OntarioMD

Access to Drug Information through Your EMR
April 2022

Overview:

Clinicians can now seamlessly access patient medication information from Ontario's Digital Health Drug Repository (DHDR) directly from within their electronic medical records (EMRs). This gives you convenient, real-time and secure access to information about publicly funded drugs and pharmacy services, all monitored drugs (regardless of payor), and COVID-19 vaccination information from the provincial COVaxON vaccination management system.

More information is available on the Ontario Ministry of Health and Ontario Health websites:
- www.ontario.ca/mydruginfo
- Online Access to COVID-19 Vaccination Information for Health Care Providers (HCPs)

Access to DHDR from within your OntarioMD (OMD)-certified EMR aligns better with your EMR workflow and the way you practice. It gives you rapid access to comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date patient medication information so you can make more informed decisions for enhanced patient care.

Key Messages:

Access to DHDR information from your EMR lets you view:

- **Publicly funded drugs** (including those listed on the Formulary or approved through the Exceptional Access Program) dispensed in Ontario and paid for by the **Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB)** program.
- Most publicly funded drugs dispensed in Ontario and eligible under the **Special Drugs Program**.
- Drugs dispensed in Ontario to households pending program eligibility with the **Trillium Drug Program**.
- **Professional pharmacy services** provided by a pharmacist in Ontario and paid for by the Ministry (e.g., MedsCheck Program medication reviews). This includes COVID-19 tests completed at a pharmacy.
- **Monitored drugs** (narcotics and controlled substances), regardless of payor, when the approved identification used was a valid Ontario Health Number, including monitored drugs reimbursed by private insurance or cash.
- **COVID-19 vaccination information** documented in COVaxON, which includes information on all COVID-19 vaccines administered in the province, where the client provided an Ontario Health Number and consent to data collection.

    View more details in the downloadable PDF from the Government of Ontario's website: Information Available to Health Care Providers through the Digital Health Drug Repository. *NOTE: This file*

download requires Adobe Reader 10 or later client. Once the download link is clicked, check the 'Downloads' folder of your computer to locate the file.

- **Clinician Benefits:**
  - Direct access from within your EMR to fit your workflows
  - Quick, secure and efficient access to clinically relevant drug and pharmacy service information enabling the Best Possible Medication History (BPMH)
  - Enhanced patient safety and continuity of care (e.g., improved ability to follow up with patients on prescribed medications; a reduced potential for adverse drug events)
  - Improved access to medication data from your EMR (e.g., up-to-the-minute accuracy of medications)
  - Better collaboration with other clinicians based on improved access to patient medication data (e.g., family practitioners know what specialists have prescribed, and vice versa)

- **Patient Benefits:**
  - The care team knows the drugs and pharmacy services dispensed as well as the details about COVID-19 vaccinations so patients don't have to remember and repeat this information at every encounter
  - Their physicians or nurse practitioners can spend more time on diagnosis, treatment and discussion during visits rather than trying to piece together medication information
  - Better health outcomes when the physician or nurse practitioner knows every drug that has been dispensed and can avoid prescribing a drug that could result in an adverse reaction

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q1: **What is the DHDR?**

A1: The DHDR (Digital Health Drug Repository) is a provincial information source of publicly funded drug and pharmacy services, and all monitored drugs (regardless of payor). COVID-19 vaccination information from COVaxON (the provincial COVID-19 vaccination management system) is also available through the DHDR.

Information in the DHDR is derived from claims reimbursement submissions from pharmacists to the Ministry of Health and contains information for Ontarians where the **Ontario Health Number was used** in the provision of the drug or pharmacy service. Similarly, COVaxON information is available **only for Ontarians who provided an Ontario Health Number** at the time of vaccination and consented to the collection of their vaccination data in COVaxON.

The DHDR provides authorized clinicians with secure access to:
- **Publicly funded drugs** (including those listed on the Formulary or approved through the Exceptional Access Program) dispensed in Ontario and paid for by the **Ontario Drug Benefit** program

- Most publicly funded drugs dispensed in Ontario and eligible under the **Special Drugs Program**
- Drugs dispensed in Ontario to households pending program eligibility with the **Trillium Drug Program**
- **Professional pharmacy services** provided by a pharmacist in Ontario and paid for by the ministry (e.g., MedsCheck Program medication reviews). This includes COVID-19 tests completed at a pharmacy.
- **Monitored drugs** (narcotics and controlled substances), regardless of payor, when the approved identification used was a valid Ontario Health Number, including monitored drugs reimbursed by private insurance or cash
- **COVID-19 vaccination information** documented in COVaxON, which includes information on all COVID-19 vaccines administered in the province, where client provided Ontario Health Number and consent to data collection.

For more details outlining information available in the DHDR, please download [Information Available to Health Care Providers through the Digital Health Drug Repository](#) from the Government of Ontario's website. *NOTE: This file download requires Adobe Reader 10 or later client. Once the download link is clicked, check the 'Downloads' folder of your computer to locate the file.*

You can also refer to Ontario Health's [Digital Health Drug Repository (DHDR): Guide for Clinical Use](#) (downloadable PDF) for key information about the DHDR, including:
- How much historical information is available
- Clinical limitations of DHDR information
- Availability of COVID-19 vaccination information from COVaxON

Q2: **How will access from my EMR change how I use the DHDR?**

A2: Access to DHDR from within your certified EMR allows you to better integrate the DHDR into your practice workflows rather than requiring you to open several portals and/or screens to complete a single task.

