

Trillium Drug Program Questions and Answers for Cancer Patients in Ontario¹

The Trillium Drug Program

Q1. What programs can help me pay for my cancer drugs?

A1. The Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program provides coverage for eligible prescription drugs to the following Ontario residents with valid Ontario Health cards:

- people 65 years of age and over;
- people receiving social assistance benefits - Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works (OW);
- people living in homes for special care and long-term care homes;
- people receiving professional services through the home and community care services program; and
- households in the **Trillium Drug Program** (TDP) which can help people pay for their eligible cancer drugs covered under the ODB program.

Q2. What is the Trillium Drug Program?

A2. The Trillium Drug Program (TDP) is for people who spend about 4% or more of their after-tax household income on prescription drug costs. To qualify for the TDP, you must:

- not already qualify for the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program (e.g., you're under 65 years old and not enrolled in a program such as Ontario Works),
- have a valid Ontario Health card, and
- either not have enough private insurance coverage for your cancer drugs; or have insurance, but it does not cover 100% of your cancer drug costs, or you have exceeded your annual or lifetime maximum amount allowed by your private insurance plan.

¹ This document provides summary information about the Trillium Drug Program. If you have specific questions about the Trillium Drug Program, please speak to your health care provider or contact the Trillium Drug Program office (416-642-3038 or 1-800-575-5386) for more information.

This document is not intended, or to be used, as legal advice about the rules for the Trillium Drug Program set out in Ontario Regulation 201/96 (made under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act*). Where there is a discrepancy between anything in this document and a provision in the regulation, the regulation prevails.

Q3. How can the Trillium Drug Program help me and my family with our drug costs?

A3. The Trillium Drug Program will pay the cost of your prescription drugs, after you've paid the annual household deductible.

The drugs covered under this program are on a list called the 'ODB Formulary'; there are over 4,400 drugs and other products on this list.

Q4. If my cancer drug is not on the formulary, what can I do?

A4. The Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program may pay for prescription drugs not listed in the ODB Formulary on a case-by-case basis through the Exceptional Access Program (EAP).

The request for coverage for a drug through the EAP can only be sent in by your doctor or nurse practitioner (NP) on your behalf. Speak to your doctor, NP or pharmacist about whether the drugs you need are covered by the ODB Program, including the EAP.

If you need coverage through the EAP, your doctor or NP should send a request as soon as possible.

All EAP requests must meet clinical standards that have been recommended by the ministry's expert advisors, the Committee to Evaluate Drugs, and approved by the Executive Officer of the Ontario Public Drug Programs.

Once a decision has been made, your doctor will be informed by the EAP by fax. If approval is granted, the coverage period begins on a specified date and extends only to the expiry date.

If you do not have EAP approval and purchase your drugs, the cost of your cancer drug will not be counted toward your annual Trillium Drug Program (TDP) deductible until you receive EAP approval for the drug.

Q5. How long will it take for my doctor or nurse practitioner to hear the decision about my Exceptional Access Program request?

A5. In general, Exceptional Access Program (EAP) requests for cancer drugs will receive a response within 3-5 business days. Timeframes for decisions depend upon the complexity and completeness of the request.

Q6. How can I follow up if I don't hear back as expected?

A6. We recommend that you speak with your doctor, nurse practitioner or reimbursement co-ordinator if you don't hear back as expected. Alternatively, you can contact the Exceptional Access Program (EAP) directly by e-mail at EAPFeedback.MOH@ontario.ca or by phone at 416-327-8109 or 1-866-811-9893.

Applying to the Trillium Drug Program

Q7. Who can apply to the Trillium Drug Program?

A7. You can apply to the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) if you are a resident of Ontario, have a valid Ontario Health card and:

- your household does not have private insurance coverage for your cancer drugs; or
- you have private insurance, but it does not cover 100% of your cancer drug costs, or you have exceeded your annual or lifetime maximum amount allowed by your private insurance plan.

Q8. How do I apply to the Trillium Drug Program?

A8. You can get a Trillium drug Program (TDP) application form on the ministry's website (www.ontario.ca/drugs), by calling the Trillium Drug Program (416-642-3038 or 1-800-575-5386) or at an Ontario pharmacy.

You can also get a TDP application guidebook on the ministry's website. This guidebook provides key information to complete the application process.

Once the TDP application is completed, mail it to the TDP office for processing.

