

# **Surveillance Update and Clinical Guidance: 2025-2026 Respiratory Season**

## **Update to York Region health care professionals as of January, 22 2026**

Respiratory surveillance shows influenza A activity across Ontario is continuing to be dominated by H3N2 subclade K. Activity with this strain is ongoing but has passed its peak and is expected to decline in the coming weeks. Influenza B activity has been low but may increase in the coming months based on typical seasonality. RSV activity is projected to rise in the coming weeks, with the highest burden among children under 5 years of age. COVID-19 rates are currently stable but anticipated to increase, primarily affecting infants under 1 year and adults over 65 years

York Region Public Health (YRPH) encourages health care providers to continue promoting influenza vaccination among patients as it remains beneficial for the following reasons:

- Influenza season can extend into May; Influenza A activity is often followed by Influenza B activity; in recent years, Influenza B activity peaked from March through May
- While the current season's vaccine does not contain subclade K specific antigens, interim analyses of vaccine effectiveness across numerous populations studied is in the range of 30-45%, and it continues to lessen illness severity and duration and help prevent facility outbreaks
- The vaccine is trivalent; it also provides protection against Influenza B and Influenza A (H1N1)

### **Influenza Prophylaxis for Congregate Settings**

During outbreaks, oseltamivir prophylaxis (Brand name: Tamiflu®) is recommended for both residents and staff. Given the dominance of the Influenza A (H3N2; subclade K) strain this year, this recommendation also applies to individuals who have already received a dose of this season's influenza vaccine.

Data from Canada's National Microbiology Lab indicates that oseltamivir continues to be effective against Influenza A—including the new subclade K—and Influenza B. For detailed guidance on antiviral treatment, dosing and treatment considerations please refer to by the Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease Canada's [Seasonal Influenza Update 2025-2026](#).

### **Contact Us**

If you have any additional questions on influenza, please call our Control of Infectious Diseases intake line at 1-877-464-9674, ext. 73588 (Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

# **Tuberculosis (TB) Diagnostic and Treatment Services for Uninsured Persons (TB-UP) Program**

The TB Diagnostic and Treatment Services for Uninsured Persons (TB-UP) program, funded by the Ministry of Health, covers the cost of OHIP-billable TB care for uninsured individuals. This includes diagnostic tests (such as chest X-rays, sputum analysis, lab tests, and TB skin tests) and physician services for both outpatient and inpatient care. Please note that TB-UP does not cover non-OHIP billable costs associated with inpatient TB treatment.

TB-UP program is designed to:

1. Facilitate early diagnosis and treatment of TB.
2. Eliminate financial barriers to obtaining TB diagnostic and treatment services.
3. Reduce the public health risk due to transmission within Ontario.

The Ministry of Health released the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) resource to help health care providers navigate the TB-UP program for their patients. This resource addresses common questions about eligibility, exceptions, and completing the claim form. Contact York Region Public Health

Before providing care, please call York Region Public Health at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 76000 to register your patient for the TB-UP program. If you have any questions or need assistance, the same number can be used to speak with one of our TB nurses.

## **Subscribe to York Region Public Health Matters**

Public Health Matters is York Region Public Health's e-update to health care professionals. It includes important updates, opportunities to engage with us and resources you can use in your practice. It highlights programs offered by Public Health that are important to you and for your patients. While we know your inboxes are always full, Public Health Matters will be an invaluable way of staying connected to YRPH now and in the future.

**Please [subscribe](#) today!**

## TB-UP FAQs

### Eligibility:

#### **Who is eligible for TB-UP?**

The TB-UP program is available for uninsured persons, who meet one of the following criteria:

1. An active case or potential/suspect case of TB (pulmonary or extra-pulmonary);
2. A contact person of an active TB case; or
3. Any other person considered at high risk of developing active TB and as determined by the TB Program staff of the board of health.

#### **What services are covered?**

1. Outpatient medical clinical (clinician) services (provided by clinicians who are paid on a fee-for-service basis), as well as laboratory and radiology services for the diagnosis and treatment of TB disease or TBI; and
2. Medical clinical services which are provided by a clinician who is a specialist paid on a fee-for-service basis (e.g., respirologist, infectious disease clinician internist, pediatrician, general or thoracic surgeon etc.) for services related to the diagnosis or treatment of TB or TBI.

