

Quick Tips: For Health Providers to Partner with Patients who use ConnectMyHealth

Patients in Ontario Health West have access to their electronic health records through the ConnectMyHealth patient portal. This digital health solution provides a free single access channel for patients to view their health records from many healthcare facilities in Ontario Health West.

This document provides an overview of key features and functions of ConnectMyHealth including tips to support health care providers with patient communication and clinical documentation.

- Evidence indicates that patients having access to their results improves their understanding of their health conditions, increases engagement in their care, and builds stronger relationships with their health care providers. Patient access to their health records supports transparent communication, can improve health outcomes and enhance care planning conversations between patients and their providers.
- ConnectMyHealth provides patients with access to their health information in near real time from participating healthcare organizations. This may include:
 - Radiology reports, and where available, their corresponding images
 - Laboratory test results
 - Hospital Discharge Summaries
 - Hospital medications and allergies
 - Pathology and Genetics reports
 - Details of past and upcoming hospital visits
- To view the most up to date list of health information available using ConnectMyHealth visit <https://info.connectmyhealth.ca/data-availability>
- The patient's record contains aggregated reports and results from contributing facilities. Depending on the type of result/report, and the associated clinical practices at these facilities, patients may access their results before you have seen them. Patients may choose to use ConnectMyHealth to view their reports/results once they are made Final/Completed/Amended by the contributing facilities. They will also be able to sign up to be notified of new results. This is important for health care providers to know as it may affect how you have conversations with patients, such as when ordering tests.

In jurisdictions where real time clinical results are available, clinicians report that, in general, there is not a significant net increase in workload related to patients' access to real time results and patients' ability to view their record can result in a more efficient and focused visit with the provider and improved patient experience.

Tips for Conversations about Access to Patient Portals

Prepare your patients by:

- Talking to them about the CMH patient portal, how to access their health records, and what information they may have access to in real time.
- Reminding them that it's their choice not to access their records if they prefer to review their reports or results with their care team at their next appointment.
- Checking with them to see if they have questions about the information they see in their record. This can promote mutual understanding and allow you to gauge the level of understanding of the care plan.

The following are some sample messages to consider when having care planning conversations with patients regarding tests:

If you have ConnectMyHealth, you may have access to test results as soon as they are available. This means you may have access to them before your health care team. You can choose whether to look at your results immediately, closer to your appointment, after your appointment, or view them with your physician during your appointment. Consider what support and health information you might need when making your decision to review your results.

Your provider/health care team is here to support you so that you fully understand the results and can make informed decisions about your care. Here are the next steps after you have your tests completed...

Tips for Clinical Documentation to Support Provider and Patient Communication

A good clinical note should allow a subsequent reader to place themselves in your shoes and understand your diagnostic reasoning, your justification for excluding other diagnoses, and your reasons for proceeding as you did. Clinical notes do not need to be exhaustive, but should give an adequate picture of the clinical situation.

- Write notes and reports with awareness that patients have a right to access their personal health information and may have real time access to read it.
- Use factual, objective descriptive statements.
- Use neutral language when describing patient behavior and consider examples or quotes from patients.
- Use plain language where possible and avoid easily misunderstood or misinterpreted abbreviations.
- Be familiar with guidance documents such as those from CPSO and CMPA.

[CPSO Advice to the Profession Medical Records Documentation](#)

[CMPA Documentation and Record Keeping](#)

Stay Up to Date

The most up to date information and FAQ's about ConnectMyHealth can be found at <https://info.connectmyhealth.ca/home>

If you think your patients might benefit from ConnectMyHealth, please refer them to the [virtual registration](#) page on the CMH site.

If you would like information to provide to patients about ConnectMyHealth, please contact your local Ontario Health Team or email ohr@connectmyhealth.ca