

Patient Policies of our Medical Clinic

Location and Parking

The medical clinic's address is:

**9 Eric Devlin Lane, Suite 105
Perth, Ontario
K7H 0C4**

The clinic is located at the corner of Scotch Line (Hwy #10) and Rideau Ferry Rd.

Parking is available to visitors and patients of the clinic and health centre. There is a flat rate fee of \$2 to park on premises. **The medical clinic doesn't control parking rates nor does it collect revenue from parking.**

If patients prefer not to pay for parking, they are welcome to find street parking and walk to the clinic from there. Vehicles shall not temporarily stop or park along Eric Devlin Lane as this is a fire lane and must be kept clear at all times. Additionally, vehicles shall not temporarily stop or park in front of the fenced waste enclosure.

Appointments and Clinic Hours

All visits must be scheduled in advance, without exception. We are unable to accommodate walk-in patients.

The clinic is open for scheduled appointments ***Monday to Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.*** It may be possible to schedule a same-day appointment for an issue that is more urgent in nature, please call the clinic to speak with the receptionist about same-day appointment availability.

Please inform the receptionist of the general nature of the medical problem for which an appointment is being made so as to properly schedule the visit and so our clinical team can adequately prepare. Please bring a valid OHIP health insurance card to each appointment.

In most cases, an appointment with the physician will be obtained. However, physicians are not in-office 5 days per week as they have commitments outside of their family practices. If a patient's physician is unavailable, however, or if the situation requires quick management, we may suggest an appointment with another physician or member of our medical team, subject to availability.

Our medical team is composed of medical students, family medicine residents, and nurses. In some cases, when indicated and when no same-day appointments are available, patients may be directed to either call 9-1-1 or visit the nearest Emergency Department.

We try our best to see patients at their appointed time. Unfortunately, given the unpredictability of some medical problems and/or unplanned staff absences, there may be occasional delays.

We ask that patients arrive 15 minutes before their scheduled appointment so that they may be checked in, brought to the exam room, and so that the nurse or medical office assistant may take vital signs and obtain information pertinent to the visit before the doctor comes in.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of the services for which patients may see their healthcare provider:

- Regular or follow-up visit
- Same-day semi-urgent issue
- Medication renewal
- Infant/child check-up
- Periodic health exam
- Counseling
- Surgical procedure
- IUD insertion and removal
- Prenatal follow-up
- Postpartum visit
- Follow-up of complex diseases such as diabetes or heart disease.

Patients may find it helpful and beneficial to prepare for an appointment ahead of time by jotting down what they would like to discuss during the appointment.

Additionally, bring a notepad to the appointment and take notes about what is discussed and decided with the physician. These notes may serve as a reference to help patients remember the outcomes and/or course of action following an appointment.

The majority of appointments are 15-minutes in length. If patients come with a list of multiple issues, physicians will likely not be able to address all of the medical concerns in one appointment and will prioritize what they consider to be the most time-sensitive. Another appointment will need to be booked in the future to discuss the remaining concerns as we cannot offer a longer appointment.

OceanMD: Electronic Messages and Reminders

We send electronic messages and reminders using a platform called *OceanMD*. This allows us to securely send reminders, messages and attachments (eg. requisitions, notes, results, etc.) to patients as well as invite them to complete forms and questionnaires online before appointments.

Email appointment reminders are offered as a courtesy. It remains the patient's responsibility to manage appointments once given one.

To send messages and reminders, we need an email address on file and consent to communicate electronically. Please ask the receptionist how to sign up for this helpful tool. Once signed up, to ensure that these emails go to the inbox, do not flag them as spam.

Note that patients will not receive an email appointment reminder for any appointment scheduled less than 48 hours ahead of time or if the appointment is with a nurse only (eg. injections, Paps, suture removal, etc.)

OceanMD: Online Appointment Booking

In an effort to reduce overall call volumes and minimize the administrative time spent on simply booking appointments, all providers are set up with online appointment booking via *OceanMD*. It's simple, click the "Book Online" button at the top of our website's homepage to view appointment availability and to book an appointment.

