

Health and Medical Care



These materials were put together by a group of researchers and practitioners in New Brunswick who work with older adults. Our aim was to help older adults in New Brunswick navigate the complex landscape of information, services, forms, and resources. We hope that you will find this helpful. This guide was last updated in December 2023.

www.stu.ca/aging-in-nb/

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Numbers to know

911: If you are in a medical emergency, call **911**.

811: If you are not in an emergency but want to talk with a nurse about your health, call Tele-Care at **811**. Tele-Care is a free and confidential helpline for getting health advice from a registered nurse. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

211: If you want to find programs and services in your community, call **211**. This is a free and confidential helpline to help you find social, community, health, and government services near you. You can also find them online at <https://nb.211.ca>

Stay Healthy: Prevent Falls Before They Happen!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Falls are the leading cause of injury among older adults
- 8 older adults are hospitalized in New Brunswick each day because of falling
- More than 85% of injury-related hospitalizations for older adults are the result of falls
- More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling

To learn more about keeping your independence and preventing falls, visit <https://www.findingbalancenb.ca> or Google “finding balance NB.”

This guide is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical, legal, or financial advice. Programs and information can change over time, so please check details with the services and agencies mentioned in these documents. [Last update, December 2023]

Medical Services and Programs:

Finding medical services can be hard. Below is a description of some programs and services that can help you with your health and medical care, both in and out of hospital:

Patient Connect NB

If you don't have a family doctor or nurse practitioner, Patient Connect NB may be able to help!

If you are a New Brunswick resident and need a doctor or nurse practitioner, Patient Connect NB can help you find one in your area.

For more information, visit <https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/program/patient-connect-nb>, or Google "Patient Connect NB" or call 811 and select the option for registering for a family doctor.

The New Brunswick Extra Mural Program

Who are they and what do they do?

The Extra Mural program helps people care for their health at home, so that they can stay out of hospital or that their time in hospital is shorter. Some services that they provide include nursing care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, respiratory therapy, speech language pathology, and clinical nutrition.

Extra Mural is not homemaker care. That is, they do not provide cleaning, cooking, and day-to-day help in your home. If you need homemakers, see the chapter on "Home Support Services" for more information.

How do you access services through Extra Mural?

- If you have a family doctor or nurse practitioner, you can refer yourself
- Your family doctor can refer you
- You must qualify for Extra Mural services. To qualify:
 - You must have a family doctor or nurse practitioner
 - You must have a Medicare card
 - You must need medical help in your home

Who would qualify for Extra Mural?

Example: Betty is 65 years old and has been discharged from hospital after a bad fall and will need help from an Occupational Therapist at home.

Example: Sam is 70 years old, has cancer and is not able to drive. He needs weekly nursing care while he is in treatment.

Who wouldn't qualify for Extra Mural?

Example: Fred is 65 and uses a cane to help him move around. Fred is able to drive himself to his doctor appointments and is able to maintain living at home independently, with a little help from his daughter.

Example: Clara is 70 and drives herself into town once a week for appointments and groceries. Clara likes living independently, but wishes she had some help in her home with cleaning and making meals.

How does Extra Mural work?

- **Extra-Mural in the community:**
 - Extra Mural has health care professionals that work with patients in their homes.
- **Extra-Mural in the hospitals:**
 - Extra-Mural Liaison Nurses work with the hospital health care team, patients, and their families, to plan a safe and supported discharge from hospital to home. Follow-up by other Extra-Mural services may also be arranged (e.g., Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Language Pathology).
- **Extra Mural in Long-Term Care:**
 - For those who qualify, Extra Mural offers services within Long-Term Care Homes. (See chapter on “Long-Term Care” for full description of the different types of Care Homes.) They offer all services in Special Care Homes. They offer some services in Nursing Homes (e.g., Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy are common in Nursing Homes).

What if you need palliative care?

Extra Mural supports a palliative care approach to help people die comfortably at home with medical supports. Extra Mural also supports Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) services at home. For more information on MAID see the chapter on “End of Life.”



Tip: Extra Mural does not offer Home Support Services, such as help with cleaning, grooming, bathing, etc. To learn more about this, see the chapter on “Home Support Services.”

Tip: Do not worry if you are discharged from Extra Mural once things are going well. While Extra Mural services are usually for a shorter period of time, you can always get the services again if you need them and still qualify.

For more information on the Extra Mural Program, call **1-888-862-2111**, visit <https://extramuralnb.ca/>, or Google “Extra Mural NB.”

Health Services Department

If the Department of Social Development has determined that you have low income, you may qualify for programs through Health Services. They offer a variety of services such as:

- Hearing Aid Program
- Dental Program
- Medical Supplies Program
- And more

For a full list of programs that they offer, call **2-1-1**, visit https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/complex_page/health-services or Google “DSD health services.”

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Program:

Do you struggle with vision loss that affects your daily life?