Trillium Drug Program
P.O. Box 337 Station D
Etobicoke ON M9A 4X3

Q9. What information do I need to complete the Trillium Drug Program application form?

A9. You need to provide the following information for each member of your household:

- legal name - first, middle and last
- Ontario Health card number, including version code
- sex
- date of birth
- Social Insurance Number
- mailing address

- consent for the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) to verify your income with the Canada Revenue Agency.

Q10. Who can help me with my application to the Trillium Drug Program?

A10. For assistance with completing a Trillium Drug Program (TDP) application, call the TDP at:

Toll free: 1-800-575-5386 or 416-642-3038 (in Toronto).

You can also email the TDP office at trillium@ontariodrugbenefit.ca.

Q11. When should I apply to the Trillium Drug Program? Should I apply as soon as I am diagnosed?

A11. You will need drug coverage once you are home and your cancer drugs are no longer covered by the hospital. You should complete the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) application form as soon as possible and choose a start date that matches the date you are released from the hospital **OR** when you first receive the prescription from your doctor or nurse practitioner for drugs related to your cancer.

Q12. Is there a time of year to apply to the Trillium Drug Program?

A12. You can apply to join the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) any time.

The TDP benefit year runs from August 1 to July 31. If it is your first time applying, you can choose the date when your TDP coverage will start and your annual deductible will be adjusted based on the number of days remaining in the benefit year.

For example, if you choose an enrollment start date of February 1 (halfway through the TDP benefit year), then your annual deductible will be reduced by half. However, any prescription drugs your household receives prior to your enrollment start date will not be included towards your deductible and they will not be reimbursed. The TDP application and coverage is for the whole household. Therefore, the start date applies to all household members.

If you don't know your enrolment start date at the time of applying to the TDP, you may leave it blank. You will not be enrolled until you choose a start date, and the TDP will send you a letter to advise of this. In the meantime, your application will be put on hold. Once you have decided on an enrolment start date, please contact TDP by using one of the services options below. If your preferred start date is coming up soon, we recommend you contact the TDP by phone.

Toll free: 1-800-575-5386

Toronto: 416-642-3038

Email: trillium@ontariodrugbenefit.ca

Fax: 416-642-3034

Mailing address:

Trillium Drug Program
P.O. Box 337 Station D
Etobicoke ON M9A 4X3

Tip: Choose an Enrollment Start Date that is before or the same date you will fill prescriptions that you would like the TDP to cover. You will **not** be able to change it later.

The following chart shows some suggestions for choosing a start date.

If...	Then start the TDP no later than:
You have already purchased prescriptions.....	The date of your earliest eligible receipt (from August 1 of the benefit year for which you are applying)
You are scheduled to begin drug therapy.....	The date your prescription is filled
You are being discharged from hospital and have a prescription to fill.....	The day you are released from the hospital
Your eligibility for professional services through the home and community care services program (and therefore eligibility for the Ontario Drug Benefit Program) is ending.....	The day after your eligibility ends
Other insurance you had to cover your prescription drugs is ending or does not cover 100% of your prescription drug costs.....	The date of your earliest eligible receipt (from August 1 of the benefit year for which you are applying)

To receive benefits for a TDP benefit year, you can apply up to 2 months after the end of the benefit year (i.e., by September 30 of the following benefit year). For example, if you want to apply to the 2017/18 benefit year, which runs from August 1, 2017 to July 31, 2018, your application must be postmarked by Canada Post on or before September 30, 2018.

Q13. When and how can I expect to hear back from the Trillium Drug Program?

A13. If your application is complete, and no information is missing, and the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) is able to confirm your family's income through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), you should receive a TDP Confirmation Letter between 7 and 17 business days after we receive your application.

If your application is not complete or your income cannot be confirmed with CRA, there may be delays in processing your application. The TDP will send you a letter requesting the required information, typically between 7 and 17 business days after they receive your application.

Q14. What should I do if I haven't heard anything in 17 days?

A14. You can contact the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) call centre or e-mail to request an update on the status of your application at 1-800-575-5386 (toll-free) or 416-642-3038 (in Toronto).

Q15. How can I track my Trillium Drug Program application?

A15. You may check the status of your Trillium Drug Program (TDP) application by contacting the TDP office at:

Toll free: 1-800-575-5386

Toronto: 416-642-3038

Email: trillium@ontariodrugbenefit.ca

Q16. Is there a way to fast-track my application due to urgent need?

