

Quality Standards

PATIENT REFERENCE GUIDE

Schizophrenia

Care for Adults in Hospitals

Let's make our health system healthier

If you or your loved one is at least 18 years old and living with schizophrenia...

Patients, families, and health care professionals partnered together on this guide to define what the best care should look like for people living with schizophrenia. The information in this guide has been created to help patients, families, and caregivers know what to ask for when receiving treatment. It is based on the best available research and is designed to help ensure the highest-quality care possible.

You can use this list of recommendations to help you and your health care professionals develop a care plan that works for you. You should use this information to become aware of what high-quality care looks like and to ask informed questions about your care. Care plans can be very different for each person, so it is important to work closely with your health care professionals.

Here are some things to consider if you or a loved one is being treated in a hospital or is transitioning from a hospital to a home or community setting.

Understanding and Planning Your Care

- You should receive a full assessment every time you are admitted to hospital. An assessment means that your care team will want to learn more about you to understand how best to help you. It should include questions about your medical history, what medications you are taking, your social situation, and your goals for recovery.
- You should have a physical examination every time you are admitted to hospital. It should focus on conditions that are common in schizophrenia (for example, heart disease and diabetes) and should be used to develop your care plan.
- You should be offered services or programs that encourage you to exercise and eat in a healthy way. These steps can help improve your physical and mental health.
- While in hospital, you should be assessed for the use of alcohol or drugs as they may make your symptoms worse and interfere with treatment.

- You should be offered services or programs that may help you to stop smoking or smoke less. Quitting or cutting down on smoking can help improve your physical and mental health.
- You should be offered cognitive behavioural therapy. This type of psychotherapy helps you develop skills and strategies to get and stay healthy by focusing on the problems of day-to-day life and how perceptions can affect feelings.
- Interventions should be offered to your family, caregivers, and personal supports to help them understand schizophrenia and its signs and symptoms. This will allow them to better support you, help you cope, and help to prevent relapse.
- Your health care professionals from the hospital should work with you to ensure all important information is transferred to your new health care professionals in the community and that you are connected to the ongoing supports that you need.
- Before you leave the hospital, you should have a follow-up appointment scheduled with your health care professional in the community.

Medication

- You should be offered long-acting antipsychotic medications. These are injected once or twice a month.
- If you have tried at least two different antipsychotic medications and your symptoms have not improved, you should be offered clozapine. Clozapine is taken orally.

Everybody is different, and some recommendations may not apply in your situation. If you have questions about your care, it is important to **speak with your health care professional.**

A more detailed version of this quality standard is available for health care professionals so they can stay current on the newest best evidence. This detailed version is also available to members of the public and can be found on our website.



Looking for more information?

Please see the complete quality standard at www.hqontario.ca and contact us at [qualitystandards@hqontario.ca](https://twitter.com/hqontario) if you have any questions or feedback about this guide.

About Health Quality Ontario

Health Quality Ontario is the provincial advisor on the quality of health care. We are motivated by a single-minded purpose: **Better health for all Ontarians.**

Our quality standards are concise sets of statements outlining the best possible care for patients based on the best available evidence. They are developed in collaboration with clinical experts from across the province and patients and caregivers with lived experience with the condition being discussed.

For more information about Health Quality Ontario and our quality standards, visit: www.hqontario.ca.
