

Frequently Asked Questions

This information provides an overview of AHS Outpatient and Community Physiotherapy Services in Edmonton and Calgary including surrounding areas as of **March 1, 2022**.

1. What are AHS Outpatient and Community Physiotherapy Services?

AHS offers funded physiotherapy services for Albertans with specific physical concerns to help improve their function, better understand their condition and learn what they can do to be healthy and independent. This includes physiotherapy services for:

- General joint or muscle conditions or injuries
- Recent fractures or orthopedic surgeries (e.g. bones and joints)
- Recent hip or knee replacements through group intervention.

AHS-funded physiotherapy services are provided virtually or in-person through AHS facilities (outpatient) or community clinics who have contracts with AHS. AHS also provides, general rehabilitation advice at no cost through the [Rehabilitation Advice Line](#) (RAL) 1-833-379-0563 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

2. What areas are the services available in?

Service coverage for Calgary Zone includes Calgary, Canmore, Banff, Okotoks, High River, Chestermere, Cochrane, Airdrie and Strathmore. Edmonton Zone includes Edmonton, Devon, Morinville, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, St. Albert, Leduc, Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park and Beaumont.

Services launched in Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray and Sexsmith on July 1, 2021 in the first stage of rollout. Services in Redwater will launch March 1, 2022.

3. Who is eligible for AHS-funded physiotherapy services?

See below for information on the eligibility criteria for each concern and how to access AHS-funded physiotherapy services as of March 1, 2022.

General joint or muscle conditions or injuries	
Who:	Adults and children
Eligibility:	All Albertans can call the Rehabilitation Advice Line for general advice. Low-income Albertans may be eligible for virtual or in-person services provided in an AHS facility or through a community clinic that has a contract with AHS.
How to access:	Call the Rehabilitation Advice Line 1-833-379-0563 Available Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visit ahs.ca/ral for more information

Fractures and orthopedic surgeries	
Who:	Adults and children
Eligibility:	Fracture and orthopedic surgery happened within the last 12 weeks. Physiotherapy clinics must have AHS approval if care needs to start later than 12 weeks.
How to access:	No referral needed. Search for <i>Fractures, Joint and Muscle Injuries or Surgery – Orthopedic</i> in the directory to find a clinic and book an assessment: ahs.ca/adultrehab
Hip and knee replacements	
Who:	Adults
Eligibility:	Surgery happened within the last 12 weeks. Physiotherapy clinics must have AHS approval if care needs to start later than 12 weeks.
How to access:	No referral needed. Search for <i>Surgery – Hip and Knee Replacement</i> in the directory to find a clinic and book an assessment: ahs.ca/adultrehab

4. How does AHS determine who qualifies for in-person or virtual AHS-funded physiotherapy for general joint or muscle conditions or injuries?

AHS offers funded in-person or virtual services for Albertans with general joint or muscle conditions or injuries who meet low-income criteria. To determine low-income, AHS considers a person’s income and family size or participation in a number of Alberta or Canadian government subsidy programs.

5. What can be expected from in-person or virtual AHS-funded Outpatient and Community Physiotherapy Services?

A registered physiotherapist will assess a patient’s needs and work with them to develop a treatment plan. Physiotherapists are movement specialists who are trained to help people participate in their daily activities by helping them improve function and manage their pain and concerns.

Active participation in recovery will be encouraged throughout a patient’s treatment. In general, physiotherapy services will include:

- An assessment
- A home exercise program
- Education on your condition and how to manage daily living
- Education to support ongoing activity and long-term recovery.

Physiotherapy for hip or knee replacements will be provided in a group as appropriate. During the visits, a physiotherapist will help patients learn exercises and activities to do at home and how to modify them to be easier or more comfortable.

6. How many AHS-funded visits will be given?

The number of visits eligible Albertans will receive depends on the type of concern they are seeing physiotherapy for, its complexity and AHS' service standards:

- Post fracture or orthopedic surgery patients will be eligible for an assessment and up to three or four visits
- Patients with complex concerns may be eligible for up to six visits
- Post hip and knee replacement patients will be eligible for up to six group classes
- Eligible low income Albertans will receive up to four visits for general joint or muscle conditions or injuries.

Albertans can speak with their clinic about visit eligibility for post-fracture or post-surgical physiotherapy.

7. Where are AHS-funded physiotherapy services provided?

AHS-funded physiotherapy services are provided in community clinics that have a contract with AHS and also some AHS facilities.

Not all physiotherapy clinics in communities have contracts with AHS. Starting March 1, 2022, view the list of Outpatient & Community Physiotherapy clinics: ahs.ca/adultrehab.

8. What if someone is not eligible for AHS-funded physiotherapy?

Albertans can choose to pay out of pocket or use third-party benefits to access the physiotherapy service provider of their choice.

All Albertans can call the Rehabilitation Advice Line for general advice at 1-833-379-0563. The service provides information on:

- Activities and exercises that help with physical concerns
- Strategies to manage the day-to-day activities affected by these concerns
- Rehabilitation services that are open for in-person and/or virtual visits
- Community-based organizations.