

Dental Coverage for Syrian Refugees

March 16, 2016

This document provides a description of dental services available for Syrian refugees in Ontario under the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) and Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO).

Interim Federal Health Program

Administered by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Syrian refugees (government-assisted and privately-sponsored) are automatically eligible for Type 1 benefits under the IFHP for 12 months¹. Under Type 1 benefits, IFHP dental coverage is limited to initial services for emergency relief of pain or infection. If further treatment is considered necessary, a prior approval request must be submitted to Medavie Blue Cross before treatment is begun.

Both children and adults are covered for dental care under the IFHP. IFHP certificates are issued to refugees at the point-of-entry upon arrival in Canada. Once Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage is obtained, refugees still retain IFHP supplemental coverage, including dental, for the remaining period of eligibility (up to 12 months).

Dental providers must be registered as an IFHP provider in order to bill for services under the IFHP. To register as an IFHP provider, visit the [Medavie Blue Cross provider website](#) and click on the "Request Account" link.

How do I verify dental service coverage?

Dental providers registered with Medavie Blue Cross can verify coverage for specific benefits, including reimbursement rates, either through the electronic claim system or by contacting Medavie Blue Cross at 1-888-614-1880.

For more information on the IFHP, visit the [Medavie Blue Cross website](#).

Medavie Blue Cross lists the following [dental services](#) as covered under the IFHP:

- 1. Emergency Examinations:** Emergency examinations are covered no more than once

¹ The programs and policies in place for Syrian refugees are consistent with what is currently available to other Type 1 refugee cohorts in Ontario. (Note: As of April 1, 2016, coverage will be the same for all individuals eligible for the IFHP, replacing the six different types of coverage).

every six months per dental office.

2. **Diagnostic Radiography:** X-rays are covered with restrictions on number and type.
3. **Restorations:** Restorations are covered for severely affected teeth only. All restorations must be pre-approved by submitting X-rays. Preapproved fillings on anterior and molar teeth have specific restrictions outlined by Medavie.
4. **Extractions:** Uncomplicated emergency extractions do not require preapproval. All complicated extraction codes must be submitted with X-rays for justification.
5. **Emergency Prescriptions:** Only those needed to treat the emergency conditions - there are charges for prescribing emergency medications.
6. **Anesthetics:** Anaesthetics are covered with restrictions dependent on the age of the patient. All anesthetics must be submitted for predetermination.

Medavie Blue Cross states that the following [dental services](#) are not covered under the IFHP:

- routine root canal treatments, orthodontics, temporary and permanent prosthetics
- intravenous sedation and nitrous oxide
- prophylaxis and fluoride
- facility fees
- specialist fees (unless specially approved for oral surgeons and pedodontists)
- pulpotomies and stainless steel crowns
- bite-wing X-rays
- restoration of incipient lesions or those not visible on an X-ray as it is considered routine care
- scaling and root planing
- complete or partial dentures and relines

Healthy Smiles Ontario

Administered by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

HSO provides free dental care for eligible children and youth aged 17 and under. HSO dental coverage includes preventive, routine, and emergency and essential treatment services to eligible children.

Children/youth and/or families with other insurance, including the IFHP, may be eligible to also receive dental benefits under HSO. Clients are required to access their other dental insurance as the first-payer prior to accessing HSO (with some exceptions). When treating HSO clients with coverage under IFHP, benefits will be coordinated with IFHP as the first payer.

Clients must apply for and meet the eligibility requirements of HSO to become enrolled.²

² Children and youth 17 and under are automatically eligible and automatically enrolled in HSO when they or their family receive: Ontario Works, Temporary Care Assistance, the Ontario Disability Support Program or Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities.

Refugee applicants can apply by mail to HSO. Application forms are available on the [ministry's website](#). [Local public health units](#) can help clients to apply or find a dental provider.

Healthy Smiles Ontario Streams

HSO has three streams:

1. **The Core Services Stream:** full HSO basket of oral health services for a set benefit period. The benefit period is standardized from August 1 to July 31 (or until the child's 18th birthday).
 - Eligibility:
 - 17 years of age or younger and resident of Ontario, and
 - adjusted family net income at or below the level at which they would qualify for at least 90% of the maximum Ontario Child Benefit (OCB).
2. **The Emergency and Essential Services Stream:** full HSO basket of oral health services for 12 months from their date of enrollment (or until the child's 18th birthday).
 - Eligibility:
 - 17 years of age or younger and resident of Ontario, and
 - meet both clinical and financial eligibility criteria
 - must be assessed with an emergency or essential dental need and
 - must attest to financial hardship
3. **The Preventive Services Only (PSO) Stream:** basket of preventive oral health services delivered almost exclusively by local public health units.
 - Eligibility:
 - 17 years of age or younger and resident of Ontario, and
 - meet both clinical and financial eligibility criteria
 - must be assessed with a clinical dental need and
 - must have family income at a level equivalent to 100% OCB and attest to financial hardship

Healthy Smiles Ontario Fees and Services

1. [Schedule of Dental Services and Fees for Dentist Providers](#); and
2. [Schedule of Services and Fees for Non-Dentist Providers](#) (i.e., dental hygienists, denturists and physician anaesthetists)

HSO covers services in the following categories:

- diagnostic
- preventive
- restorative
- endodontic
- periodontal
- fixed and removable prosthetics
- oral and maxillofacial surgery
- adjunctive services