



The Saskatchewan health care system can be confusing. Below are some of the most important aspects of it:

### Why do I need a health card?

- To see your family doctor or a doctor in walk-in clinic
- To go to the hospital/emergency room
- To go see a specialist (special doctor)

*\*These services are at no cost to you if you have a saskatchewan health card*

### How do I get a health card?

- Find the forms online. Go to: <http://www.ehealthsask.ca/HealthRegistries/Pages/default.aspx>
- Speak to a settlement advisor at one of the settlement agencies listed at the back of this form

### Family Doctors:

- A family doctor is your doctor. He/she knows you and your family
- Family doctors work in health clinics
- Family doctors help keep you healthy
- They help you when you get a little bit sick
- You need to make an appointment with your family doctor
- When making an appointment, tell the staff what language you speak and ask for translation services if you need help communicating (friends and family should only translate in emergencies)
- Find a Family Doctor here: <https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/patients/Pages/Doctors-Taking-Patients.aspx>

*\*If after seeing a doctor you are given a prescription for medication, you need to go to the pharmacy and have to pay for it.*

### Walk-In Clinics:

- Walk-In clinics are used when you are unable to see your family doctor
- You do not need an appointment
- You can use the walk-in clinics for minor emergencies
- Wait times may be long, but less long than in Hospitals/Emergency rooms
  - Walk-In clinics may not have your health history
- You might always see a different doctor

*\*For example, if you trip while walking and your ankle gets bigger and is hard to move, this is something a minor emergency doctor can help treat.*

### Specialists:

- If the first doctor you see cannot help you, he/she will send you to a specialist
- A specialist knows a lot about a special type of problem
  - \*For example, if you had a rash on your arm, and your family doctor did not know what it was, they would send you to a skin doctor (called a dermatologist) who studied more skin conditions than a family doctor.*
- You need a note from your family doctor to see a specialist

### Hospitals/Emergency Rooms:

- Emergency Rooms are used for **urgent** health problems
- Doctors see the sickest patients first
- If you are not very sick, you will wait a long time (several hours)
- If your problem can wait, you can go to a Walk-In clinic or see your family doctor

*\*Chest pain, trouble breathing, fever in newborns, poisoning, sudden loss of vision, and uncontrollable bleeding are reasons to go to the Emergency Room. There can be other reasons to go; if ever in doubt, it is best to have your symptoms checked.*

*\*In case of an emergency, or if you need an ambulance, call **911**.*

### **Health Records/Vaccinations:**

- If you have health or vaccination records from your country, bring them to your family doctor
- If you do not have vaccination records, speak to your family doctor
- For more information on immunization/vaccinations, go to: [https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations\\_services/Services/Immunization/Pages/Home.aspx](https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Immunization/Pages/Home.aspx)

### **Other Types of Care:**

- Other types of care are available to supplement your health experience. However, these services generally are not covered by the Saskatchewan Health card and you will have to pay for the services if you do not have other insurance
- Dental clinics perform routine cleaning, do check-ups, fix cavities, and other procedures to help keep your teeth healthy. You can find a dentist here: <http://www.saskdentist.com/find.asp>
- Optometrists are eye doctors that can do routine eye check-ups and can prescribe eyeglasses. You can find an eye doctor here: <http://optometrists.sk.ca>

### **Medications:**

- Most medications will cost you money
- Some refugees can get temporary coverage under the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)
- To see if you qualify, go to: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/arriving-healthcare.asp>
- Additional insurance options are available if you do not qualify under the IFHP  
*\*If you need more information, you may speak to your Settlement Advisor.*

### **How to Stay Healthy:**

- A large part of being healthy is lifestyle and the foods that we eat:
- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables
- Try to get physical exercise
- Keep salt and sugars to a minimum. This can help prevent many illnesses
- This website has information on nutrition in many languages: <http://www.refugees.org/resources/for-refugees--immigrants/health/>

### **Important Contact Information:**

These are some places where newcomers can receive help in Saskatoon.

#### **International Women of Saskatoon**

Website: <http://internationalwomenofsaskatoon.org/>

#### **Global Gathering Place**

Website: [www.globalgatheringplace.com](http://www.globalgatheringplace.com)

#### **Saskatoon Open Door Society**

Website: [www.sods.sk.ca](http://www.sods.sk.ca)

#### **Saskatchewan German Council: Immigrant Settlement Advisor**

The services are free of charge for all immigrants, regardless of country of origin

Website: [www.saskgermancouncil.org](http://www.saskgermancouncil.org)

#### **Health Line**

- Phone number: **811**
- The Health Line is a free and confidential telephone service
- If you are sick and do not know what to do, call 811
- Registered nurses will listen to your problems and tell you either to go see a doctor, the emergency room, or treat the symptom yourself
- You need a Saskatchewan Health Card number