From your EMR, you can view:
- **Publicly funded drugs**, including those paid for by the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program
- **Monitored drugs** (narcotics and controlled substances), including opioids
- **Publicly funded pharmacy services**, such as the MedsCheck Program medication reviews and pharmacist-administered influenza vaccines
- **COVID-19 vaccination information** documented in COVaxON, the provincial COVID-19 vaccination management system

Q3: **Why do clinicians prefer to access provincial digital health systems like the DHDR from within their EMRs?**

A3: OntarioMD (OMD) works with more than 20,000 clinicians to support their use of EMRs and other digital health tools. As more tools became available, clinicians told us that they would prefer to

access these provincial assets through their EMRs to streamline their workflow and save time. Seamless access from within the EMR eliminates the need to navigate through multiple websites or log in to additional systems that require more usernames and passwords, and helps clinicians provide more informed patient care to improve patient outcomes.

Certified EMRs are gateways to comprehensive and up-to-the-minute patient information for clinicians and OMD has undertaken the important work of connecting certified EMRs to more provincial digital health tools.

Q4: **What other provincial digital health tools can I access from within my EMR?**

A4: OMD has been enabling seamless access from certified EMRs to many valuable digital health tools for clinicians such as Health Report Manager (HRM®) to receive reports from hospitals and specialty clinics; the Ontario Laboratories Information System (OLIS) to access lab test results; and eConsult to submit a request for advice to a specialist. This access from EMRs suits clinicians' workflows. OMD has worked with the vendors of certified EMRs and with clinician practices for more than 15 years to increase the clinical value of certified EMRs so clinicians can focus on patient care rather than mastering multiple technologies.

Q5: **What is PrescribeIT™ and how does it differ from the DHDR?**

A5: **PrescribeIT™ is a solution that allows you to create and deliver electronic prescriptions.**
- Prescribers can electronically transmit a prescription directly from an EMR to the pharmacy management system of a patient's pharmacy of choice.
- Prescriptions created within PrescribeIT can be retrieved by participating pharmacies permitting patients to have these prescriptions filled.
- Canada Health Infoway is working with Health Canada, the provinces and territories, and industry stakeholders to operate and maintain this national e-prescribing service.

DHDR is a solution that allows you to view medications.
- Currently, DHDR presents a view of dispensed prescriptions that are recorded in the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program, Special Authorization Digital Information Exchange (SADIE), and Narcotics Monitoring System (NMS).
- DHDR is designed to collect additional data from the provincial medication databases, to avoid having clinicians having to search for the data in multiple places, and makes seamless access easier.
- DHDR does not permit the creation and delivery of prescriptions (i.e., no "submit" function).

PrescribeIT™ and DHDR are complementary to one another, each providing discrete value related to delivering health care to patients.

Q6: **What is the value in having access to the DHDR if I already use ClinicalConnect or ConnectingOntario ClinicalViewer to access patient drug information?**

A6: Through your EMR, you can seamlessly view DHDR drug data, pharmacy services, and COVID-19 vaccination information while reviewing your patient's chart. There is no need to launch a separate application or browser window, log in with different credentials, and/or search for the patient. This integrated access to DHDR from your EMR saves you this extra effort. Seamless access provides more time for diagnosing, treating and communicating with your patients. Quickly locating the drug information you need helps you reduce the risk of adverse drug events such as medication errors, drug reactions, allergic reactions, and overdoses, and increases the likelihood of optimal patient outcomes.

Q7: **When can I access DHDR through my EMR?**

A7: OMD is leading the integration of DHDR with certified EMRs with support from Ontario Health, the Ministry of Health, clinicians and vendors with OMD-certified EMRs to advance this important initiative. In November 2021, integration between OMD-certified EMRs and DHDR was made a mandatory requirement of EMR certification in Ontario. All vendors with OMD-certified EMRs must integrate their products with the DHDR by November 2022 to maintain their OMD EMR certification.

DHDR is available today through select OMD-certified EMRs, and OMD will continue to work with additional vendors with certified EMRs to offer you this important provincial resource. You may also check the Certified-EMR Offerings – Integrated Provincial EHR Products and Services table regularly to see whether your EMR vendor has completed integration.

Please ask your EMR vendor when you can access the DHDR, and contact your OMD Practice Advisor or support@ontariomd.com to express your interest in participating. An OMD-certified EMR is a prerequisite for participation.

Q8: **How can my practice integrate our EMR with the DHDR?**

A8: DHDR is available today through select OMD-certified EMRs. Please check the Certified-EMR Offerings – Integrated Provincial EHR Products and Services table regularly to see whether your EMR vendor has completed integration. If you use YMS EMR or YES EMR, you can already access the DHDR. If you use another certified EMR, please ask your EMR vendor when you can access the DHDR. Please contact your OMD Practice Advisor or support@ontariomd.com to express your interest in participating. An OMD-certified EMR is a prerequisite for participation.

Q9: **Where can I get more information?**

A9: For more information on accessing the DHDR from within your EMR, or if you have a question about certified EMRs and/or other digital health tools available to you, please contact OMD at support@ontariomd.com, contact your local Practice Advisor, or visit OntarioMD.ca.