

Your Health Care Team

Information for patients and families at University Health Network

Read this brochure to learn about:

- Teaching hospitals
- Who provides your care
- Who to contact if you have concerns about your care



The University Health Network (UHN) is a network of teaching and research hospitals. It is a partner with the University of Toronto.

UHN is 1 organization that includes 4 hospitals:

- Toronto General Hospital
- Toronto Western Hospital
- Princess Margaret Cancer Centre
- Toronto Rehab

What is a “teaching hospital”?

A teaching hospital trains new doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals. Students work with your health care team while trained teachers guide them. Students come from across Canada and from around the world.

What if I don’t want a medical student helping with my care?

As a teaching hospital, we give health care students the opportunity to learn. If you have concerns about a medical student, please speak with the doctor in charge of your care.

Who will care for me?

A health care team will look after you, rather than a single doctor. This team may include doctors, specialists, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, dietitians, technologists and many other staff. Here are some of the people who may be part of your health care team.

Attending Physician and the Medical Team

Your Attending Physician is the staff doctor who is in charge of your care in the hospital. Remember this person's name. If you do not know who it is, please ask anyone in your health care team.

Your medical team includes your staff doctor plus other doctors in training. These teams work in shifts. You may have more than one team looking after you while you are in the hospital.

The team may include:

- Medical students who are studying to become doctors.
- Residents who are training to be specialists. Residents train for 1 to 5 years after they graduate from medical school.
- Fellows who are doing special training to become experts in their area. Fellows have usually finished both medical school and residency.
- Clinical Assistants who are fully trained doctors helping the attending physician with your care.
- Physician Assistant (PA): A medically educated clinician who works with the doctors.
- Nurse Practitioner (NP): A nurse who has additional education and specialized training to assess and manage your medical needs and plan your care. They can make diagnoses, order tests, interpret results, and prescribe medications.

Nurses

Nurses help plan your care with the other members of your health care team. Your floor nurses are available 24 hours a day. They are supervised by the unit's Nurse Manager.

There are different kinds of nurses, each with a different role.

You may have a:

- Registered Nurse (RN)
- Registered Practical Nurse (RPN)
- Advance Practice Nurse (APN)

Pharmacists

The inpatient pharmacist makes sure you get the best medicine. The pharmacist will give you information about your medicine. They will also help you understand how to use it safely. Our outpatient pharmacists can help you with medicine and information for when you go home.

Social Workers

Social workers help you manage your feelings, relationships and money needs. They may help you plan for when you go home. The Social Worker can give you information about services in the community.

Physiotherapists (PT)

Physiotherapists help you with your strength, balance, and coordination. They look at how well you can walk and move around safely. A physiotherapist may make a plan to help you get stronger and more independent.

Occupational Therapists (OT)

Occupational Therapists look at how well you can eat, bathe, dress and do other everyday activities.

They can help teach you how to stay independent. They will teach you how to care for yourself and stay safe when you go home. They can also help you plan for any equipment you may need.

Speech-Language Pathologists

Speech-Language Pathologists help you with any problems you have with talking or swallowing. They will make a plan to help you manage these problems.

Spiritual Care Professionals

Spiritual care professionals can:

- help you find meaning in your illness and life's events
- arrange religious services, sacraments or rituals
- help you and your family deal with loss and grief

A Spiritual Care Professional is available from 8:30 am to 11:00 pm.

Clinical Dietitian

Clinical Dietitians help with choosing the right food for you. They will decide what nutrition your body needs and will suggest foods. They can also talk to you about hospital menus and your choices.

Respiratory Therapist

The Respiratory Therapist treats patients with breathing problems. The RT helps patients in all areas of the hospital such as:

- emergency department
- intensive care
- operating rooms
- outpatient clinics

Medical Imaging Technologists

Medical imaging technologists are trained in using different kinds of tests to take pictures of your body.

They care for patients during procedures such as:

- x-ray
- computerized tomography scan (CT)
- magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
- ultrasound
- nuclear medicine test

Other professionals

You may have some other members of your health care team. This depends on the reason you are in the hospital. Some examples are:

- psychologists
- radiologists
- radiation therapists
- pathologists
- research coordinators or assistants
- different kinds of technicians (such as venipuncture and electrocardiogram)
- volunteers

How can I contact a member of my health care team?

Ask the nurse looking after you. Your nurse will make sure this person knows you want to speak to them. The team member will then speak with you as soon as possible.

What is Patient Relations?

Sometimes you may have concerns that are hard to talk about with your health care team. If this happens, Patient Relations can help with conflicts or concerns.

We're open:

Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Note: Please leave a detailed message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Phone: 416 340 4907

By email: patientrelations@uhn.ca

Mailing Address: Patient Relations
University Health Network
200 Elizabeth Street
Toronto, ON M5G 2C4



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