



What is the ODSP application process?

The application **must** be completed and submitted within 3 months of patient receiving it.

If application is properly completed and evidence is considered strong enough, ODSP will be granted. This is a best case scenario and usually takes 3 - 6 months in our jurisdiction.

If the application is not successful, it goes on to an internal review by a different adjudicator. Medical evidence can be added at this point.

If the internal review is not successful (as is commonly the case), the application must proceed to hearing. Wait times for hearing dates vary, and can be one year or more.

If the patient retains a lawyer who requests medical reports in support of the appeal, the patient usually must pay for the costs associated with these reports if the appeal is successful.

What do I need to know about the ODSP application?

➤ It is better to complete the forms *with* the patient, as there may be questions on the forms that have never come up during patient interviews.

➤ It is *very* important to include as much detail as possible about the patient and his/her status. Include all evidence such as imaging studies, psychiatric reports, and counseling notes if appropriate.

➤ You may want to involve other health care professionals such as Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, and Nurses as they may be able to provide more detailed information about aspects of the patient's status.

➤ When documenting illness, it is important to include both medications and dosage, as this can be taken to indicate the severity of the disease.

➤ Drug and alcohol addictions can now be considered when assessing eligibility for ODSP. You should include information about addictions on the application, even if the patient is in remission.

➤ Time spent completing ODSP forms is billable under OHIP.

➤ Pursuing ODSP benefits is a time consuming process, and is often *extremely* stressful for patients, particularly those with mental health issues. Proper completion of the application can avoid much of the delay and can minimize the negative impacts on the patient.

What about the terms used in the Health Status Report?

On page 4 of the Health Status Report, you will find 3 terms that often cause confusion. Here we attempt to clarify them.

1) "Condition"

The patient need not have a fully defined or medically recognizable diagnosis. Instead, you may simply describe the condition as best possible (e.g. chronic pain of unknown origin).

2) "Impairment"

This is typically understood to mean the patient's symptoms, or physical or psychiatric manifestations of the condition. For example, for a patient with anxiety disorder, the impairments could include panic attacks and discomfort in social situations.

3) "Restriction"

This relates to the impacts on the patient's functioning, or activities of daily living. With anxiety disorder, the restrictions could be an inability to form social relationships or function in crowded situations.

What are some frequently asked questions?

What if I'm doubtful of the validity of the patient's disability?

You are not being asked to decide whether the patient should receive ODSP, only to provide medical information. You must give an accurate assessment of the patient's situation. It is up to the adjudicator to determine whether the patient qualifies for ODSP.

Doesn't ODSP discourage patients from returning to work?

Actually, the ODSP system is designed to encourage a transition back to independent living. Patients are able to supplement their ODSP benefits with employment income. If the earnings of a recipient increase to such a degree that ODSP deems the person financially self-sufficient, ODSP can still provide supports such as a drug card to ease the transition into the workforce. The rapid reinstatement program also allows many recipients who left ODSP due to employment earnings to come back to ODSP if they lose their job, stop working or their earnings decrease.

How much money do ODSP recipients receive?

This can vary according to factors such as the number of dependents in the household. However, in general individuals receiving ODSP struggle to meet living expenses from this source.

Who can I contact in Kingston if I have more questions about completing the ODSP application?

The Independent Living Centre

A useful resource for applicants requiring help filling out the self-assessment portion of the application.

☎ (613) 542-8353

💻 info@ilckingston.com



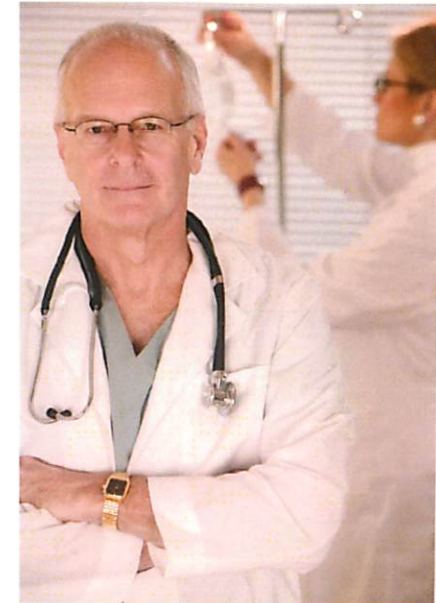
Useful for both applicants and their physicians.

☎ (613) 541-0777

💻 www.kclc.ca

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Ontario Disability Support Program: Information for Physicians



A guide for Kingston and Area physicians completing the ODSP application package