



## How do uninsured patients access cancer screening in Ontario?

How Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) funds the four organized screening programs varies, and therefore, there are some differences in access to screening services for uninsured participants by program.

Eligible people at average risk for breast cancer can get screened through the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) without valid OHIP coverage. The cost of mammograms for average risk participants who do not have OHIP is covered by Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario). Any follow up or assessment a participant needs after screening is not covered by the OBSP. For individuals screening through the High Risk OBSP, genetic assessment for eligibility and screening are only available to people with OHIP coverage.

Cervical, colorectal and lung cancer screening are available at no cost to participants who have OHIP coverage and meet other program eligibility criteria. Providers are expected to confirm that their patients have OHIP coverage, in alignment with Ministry of Health (MOH) requirements.

To support OHIP-eligible patients in obtaining an OHIP card:

- Primary care providers can visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/apply-ohip-and-get-health-card> or call ServiceOntario toll-free at 1-800-267-8097 or text toll-free TYY at 1-800-268-7095 for more information.
- We are also aware that agencies or shelters can sign agreements with the MOH (via Service Ontario) to assist people who are home insecure in obtaining interim OHIP coverage. This can involve the use of the shelter or agency's address in lieu of an available or appropriate address for the person requiring coverage.

Providing screening for those who are not eligible for OHIP is out scope for Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario). However, we are aware of some alternative options for screening for these individuals:

- User-pay (e.g., it is Ontario Health's understanding that user-pay fecal immunochemical test, the recommended test for screening people at average risk of colorectal cancer, is available through Dynacare).
- Some institutions that provide healthcare services through funding other than OHIP (e.g., community health centres) provide additional support for these populations.
- Other types of health insurance coverage (e.g., Interim Federal Health Program coverage for refugees).

We recommend connecting directly with the Ministry of Health for further information about access to screening for those who are not eligible for OHIP.