

Frequently Asked Questions

How is a patient's privacy protected?

- All of our staff members, both administrative and registered, sign strict confidentiality agreements and undergo extensive privacy training each year. Please read all about our patient privacy measures here: <https://chfht.ca/privacy/>
- CHFHT's receptionists and other administrative staff members access patients' charts when booking appointments, answering patients' questions, locating information, arranging referrals and entering test results into the charts. Our physicians, nurse practitioners and registered staff also document their professional interactions in the charts.
- We have policies that set out who is permitted to access the charts and for what specific reasons. Even physicians are not permitted to look at the charts of patients if they have no professional reason to access the charts. Monthly and annual privacy audits are completed.
- We have implemented new measures to reduce the chance of patients' information being overheard, such as white noise machines.
- Any questions about privacy can be reported in strict confidence to our Administrator and Privacy Officer Mary Stuart at 613-473-1167 ext. 216.

Why do reception staff ask about the reason for an appointment? Isn't that a violation of patient privacy?

- CHFHT's physicians and nurse practitioners want reception staff to ask patients' their "reasons for visit" because:
 - They need to know whether an appointment is required with the physician or nurse practitioner, or with nursing staff; for example, most immunizations, lacerations, stitch removal and wound care are handled by nursing staff.
 - They need to know the length of the appointment that must be booked, which can vary greatly. A simple prescription renewal or medication review would require a short appointment, whereas a visit about worsening chronic disease symptoms would require a much longer visit.
 - They need to know which appointment type is the most appropriate to address each patient's concern. (We have several different appointment options: in person, video, telephone, email, text message.)
 - Where patients report certain reasons for a visit, such as pain or a cough, most physicians and nurse practitioners will want them to fill in a specific health survey on a tablet, to describe their symptoms in detail.

Are CHFHT's day clinics open to the public?

- Neither CHFHT's Madoc clinic nor CHFHT's Marmora clinic is a "walk-in clinic". Clinic services can only be accessed by patients of CHFHT except for the following:
 - The laboratory services provided by Life Labs at CHFHT's Madoc clinic site are open to everyone.
 - Anyone who lives in the municipality of Marmora & Lake can access blood work at CHFHT's Marmora clinic site.
 - The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic at the Marmora site is open to everyone.

- CHFHT’s Gilmour site is a public clinic staffed once per week by a CHFHT Nurse Practitioner. Patients are welcome regardless of who their regular healthcare provider might be.

Who can attend the after-hours clinics?

- The physicians affiliated with CHFHT offer five after-hours clinics each week for active patients of CHFHT.

Why is there a limit to the number of patients who can be seen at the after-hours clinics?

- Typically, thirteen patients can be booked into each after-hours clinic. Occasionally we can see about fifteen or sixteen patients in the time available. We have found that no more than that number of patients can be seen safely within the three-hour time slot.
- The after-hours clinics operate on a first come, first served basis. At times, there may also be pre-booked appointments.
- To reduce the wait times at the after-hours clinics, if your concern is not urgent, please make an appointment with your physician or nurse practitioner during regular clinic hours.
- The after-hours clinics are not urgent care clinics. **All emergency cases should be directed to a local hospital’s emergency department.**

How do I become a patient at CHFHT?

- Anyone who is not presently rostered to a physician should apply to Health Care Connect at ontario.ca/healthcareconnect for the next available physician or nurse practitioner in the region. You can also call Health Care Connect at **1-800-445-1822, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.**

How does a CHFHT patient make an appointment?

- Details of our appointment booking process are provided here: <https://chfht.ca/book-an-appointment/>

Do physicians and nurse practitioners make house calls?

- All physicians and nurse practitioners make house calls for their own palliative and shut-in patients.
- All physicians and nurse practitioners provide palliative visits to the Heart of Hastings Hospice in Madoc.
- Three physicians visit patients at the Caressant Care Nursing Home in Marmora. A nurse practitioner provides care for Caressant Care Retirement Home residents.

What if a patient wants to switch to another physician or nurse practitioner?

- The process is the same as if the patient was leaving CHFHT and switching to another clinic. We recommend that the patient first de-roster (no longer be a patient), then apply to Health Care Connect at ontario.ca/healthcareconnect for the next available physician or nurse practitioner in the region. You can also call 1-800-445-1822, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

How can I provide feedback to CHFHT?

- CHFHT has a Community Advisory Committee which includes community members. The Chair of the Community Advisory Committee is also a Board Member, so information from the Community Advisory Committee is passed along to the Board.
- You can ask us to email you a link to our Patient Experience Survey.
- You can contact our Administrator or our Lead Physician.