

Dear Healthcare Professional,

We are in an era where provincial funding for chronic care programs and services is limited and therefore unable to reach all those in need. There is a program that encourages health care practitioners to promote physical activity and help patients become more active in hopes of decreasing patients' chances of later developing chronic disease.

The literature has shown that patients who are encouraged to exercise by a health care provider are 6 times more likely to participate in supervised exercise, and 12 times more likely to participate in exercise at home (1). Moreover, when surveyed patients state they would like their physician to prescribe exercise (2).

Prescription to Get Active (RxTGA), a national not-for-profit corporation since 2015, administers a doctor referral program designed to help sedentary, deconditioned, at risk patients become physically active. The program, soft-launched in Ontario in the summer of 2018, followed a model created based on the success of the program's 2011 inception in Alberta.

Doctors identify patients who they believe could benefit from being more active based on the Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines in an unsupervised physical activity without medical clearance. Similar to the way a physician writes a prescription for a medication, a RxTGA prescription is written (see attached EMR file) suited to the patient. After receiving the prescription, the patient is advised to visit the RxTGA website for access to a wealth of online resources and a list of member recreation facilities who offer a 30-day free access. *Note: there is no quota, no fee, no term of commitment – just a willingness to participate and help your patients become healthier through an active lifestyle.*

By partnering healthcare and community recreation, Prescription to Get Active provides individuals the resources and recreation access needed to help remove barriers associated with inactivity. By encouraging those who are at risk and providing them the tools to adopt and maintain a healthful exercise lifestyle we hope it will help reverse or slow the progression of chronic disease. As a result, help reduce the burden on the overall healthcare system.

We look to you, as leaders in the healthcare community, to share this information with the members of your team and consider becoming members and partners for a healthier Ontario.

Please contact me with questions and for further information.

A Prescription To Get Active could be the most important prescription.

Yours in health,

Lori Longwell

Project Manager – Ontario

Prescription To Get Active

P: 866-212-7552

www.prescriptiontogetactive.com

1. Hirvensalo M, Heikkinen E, Lintunen T, Rantanen T. The effect of advice by health care professionals on increasing physical activity of older people. *Scand J Med Sci Sports*. 2003 Aug; 13(4): 231-6.
2. Petrella R, Koval J, Cunningham D, Paterson D. Can primary care doctors prescribe exercise to improve fitness?: The step test exercise prescription (STEP) project. *Amer J of Preventative Med*. 2003 May; 24(4): 316-322.