Please choose from the categories available to ensure the appointment is booked for the appropriate amount of time. If there's no category for the type of appointment needed, please call us so the appointment can be booked appropriately.

We strongly encourage patients with access to the internet to use this easy-to-use and helpful tool. It will help minimize unpredictable and sometimes very long wait times over the phone, which can be frustrating.

Masks

If patients are experiencing symptoms of upper respiratory tract infection or any communicable disease, they will be asked to wear a mask while inside the clinic. We may also ask patients to sit in the larger waiting area in the atrium. This helps minimize the spread of infection and promotes the health and safety of all other patients and staff.

Missed Appointments and Late Arrivals

An appointment is time that is put aside for each patient. Patients who miss appointments without 24-hour's notice will be charged directly. The appointment card we offer when the appointment is booked in-office serves as a reminder. Additionally, we offer the option of receiving appointment reminders via email using a secure messaging platform called *OceanMD*. Please make sure to take note of the appointment when scheduling it by telephone.

If patients do not check-in within 5 minutes of the start of the appointment, we may not be able to continue with the appointment as planned. It may also mean that the appointment will need to be rescheduled.

Repeat and frequent missed appointments due to lateness and/or cancellations without enough notice may result in termination of the patient-physician relationship and exclusion from the clinic.

Waiting is a Nuisance

No one likes to wait, we understand. Our physicians have multiple demands on their time including unforeseen emergencies and patients requiring extra time. When it is their turn, each patient will be given the same care and attention. We appreciate patience and understanding.

Services Insured by Health Insurance

Services covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) will only be offered if a valid health card is presented at each visit. The Ontario government requires us to provide this information for each visit. Patients already registered who do not have a valid health card will be required to pay for services rendered. As a courtesy, we offer that patients can recoup this fee if a valid health card is presented within 2 months.

Non-insured Services and Procedures

OHIP covers the costs of most medical needs, however, there are many services we provide which are not covered by OHIP. These services require significant time and resources to administer and the demand for these uninsured services has increased dramatically in the past several years. In the face of rising office expenses and government restrictions, we are unable to provide these services free of charge. Examples of these services include, but are not limited to:

- Prescription renewals without an appointment (Prescription renewals done during a regular appointment do not have a charge)
- School/Camp Forms
- Referrals for Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy, Chiropractic, etc.

- Insurance Forms

We have joined PatientSERV, the Ontario Medical Association's partner in uninsured services management. PatientSERV allows patients to easily manage their uninsured services payments through an online platform and dedicated support team, which will help patients cover the costs of uninsured services in a hassle-free and efficient manner.

Through PatientSERV, we will also be offering the PS365 plan. This optional annual fee plan covers the costs of most uninsured services for one year (see full list of services for more details). We believe that the PS365 plan is fairly priced and hope that patients seriously consider the benefits for themselves and their families.

Of course, patients may choose not to participate in the PS365 plan program. In this case, any uninsured services received will be charged on a Pay-As-You-Go basis. Patients will receive invoices for uninsured services used and will pay invoices online (at www.patientserv.ca), by telephone, via mail, or in-person (at the clinic). If payment is made in-person at the clinic, only cash or cheque will be accepted. There is an ATM in the building's lobby, for convenience.

The administration of the PS365 program is handled on our behalf by PatientSERV. For questions about this program, or to pay an invoice over the phone, please contact PatientSERV at 1-800-385-3210. Regardless of the choice made, please be assured that it will have no bearing upon the medical care received from us as patient healthcare is our top priority.

Fees for Non-Insured Services and Procedures

These fees are subject to change without notice. Physicians reserve the right to provide a discount or waive fees for certain items based on individual circumstances.

Forms and Certificates

Certain circumstances require a form or certificate to be completed by the doctor. **We reserve 45 days, upon receipt of the form, to complete and return these forms to patients. We will email when the form is ready. Payment (cash only) must be made before the completed form is released to the patient.**

Prescription Renewal

Prescriptions are usually reviewed during an appointment. Physicians' records only show medications which have been prescribed by them, therefore it is the patient's responsibility to let them know which medications are being taken. It's good practice to bring medications into an appointment a couple of times a year so that the doctor and the patient's medical record are up-to-date.