#### **What services are not covered?**

1. Any services/expenses for uninsured persons who receive services unrelated to the diagnosis or treatment of TB or TBI.
2. Inpatient services.
3. Services provided to clinicians or service providers (i.e., laboratories and radiology facilities) who are normally compensated through a global budget or an alternative payment process through an organization/agency and are not paid on a fee-for-service basis.

#### **If a client has private insurance, but it will not be adequate/you are unsure if it will be adequate, can they be enrolled in TB-UP?**

- Yes, they may be enrolled in TB-UP. 'Uninsured' includes inadequately insured (i.e. the individual's private insurance plan will not cover TB diagnostics and treatment).

- All insurance must be fully leveraged before TB-UP is billed.

### **Can clients remain enrolled for 2 years to cover follow-up?**

- Clients must be withdrawn from the program under the following conditions: 1) Has completed treatment; 2) Is deceased; 3) Has moved outside of Ontario; 4) Has completed assessment and findings were negative; 5) Or obtains medical insurance, such as OHIP or IFHP.
- Typically, insurance should be obtained within the 2-year follow-up period, therefore automatic enrollment of a client for 2 years is not recommended.
- The TB Program staff may use their discretion.

### **If the board of health was not aware of the client at the time of diagnosis, can the registration date be backdated to the date of diagnosis?**

- The TB Program staff may use their discretion.

### **What if facilities turn away clients on TB-UP?**

- Facilities are not legally required to accept clients enrolled in TB-UP. Occasionally, clients may be turned away because the facility is unaware of the program.
- In these cases, it is recommended to either identify an alternative facility or engage with the original facility to provide education about TB-UP.

### **TB-UP Exceptions:**

#### **What services require an exception request?**

- Any services that are not routinely covered under the TB-UP program, and for which the client lacks any alternative means of payment, may be submitted for consideration via an exception request.
- Some common examples include:
  - Inpatient services
  - Retroactive payments for persons who receive services prior to registration in the TB-UP program

- Services which do not correspond with the OHIP schedule of benefits (e.g. clinic fees, registration fees)

### How do I submit an exception request?

- The PHU collects all applicable information and submits the exception request to [IDPP@ontario.ca](mailto:IDPP@ontario.ca)

#### For inpatient service requests:

1. iPHIS client ID
2. TB-UP registration #
3. Health insurance status and reason for exception request
4. Diagnosis and date of diagnosis
5. Known co-morbidities (if applicable to the reason for admission)
6. Hospital name, admission date, reason for admission, and discharge date/plans (if applicable).
7. An itemized bill will be requested by the Ministry as soon as it is available from the hospital. All personal health information should be redacted.

#### For other requests:

1. iPHIS client ID
  2. TB-UP registration #
  3. Health insurance status and reason for exception request
  4. Diagnosis and date of diagnosis
  5. Known co-morbidities (if applicable to the reason for the request)
  6. Hospital/facility name
  7. Services rendered, billing codes (if applicable, when available), and cost breakdown. A redacted bill is accepted as well.
- Once received, the IDPP team will review the exception request and obtain appropriate approvals (if applicable).
  - If the bill requires clarification, the IDPP team will communicate directly with the hospital/facility.
  - If it is not approved, the rationale will be communicated to the requestor.
  - If approved, the IDPP team will send an exception letter to the PHU.

- The PHU will provide the exception letter to the applicable billing department with the following instructions for reimbursement:
  - Complete the TB-UP Healthcare Provider Claim form for the services outlined in the exception letter. In the service code section, use the ‘dummy’ code R990 (unless there is an OHIP code).
  - Attach the exception letter to the Healthcare Provider Claim form. This signals to Claims Services Branch that the claim has been reviewed and approved for exceptional coverage through TB-UP.
  - Submit the claim via one of the following methods:
    - Mail: Forms can be mailed to the address listed on the form.
    - Fax: Forms can be faxed to (613) 237-3246
    - Email: [CSBOttawa@ontario.ca](mailto:CSBOttawa@ontario.ca) (while this email is secure, always follow your org’s security policies when emailing personal health information)

### **What happens if an exception request is not approved?**

- If an exception request is not approved, the client remains responsible for any associated costs.

