

Welcome to the Navigator Program



What is the Navigator Program?

The Navigator Program is a new program to help parents who are caring for a child with complex medical needs. It will provide non-medical supports to help parents in their caregiving role. The program has been funded for 5 years by the Government of Canada (Social Development Partnership Program). Pincrest-Queensway Community Health Centre (PQCHC) works with CHEO to provide this program.

Our goals are to:

- Promote the social and emotional health of families;
- Help families access and navigate key supports and services;
- Increase understanding of the best ways to support families;
- Find gaps in the system, and find solutions to the problems families often face.

Navigator Program pillars

The program has 3 components, or pillars, to support program goals.



System Navigator:

System Navigators will:

- Help parents navigate the complex web of resources outside of their child's medical care;
- Build on family strengths;
- Provide social and emotional support.



Parent Navigator:

Parent Navigators bring their own personal, lived experiences caring for a child with complex medical needs. They will offer "peer-to-peer" support in areas like:

- Daily living;
- Social support networks;
- Recreation;
- Parent health and wellbeing;
- Personal planning.



Knowledge Navigation:

This involves gathering information to develop more effective tools and strategies for supporting parents. We'll learn from parents and caregivers about their needs and where there are gaps in support. Through this process, we aim to:

- Improve our understanding of parents' lived experience;
- Identify gaps in services;
- Find solutions to common difficulties that families face;
- Increase access to information, training and education for parents, employers and professionals, on ways to effectively support parents and caregivers;
- Establish practice guidelines and develop effective ways to share knowledge;
- Build a high quality, sustainable system to support parents locally, provincially and nationally.



What can parents expect from the Navigator Program?



One on one support: Parent and System Navigators will meet with parents one on one to help them to connect with the supports they need, related to:

- Reaching employment or education goals;
- Improving knowledge and access to key supports;
- Expanding social support networks;
- Strengthening relationships;
- Coping with stress;
- Developing self-care habits;
- Finding accessible recreation;
- Handling day to day issues;
- Other issues as needed.



Parent support groups: Led by the team social worker, group discussions will focus on issues families identify.



Social gatherings: Hosted by Parent Navigators, these gatherings will give parents and caregivers a chance to

- Connect with other families;
- Share ideas;
- Learn from each other.



System improvements

Our Navigator Program staff will:

- Develop online resources to inform and connect parents, employers and professionals with the information needed to support parents and caregivers.
- Work with new and existing partners to address gaps in the system, and improve services.
- Develop a community of practice for social workers, parents and caregivers, so we can share knowledge and keep improving.

How do we apply for the Navigator Program?

Parents and caregivers must meet certain criteria to take part in the Navigator program. To have support from the Navigator program:

✓ You must be the parent or caregiver of a medically complex or fragile child or teen who is under 18 years of age.

✓ Your child or teen must:

- Be currently receiving services from CHEO.
- Have at least one of the following:
 - Many medical problems (that may or may not have an overriding diagnosis);
 - Many specialty teams involved in care;
 - A chronic condition that requires ongoing, frequent or time consuming medical treatments (this can include managing 24 hour care).

For more information, or to enroll in the Navigator Program, please visit:

<http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/Program-Navigator>

Email: Navigator@cheo.on.ca

Telephone: 613-737-7600 extension 3511.

