Access to Healthcare

Key Points

- Individual and system (or structural) level barriers impede access to healthcare.

Research suggests that some people with HIV have problems accessing and navigating the healthcare system because of individual-level barriers due to personal circumstances (e.g., financial, mental health), as well as systems-level or structural barriers (e.g., geography, stigma, clinic hours).

These barriers can negatively impact the ability of some people to access healthcare. For example, refugees may experience system-level barriers in the form of lack of access to provincial healthcare coverage. People who use drugs may experience both individual- and system-level barriers in the form of mental illness, stigma and discrimination, and lack of providers experienced in the care of this population.

The ability to access healthcare may also depend on where someone lives in Canada. For example, people in rural communities may have fewer services available to them and may need more travel time or assistance to access healthcare services.

Sources


Disclaimer

Decisions about particular medical treatments should always be made in consultation with a qualified medical practitioner knowledgeable about HIV- and hepatitis C-related illness and the treatments in question.

CATIE provides information resources to help people living with HIV and/or hepatitis C who wish to manage their own health care in partnership with their care providers. Information accessed through or published or provided by CATIE, however, is not to be considered medical advice. We do not recommend or advocate particular treatments and we urge users to consult as broad a range of sources as possible. We strongly urge users to consult with a qualified medical practitioner prior to undertaking any decision, use or action of a medical nature.

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Information on safer drug use is presented as a public health service to help people make healthier choices to reduce the spread of HIV, viral hepatitis and other infections. It is not intended to encourage or promote the use or possession of illegal drugs.

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