### **How long from the date of service can exception requests be submitted?**

- Exception requests can be submitted to the Ministry up to one year from the date of service.
- If the duration exceeds six months, this must be included in the exception request and communicated to the Ministry at the outset.
- Requests for services extending beyond one year from the date of service may be considered only in rare and extenuating circumstances, where factors outside of the control of the Public Health Unit prevented timely submission of the request.

### **Healthcare Provider Claim Form:**

#### **Where can I download the TB-UP Claims Form?**

You can download both the English and French TB-UP claims forms below:

- [English Form](#)

- [French Form](#)

### Where can I find instructions on filling out the TB-UP claims form?

Step-by-step instructions are provided on the form.

- The forms must be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader to be fillable (and to be issued with the unique invoice code required for submission).
- The invoice code is a unique time code auto generated to function as an identifier. The TB-UP module in iPHIS has been changed to allow up to 14-digits to be entered in this field.
- The 'print form' button needs to be hit after each invoice refresh to generate a unique invoice.

### Can I still order and use the old TB-UP form?

- Claims Services Branch is no longer printing the old TB-UP triplicate form, so they are no longer available for ordering.

### Can the TB-UP form be saved?

- The form cannot be saved, but multiple forms can be generated by hitting the "refresh invoice" button.
- This button will not clear the filled-out information in **Section A**, allowing for single data entry to be printed into multiple forms for clients.

### How can I submit the TB-UP claims form to Claims Services Branch?

- a. Mail: Forms can be mailed to the address listed on the form.
- b. Fax: Forms can be faxed to (613) 237-3246
- c. Email: [CSBOttawa@ontario.ca](mailto:CSBOttawa@ontario.ca) (while this email is secure, always follow your org's security policies when emailing personal health information)

### What is required in the 'service code' field on the form?

- The service code field should be filled with the relevant four- or five-digit OHIP fee code. Refer to the [OHIP Schedule of Benefits](#).
- If there is no corresponding OHIP code, it will not be routinely covered under the TB-UP program.

### **Is there an option for clinics/physicians to submit the claims electronically?**

- At this time, there is no option for clinics to submit claim forms via online portal systems, as the form must also be accessible by labs.

### **Who is responsible for filling out the form?**

- Part A of the form must be completed either by or with assistance from the local public health unit.
- Part B of the form must be completed by or on behalf of the service provider (by other clinic/facility staff).

### **How long from the date of service is the claim form accepted?**

- The claim form must be submitted within 6 months from the date of service.
- If there are any concerns about this, please contact [IDPP@ontario.ca](mailto:IDPP@ontario.ca).

### **When can I expect payment?**

- All payments are made within 6-9 weeks of receipt, unless corrections to the form are required.



## TB-UP Coverage Notice

This client is currently being assessed and/or treated for tuberculosis (TB) and does not have OHIP or private insurance coverage. They have coverage through the **Tuberculosis for Uninsured Persons Program (TB-UP)**, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health.

### Program Purpose:

1. Facilitate early diagnosis and treatment of TB.
2. Eliminate financial barriers to obtaining TB diagnostic and treatment services.
3. Reduce the public health risk due to transmission within Ontario.

### Billing Instructions:

1. Do not bill the client.
2. Complete the TB-UP Claims Form. If this is not provided by the client, it can be retrieved from the local public health unit.
3. **Submit the completed claim form within six months** of service date via one of the following methods:
  - a. Mail: Ministry of Health, 347 Preston St, 4th Floor, Ottawa ON K1S 3J4
  - b. Fax: (613) 237-3246
  - c. Encrypted Email (preferred): [CSBOttawa@ontario.ca](mailto:CSBOttawa@ontario.ca)
4. Retain all claim forms and documentation.

### Support and Inquiries:

- For eligibility or general program information: Consult the Tuberculosis Program Guideline, 2023 (or as current), Appendix 4.
- For support completing or accessing claims forms, exceptional coverage requests, or questions about the program: Consult the local public health unit.
- For questions about claims submissions or payment status: consult the Infectious Disease Team at the Ministry of Health: [IDPP@ontario.ca](mailto:IDPP@ontario.ca) **\*Do not send personal health information to this email\***

**Thank you for your crucial role in supporting equitable access to TB care and protecting public health across Ontario.**