

Attendant Care Services in Ontario

An attendant is a person who assists you with your basic daily physical needs. Attendants do not give medical services. They offer care at your home or in specialized homes called Supported Housing. Attendant services can be funded by government, insurance companies, or privately. Most attendants are trained as personal support workers but backgrounds can vary.

There are government programs that help pay for attendant care. Programs have different wait times and offer different numbers of service hours per week. Speak with your social worker to find out what is best for your needs. Spinal Cord Injury Ontario (www.sciontario.org) can also help you find the right program. Speak with one of their Regional Services Coordinators. For more about attendant care in Ontario or to find an attendant, visit www.cilt.ca.

Government programs for attendant care

Home Care	Supported Housing
Attendant Outreach Services	Supportive Service Living Unit
Direct Funding	Transitional Living

What kind of assistance do attendants offer?

Attendants help with your basic day to day needs. They help you do all the things you could do by yourself before your injury. Attendants are different than nurses. You need to instruct attendants about how they can help. This is called 'directing your care'. With your attendant, you are responsible for all decisions and training. Attendants can help with:

- Bathing and grooming
- Transferring
- Toileting (bladder and bowel care)
- Eating
- Getting dressed
- Preparing meals

Attendants do not give medical services such as wound care or injections. The Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) can help you find medical services in Ontario. To learn more, check out the [Spinal Cord Essentials CCAC](#) handout.

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How to qualify for funding in Ontario

- Have a valid OHIP card.
- Ontario resident of 16 years of age or older.
- Have a permanent physical disability. Need assistance with daily activities.
- Be able to direct your own care.

Attendant Outreach Services

Attendants Outreach Services offers attendant care in your home, workplace, or school. It is funded by the Ontario government. There is a maximum number of hours of service you can receive per week. All services must be scheduled in advance (no emergency services). At times, there can be waitlists for services.

Application in Toronto: Apply through the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto. Fill out an Attendant Service Application form available at www.cilt.ca → Attendant Services.

Application outside Toronto: Different companies offer attendant care across Ontario. The Ontario Attendant Service Directory (Greenbook) lists all attendant service options. View it at www.cilt.ca/greenbook.aspx.

Direct Funding

Direct Funding offers funding for you to hire your own attendants privately. When receiving Direct Funding, you act as your attendants' employer and manager. You will need to interview, hire, train, and fire your attendants as needed. You will also need to handle all finances and paper work for the Direct Funding program.

Application: An application form can be downloaded at www.dfontario.ca. After you apply, you will have a meeting to discuss your needs and to see if you qualify. Approval for Direct Funding can take many months. Most people have other funding sources while they wait for Direct Funding approval. Visit their website for current wait times.

Contact your Social Worker for more information.

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Supportive Service Living Units

Supportive Service Living Units (SSLUs) are private or shared apartments for people with physical disabilities. Supportive living is for people who need low or medium levels of care. Scheduling attendant services must be done in advance. In many places, attendant care is available onsite, 24 hours per day.

Cost: Supportive living is not free. Like apartments, rates vary across buildings and units. Some apartments can adjust rent if you have low income. You must pay for your own meals and extra services (e.g. telephone, cable, internet).

Application: Apply the same way as Attendant Outreach Services (see above).

Transitional Living

Transitional Living are short-term (approximately 6-18 months) residences which can be used for people who need additional time or practice to transition from living in the hospital to living in the community. Applicants must require assistance with their personal care. Attendant care services are available onsite 24h/day but must be booked ahead of time.

Cost: You are responsible for your rent and expenses such as food, medications, and extra services. Rent subsidies may be available. Attendant care costs are covered by OHIP.

Application: Options can be found in the Greenbook www.cilt.ca/greenbook.aspx. In Toronto, there are two options:

- Bellwoods Community Connect Program: www.bellwoodscentres.org
- Gage Transition to Independent Living: www.westpark.org/Services/GTIL

Always remember to keep a copy of your completed application package for future reference.

Contact your Social Worker for more information.

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www.SpinalCordEssentials.ca

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