If yes, Vision Loss Rehabilitation New Brunswick can help you with training and support. This is a free service. You can be referred by a health professional, such as your doctor, a nurse practitioner or an optometrist. You can also refer yourself by calling the nearest program office:

- Saint John: **506-634-7277**
- Fredericton: **506-458-0060**
- Moncton: **506-857-4240**
- Bathurst: **506-546-9922**

For more information on the program, visit <https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/program/vision-loss-rehabilitation>, or Google “Vision loss rehabilitation NB.”

Health and Medication Coverage Plans:

Are you wondering what programs are available to help you with health and prescription drug coverage? Do you need financial help paying for health-related issues or prescriptions?

If yes, the following programs may be able to help:

NEW BRUNSWICK PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM

If you receive the Federal Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), you are covered by the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Plan (NBPDP).

If you do not receive the Federal Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), but your income is below a certain amount, you may qualify for the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Plan (NBPDP).

For more information on this program and to apply, call **1-800-332-3692**, visit: <https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/program/prescription-drug-plans>, or Google “NB Prescription Drug Program.”

NEW BRUNSWICK DRUG PLAN

If you do not qualify for the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Plan (listed above), you may enroll in the New Brunswick Drug Plan, which is offered to New Brunswickers who do not have health insurance. Eligibility for this program is based on income.

For more information on this program, call **1-855-540-7325**, visit: <https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/program/prescription-drug-plans>, or Google “NB Drug Plan.”

MEDAVIE BLUE CROSS SENIORS’ PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM

If you are 65 years old and over and are not covered by another drug program, you may apply for the Medavie Blue Cross Seniors’ Prescription Drug Program.

To enroll in this program or for more information:

- Call **1-800-332-3692** to receive the Medavie Blue Cross Seniors’ Prescription Drug Program application form
- The application form can be found here https://docs.medaviebc.ca/FORM-979E-MBC-Seniors-Application-Form_Fillable.pdf

MEDAVIE BLUE CROSS SENIORS' HEALTH PROGRAM

This program offers seniors with additional health benefits, such as chiropractors, hearing aids, diabetic test strips, and dental benefits.

To enroll in this program or for more information:

- Call: **1-844-209-7599**
- The application form can be found here <https://docs.medaviebc.ca/members-EN/FORM-070-E-Seniors-Health-Program-Application-Form.pdf>

Medications – Helpful information know:

WILL MY MEDICATIONS BE COVERED IF I MOVE INTO A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY?

If the Department of Social Development decides that you have low-income, your medications may be covered in Long-Term Care (e.g., a nursing home).

There are also options to have your medications covered under some private health insurance policies (like Medavie Blue Cross or Sun Life) or programs offered through the Government of New Brunswick (see above).

If you pay privately for long-term care, then you must have your own private coverage or go through the New Brunswick Drug Plan. For more information on the New Brunswick Drug Plan, call **1-855-540-7325**, visit <https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/program/prescription-drug-plans>, or Google “NB Drug Plan.”

DO YOU HAVE A HARD TIME REMEMBERING WHICH PILL YOU'VE ALREADY TAKEN EACH DAY?

Ask your pharmacist about how to help you keep track. An occupational therapist can also review how well you keep track of your medications and suggest different strategies to help. Some strategies include:

- **Bubble packs:** Your pharmacist can package your pills in a special foil package to help you keep track of what pills you have to take and when.
- **Daily pill sorting boxes:** These help you keep track of what days to take which medications.
- **Automatic pill dispensers:** These are devices you can buy and program.

- **Medication reminder services:** You can use smart watches or devices like Google Home or Alexa to remind you to take medications. Some companies like CareLink Advantage also offer reminders through their alert devices. Carelink Advantage: Call **1-866-876-7401**, visit <https://carelinkadvantage.ca/>, or Google “carelink advantage.”

DID YOU KNOW?

Pharmacies offer many different services and products. Some of these include:

- **Medication disposal:** You can take your old medications to the pharmacy for safe disposal. This is a free service.
- **Alternate forms of medicine:** Pharmacists can help you find alternate forms of medications for some health issues, if you do not have a prescription.
- **Medication review:** Pharmacists are experts in medications and can help you make sure that the medications you are taking are right for you.



Tip: Did you know that older adults are hospitalized five times more often than younger adults because of harmful medication side effects? As we age, our bodies process medications less well. This means that medications you might have taken for years can become unnecessary or even harmful. Here are some questions to ask your doctor or pharmacist:

- Why am I taking this medication?
- What are the benefits or harms of this medications?
- Does this medication affect any other medications that I am taking?
- Can this medication affect my memory?
- Can this medication raise my chances of falling?

To learn more about medication see www.deprescribingnetwork.ca

Adult Protection

Are you or someone you know having a hard time taking care of yourself? Is someone you know not getting the care they need to be safe?

This may include things like:

- Poor hygiene
- Poor nutrition
- Not getting medical care when needed
- Going without heat, water, or electricity in the home, and/or
- Living in an unsafe environment

If so, the Adult Protection Program can help. If you have concerns about:

- a senior aged 65 or older, or
- an adult who lives with a disability

Contact Social Development at **1-833-733-7835** and press option 1 to make an Adult Protection referral.

Services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Visit https://socialsupportsnb.ca/en/simple_page/adult-protection-program for more information.