Before each visit, patients should make sure to check the number of remaining renewals of existing prescriptions. We will endeavour to ensure that there are a sufficient number of refills until the next visit for re-evaluation of the patient's medical condition.

It is the patient's responsibility to make an appointment before the expiration of their drug prescription. Please note that, in the vast majority of cases, we do not accept requests for medication renewal sent to us by the pharmacy. Instead, request a prescription renewal by either completing the prescription renewal request form on our website or leaving a voice message on our prescription renewal line (613-201-9300, select option 1). Please allow a 21 day processing time for prescription renewals once we receive the request. For ways to facilitate renewals, we suggest speaking with the physician at an upcoming visit to discuss alternative options.

Prescribing Opioids

Physicians may prescribe opioids for pain related to cancer. Physicians reserve the right to not prescribe opioids for their patients for chronic non-cancer pain. Any patient who is prescribed opioids shall complete and adhere to the terms outlined in the **Opioid Agreement**.

Exam Results

Unfortunately, it is not possible to communicate the results to each patient regarding exams or analyses that are within normal limits. Patients will be informed of any remarkable or abnormal results by one of our medical staff. We invite patients to make an appointment to discuss any questions or concerns regarding results.

Preventative Care

Preventive care screenings help detect or prevent serious diseases and medical problems before they can become major. Routine screening for certain cancers are key in early diagnosis.

Mammography (Mammogram): Every 2 years starting at the age of 40 for all women, earlier if indicated by family history of breast cancer. As part of the Ontario Breast Screening Program, patients are able to self-refer. If patients experience any issues, they may call the clinic for a requisition.

Paps smears: Recently, this screening has changed to HPV screening and is to be completed every 5 years starting at the age of 25 years or once sexually active. Immunocompromised patients are screened every 3 years.

FIT testing (fecal immunochemical test): A test completed every 2 years for men and women, starting at the age of 50 until the age of 74. This test screens patients for colorectal cancer. A kit is mailed directly to the patient's home, they provide one stool sample and return the kit by mail for

analysis. Patients requesting screening between 75-85 can request a collection kit from the clinic and the lab will bill \$75 to the patient.

Flu Vaccines: To prevent the flu, the flu vaccine will be offered to patients of all ages every fall. We will plan vaccine clinics and can also give the flu shot when present for an appointment.

If there are questions or concerns prior to the time patients are due for routine screening, they're encouraged to speak with their physician.

Services for Patients After Clinic Hours and on Statutory Holidays

We do not offer extended service hours. If the clinic is closed, patients have a couple of options for seeking medical advice:

Pharmacy

Pharmacists can assess and prescribe medication for common ailments like pink eye, seasonal allergies and skin rashes. They can also extend certain prescriptions for chronic conditions until your next doctor's appointment

Ontario Health Line

If you require consultation, you can call 811 (TTY 711) or visit [Health811.ontario.ca](https://health811.ontario.ca)

811 is a free, secure and confidential service that people in Ontario can access to receive health advice from a registered nurse, find health services or information. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

When you call 811, you will be:

- Connected to a nurse
- Asked a series of questions to assess your health concerns
- Provided with health care advice so that you can manage your care at home and/or be advised to see your primary care provider.

If the situation requires it, patients should call 9-1-1 or go to the Emergency Department at the nearest hospital.

In order not to penalize our team, which provides patients with access to essentially the same services, we ask that they not use other clinics like walk-in clinics.

Consultations With Specialists and Other Members of our Team

Referrals with specialists and other members of our team will be provided by the patient's physician, if judged necessary, after discussion of the medical problem during an appointment. Patients wishing to be directed to a health professional or a specialist must make an appointment with their doctor first.

Providers refer locally to the extent that they are able. Should patients want to be referred to a specific professional, they may inform their physician during the visit, and come prepared with that specialist's contact information for the referral.

