the time)
- Pharmacists are able to prescribe most medications - they can extend prescriptions, decrease dispensing fees for patients, initiate new or emergency medications. Many pharmacies also provide free delivery, which helps with cost/transportation!
- Pharmacists must abide by their Code of Ethics. This includes Principle 1: Hold the wellbeing of the patient to be [their] primary concern



Pharmacy specific resources:

- Major pharmacy chains have Care Clinics which can provide general health advice and minor ailment care without the need of a provincial health care or insurance. (Shoppers Drug Mart, Mint Health + Drugs, and Rexall). Note that certain services may include a charge.
- If the migrant has legal documentation, the Government of Canada can provide temporary drug and health care coverage called the "Interim Federal Health Program"
- Shoppers Drug Mart - care for chronic conditions, labs & testing, medication management, minor illness, minor injuries, travel health, vaccines & injections
 - 10907 82nd Ave NW
 - 10116 150 St NW
 - 254 87 Ave and 156 St
 - 3812 118 Ave

Physician/Clinician Services



Scan Here To Visit Migrante

What issues do physicians face?

- Most clinical services provided by physicians are billed towards provincial health-care plans. Therefore, they must charge the patients directly for their services if they lack proper documentation. These services can be very expensive!
- Many family and walk-in clinics are extremely busy and full - Those that do help migrants may be unable to take on new patients

How can physicians help?

- Physicians must abide by their Code of Ethics: [Physicians should] Consider first the well-being of the patient; always act to benefit the patient and promote the good of the patient. If they are unable to help, they should attempt to find appropriate resources instead.
- If the condition is not serious, physicians should refer migrants to a pharmacy they trust can manage the patient's condition.
- If physicians know of clinics that are willing to, and able to help, they should refer migrants to them!

Physician and other clinical resources:

- There are many numbers that can be contacted that are free for everyone!
 - [8-1-1] for general health advice (personal information and fees may incur after being triaged)
 - [2-1-1] for general social services (food, newcomer support, mental health, crisis resources, etc.)
 - [9-1-1] for emergency services. No one will be denied healthcare in an emergency situation! (may have associated fees or taken into social work)
- New Canadians Health Centre Edmonton (<https://www.nchcedmonton.org/>)
 - Family doctors, nurses, specialists including a paediatrician, therapists, an immunization clinic, and other health-care services holistic healthcare for refugees and immigrants
- Shine dental clinic
 - A volunteer, student-run dental clinic that provides free dental care (extractions, fillings, root canals, cleanings) to low-income families, open on Saturdays
 - <https://www.shinedentistry.org>

Other Resources



Wellness Together Canada (<https://www.wellnesstogether.ca/en-ca/>)

- Mental health support
- Always free, private and confidential, available 24/7,
- 1-866-585-0445 (for adults), 1-888-668-6810 (for youth)
- Call, Skype, FaceTime, Google Voice

New Canadians Health Centre Edmonton (<https://www.nchcedmonton.org/>)

- Family doctors, nurses, specialists including a paediatrician, therapists, an immunization clinic, and other health-care services
- Holistic healthcare for refugees and immigrants

Momentum Counseling Services 9562 82 Avenue Edmonton

- Contact: 780-757-0900
- They use a sliding scale based on monthly income (no papers needed). Will NOT turn away anyone who needs care.
- free group counseling, virtual (via Zoom) or in-person sessions, schedule appointments online or by phone
- Intake Form: requires a phone number, email (if virtual) and emergency contact.

Migrante

- non-profit advocacy and self help organization
- help with healthcare fees and provide referrals
- advocate and campaign on migrant issues

Basic Need Services

(<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page16163.aspx>)

- Free Food in Alberta Directories for emergency food programs

Bissell Centre (<https://bissellcentre.org>)

- for housing, employment, mental health and other supports