A16. The Trillium Drug Program (TDP) has a process to expedite new applications in cases where a patient requires coverage for life-saving cancer drugs. Complete applications can be processed within approximately 48 hours and should be submitted through your cancer care worker's or doctor's office.

Your income and deductible

Q17. How does the Trillium Drug Program calculate how much my family has to pay?

A17. The Trillium Drug Program (TDP) deductible is based on your family's net household income and how many people are in your household. The TDP Guidebook has a chart that explains your household's deductible amount.

For the purposes of the TDP, the following people are included in the definition of a household, whether or not they require drug benefits, have an existing private insurance plan, or reside outside of Ontario:

- a spouse or common-law partner (including a spouse or partner living in a long-term care home, another province, or outside Canada)
- children, parents, grandparents who live with you and rely on you – or you rely on them – for financial support
- children who are students and rely on you for financial support, whether or not they live with you.

Q18. What proof of income is acceptable if the Canada Revenue Agency is not able to verify my income?

A18. Approximately 98% of people enrolled provide consent to the Canada Revenue Agency to release their income information to the Trillium Drug Program (TDP), which is the quickest and simplest way to become enrolled and stay enrolled each year. However, if a household member did not provide consent, did not file an income tax return, or filed their taxes late, they should provide complete income documentation from the previous taxation year such as:

- Copy of Notice of Assessment: The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will send this document to you once your tax assessment has been completed
- Copy of completed T1 General or Special form, the tax form you submit to the CRA
- Copies of all T4/T4A and/or T5 slips
- Universal Child Care Benefit (if applicable)
- A letter from your employer confirming your salary
- Employment Insurance (EI) Registration Letter
- Record of Employment

If household member(s) do not file their income taxes and have zero income from the previous taxation year, a signed and dated declaration must be submitted.

Q19. What if I can't afford my Trillium deductible amount?

A19. Your deductible is approximately 4% of your net household income. You meet the deductible by purchasing your drugs at the pharmacy. The Trillium Drug Program (TDP) cannot waive the deductible requirement.

Q20. I am no longer working (or have reduced my work) due to the cancer diagnosis. How do I explain that my income is lower than the amount on my Notice of Assessment?

A20. If your combined net household income decreases by at least 10% since the previous taxation year, you can request a calculation of your deductible at the time you apply to the Trillium Drug Program (TDP), or later, based on the lower household income.

Q21. Will requesting a reassessment delay enrolling in the Trillium Drug Program?

A21. No, but first the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) must confirm your household income with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for the previous taxation year, before your reassessment, in order to verify that your household's income has been reduced by greater than 10% since the last taxation year. You will need to complete and send the Annual Deductible Re-Assessment form and provide proof of income documents.

Q22. What if I have moved back in with my family because of my cancer diagnosis?

A22. If you have moved back home and become financially dependent on your family, all members of your household should be included on the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) application. All incomes will be combined to calculate your household's deductible.

If you have moved back with your family, but remain financially independent (for example, you pay rent and your own household expenses), you would apply as a single person on your application. You would not include other household members' income to calculate your deductible.

Renewing my Trillium Drug Program coverage

Q23. Do I need to apply to the Trillium Drug Program each year? Or am I automatically renewed each benefit year?

A23. The Trillium Drug Program (TDP) has an Automated Annual Renewal beginning around the middle of June each year to ensure households have enough time to provide

income documentation if required before the upcoming benefit year that starts on August 1.

If you have provided consent for the TDP to access your income information from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), and the CRA can confirm your household's net income from the previous taxation year, your family will be renewed automatically by August 1. You will be sent a confirmation letter by the TDP in late June.

If the CRA cannot confirm your household's net income from the previous taxation year, the TDP will send you a letter towards the end of June. The letter will ask you for any missing household members' Notice of Assessment or other income documentation. TDP needs to receive this prior to August 1 to ensure that your household enrollment has been confirmed by the start of the benefit year. By doing this, there will not be gaps in your ongoing enrollment or coverage.

Q24. What if I have not filed my income tax return recently? If I don't have any notice of assessment, may I still apply?

A24. Yes, your income can be verified electronically through the Canada Revenue Agency or, if you have not filed your taxes, you can provide the documents listed in the answer to question 18.

Q25. What if there is a gap in my cancer treatment?

A25. Your drug coverage through the Trillium Drug Program (TDP) will not be affected by gaps in your treatment. Your enrollment in the program will continue. For individual cases, please contact the TDP office for assistance.

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