Any change request regarding a specialist after a referral has been made will be billed at the rate of \$35.00 for administrative fees incurred. If, one month after the original referral request, an appointment with another professional of our team or with a specialist has not been confirmed, patients are encouraged to **follow-up with the specialists' clinic**. Finally, when an appointment is missed, patients are responsible for paying the fees imposed by the specialist.

Teaching Facility

Our clinic is a training site for physicians and other disciplines in family medicine. This means patients may be seen by male or female nursing or medical students, and residents and their supervising nurse or physician. Please treat them with respect and help make them feel welcome.

Our Commitment to Patient Privacy

Protecting patient privacy is not only the law, but it is an essential part of our team's commitment to treating our patients with dignity, compassion and social responsibility. We take steps to protect personal health information from theft, loss and unauthorized access, copying, modification, use, disclosure and disposal.

We take steps to ensure that everyone who performs services for us protects patient privacy and only uses personal health information for purposes to which patients consent, or otherwise as permitted or required by law.

Collection of Personal Information

We collect personal health information under the authority of the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 and other laws.

The personal health information that we collect may include, for example, name, date of birth, address, health history, records of visits to the clinic and the care received during those visits.

As a general rule, we collect personal health information from the patient directly or from someone authorized by law to act on the patient's behalf. We may collect it from others with the patient's consent; if the collection is necessary for the provision of health care and it is not possible to collect it from the patient accurately or in a timely way; or for certain approved research purposes; or as authorized by law or by the Information and Privacy Commissioner/Ontario.

Use of Personal Health Information

Access to patients' personal health information is available to those who need it in order to provide care. This may include physicians, nurses, technologists, therapists and other health professionals. In addition to using patient's personal health information to treat and care for them, the clinic may use personal health information to:

- Educate our agents
- Conduct research
- Compile statistics
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- Fulfill other purposes permitted or required by law
- Plan, administer and manage programs, services and internal operations
- Get payment for the treatment and care of the patient (from OHIP, WSIB, private insurer or others)
- Conduct quality improvement activities (such as sending patient satisfaction surveys)

Disclosures of Personal Health Information

Unless a patient tells us otherwise, we may disclose their personal health information to:

- Care providers to determine suitability for services within the community or institutional providers, to provide for ongoing care, to improve/maintain the quality of the patient's care and of those provided similar care, if the disclosure is necessary and consent cannot be obtained in a timely manner;
- Shared electronic health systems that have been established to support the patient's care across multiple healthcare organizations.

As permitted or required by the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, we may also disclose patients' personal health information to:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care e-health projects
- Approved research projects
- The Medical Officer of Health to report communicable diseases

- The Workplace Safety & Insurance Board Law enforcement officers who present a warrant or subpoena, or to aid in an investigation
- Law enforcement officers who present a warrant or subpoena, or to aid in an investigation
- A Children's Aid Society where child abuse is suspected; or the Children's Lawyer
- The Public Guardian and Trustee
- The Coroner

If there are questions or concerns, patients also have the right to contact:

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario

2 Bloor Street East Toronto, ON M4W 1A8

Telephone: (416) 326-3333 or 1-800-387-0073

Fax: (416) 325-9195

www.ipc.on.ca

Policy on Inappropriate Patient Behaviour

Inappropriate or abusive behaviour or comments, and harassment, or violence against a member of our staff, a physician or another patient will not be tolerated or ignored. We ask that all interactions with our staff remain respectful, including when speaking with them over the phone.

Any behaviour judged to be inappropriate, abusive, aggressive or intimidating, infringing on the dignity or respect of a person, be it physically, verbally or in writing, could result in the termination of the patient-physician relationship and exclusion from the clinic.

Please note that if the therapeutic relationship between physician and patient is severed for whatever reason, either by the patient or the physician, it is our clinic's policy *not* to transfer care of the patient to another physician of the practice.

Providing Feedback

In order to enhance the patient experience at our clinic, we welcome feedback. Any concerns about the clinical care received should be discussed with the patient's physician first. If there's a formal complaint, patients may submit it in writing to the Executive Director of the clinic so as to ensure an appropriate follow-up.