

All hospitals and community health centres in the central Toronto area collect demographic information. The purpose of this information is to understand who our patients and clients are and what unique needs they may have. The information you share with us will also shape our understanding of patient and client experiences and outcomes.

“Demographic” means information collected about a group of people that helps to describe them. The demographic information we are collecting includes:

- Language
- Gender
- Racial/ethnic group
- Income
- Disability
- Length of time in Canada
- Sexual orientation

## Why are you asking me these questions?

A team of Toronto researchers worked on choosing each question. They carefully reviewed information about quality and equitable care. By asking these questions, we will continue to know our patients and clients and become better at providing care and services. Also, sometimes people experience discrimination in health care settings. We want to make sure that is not happening. If it is, we want to correct that.



## Is it legal to ask these questions?

Yes, the Ontario Human Rights Commission strongly encourages organizations to collect and use demographic information to keep track of outcomes and promote equity. Also, Ontario’s Excellent Care for All Act, 2010 is a law that holds hospitals responsible for delivering quality health care. This law has health care organizations collect information from patients and clients about their experience. We learned that demographic information greatly impacts patient and client experiences and decisions about whether to use health care or not.

We believe that we cannot fully understand patients’ and clients’ health care experiences without knowing more about who they are.

## How will you use this information?

- We will study whether factors such as language, disability, gender and so on are linked to health outcomes.
- We want to learn more about the link between how long you have been in Canada and health outcomes.
- We will review and use your information to develop programs and do service training.
- Members of your health care team (or “Circle of Care”) may refer you to services, give you information, or identify any unique needs, such as:
  - interpretation services
  - health information
  - treatment programs
  - accommodation for disabilities



## Who can see my demographic information?

We take your privacy very seriously.

(1) This information will be visible only to your health care team and protected like all your other health information.

(2) This information will remain confidential and will not be visible to anyone.

If used in research, the information from all patients and clients will be combined and researchers will not be able to identify who any of the patients and clients are.

## I'm only here for a quick appointment. How is this relevant to my care?

It is important for us know who we serve, whether patient and client needs match the care we provide for all.

This information will help us understand and plan care not only for your future visits, but for other patients and clients who may have similar needs as yours. This gives us a full picture of our patient and client population.

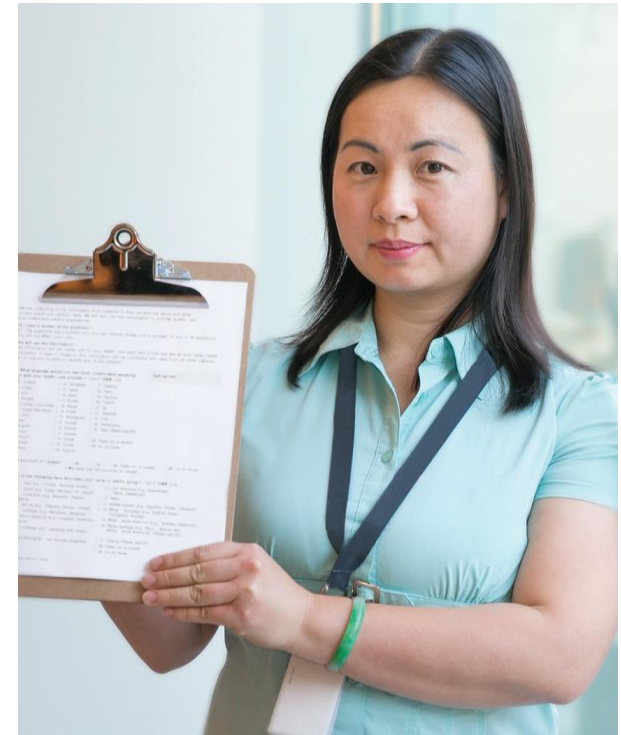
## What if there are questions that I don't want to answer?

You can answer "prefer not to answer" to any or all questions. This will not impact the care you receive here.

## Questions or Comments?

Please contact Cliff Ledwos at [clledwos@accessalliance.ca](mailto:clledwos@accessalliance.ca).

For more information, visit the Measuring Health Equity website at <http://torontohealthequity.ca/>.



# We ask because we care

## Collecting demographic information in health care

