



Patient & Family Guide
2026

Eating Disorder Inpatient Program



www.nshealth.ca

Eating Disorder Inpatient Program

What is the Eating Disorder Inpatient Program?

- The Eating Disorder Inpatient Program is a voluntary inpatient (in hospital) program for people 18 years old or older who have an eating disorder.
- The goals of the program are to help you:
 - › Manage your eating disorder symptoms
 - › Get to and stay at a healthy weight
 - › Get and stay healthy
- How long you stay in the program will depend on your physical and mental health. This can be hard to predict. While you are in the hospital, your health care team will help you get ready for discharge.
- Before you are admitted, you will talk with an eating disorder nurse about the program and what to expect. Your support persons are welcome to come to these meetings.
- Once you have finished the inpatient program, we recommend that you continue in the outpatient program (in your community).

Who is the Eating Disorder Inpatient Program for?

- The inpatient program is for people who:
 - › Do not weigh enough to take part in the outpatient program
 - › Need to become medically stable (have health problems from not eating enough)
 - › Have tried other options at home that have not fully helped stop their eating disorder behaviours
- You and your health care team will decide together if the inpatient program is right for you.

Your health care team

Nurses

- There are nurses who will:
 - › Monitor (check) your health
 - › Support you during meals
 - › Give emotional support

Psychiatrist

- The psychiatrist will meet with you once a week. They will monitor your progress and help manage your medication(s).

Recreation therapist

- The recreation therapist will help you find recreation activities (like art, music, and community outings) to enjoy during and after your stay.

Social workers

- Social workers are available to help you with the next steps in your recovery, like social services (income assistance, help with finding a job) and finding housing.

Dietitian

- The dietitian will help make a meal plan to meet your nutritional needs.

What are your questions?

Please ask a member of your health care team. We are here to help you.

Where is the Eating Disorder Inpatient Program?

Abbie J. Lane Memorial Building, 7th floor
QE II Health Sciences Centre
5909 Veterans' Memorial Lane, Halifax

The Program is in a 25-bed secured psychiatric unit for people with different conditions. The inpatient eating disorder room is for people with any type of eating disorder. It has 3 beds.

Where do I go for the Eating Disorder Inpatient Program?

- Go to the main doors of the Abbie J. Lane Memorial Building on Veterans' Memorial Lane. Tell security staff that you are being admitted.
- Take the elevator to the 7th floor. An inpatient nurse will meet you at the time you have chosen.

What will happen on my first day?

- When you arrive, the nurse will check you in. They will:
 - › Check your belongings. This is to make sure the unit is safe for everyone. See the packing list on page 6 of things you might like to bring to make your stay more comfortable.
 - › Give you a tour of the unit, bring you to your room, and give you time to settle in and unpack. You will have up to 2 roommates who may be any age or gender.
 - › Take your vital signs (temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and breathing) and ask about your medical history. A doctor will give you a physical exam.
 - › Review what is expected of you on the unit and your contract for treatment. A contract is an agreement about your care plan. It lists things that you and your health care team can do to support your recovery.

The nurses are here to support you during your stay. If you have any concerns, please talk with your nurse.

Packing list

We want you to be comfortable while you work on your recovery. You may want to bring:

- Comfortable, loose-fitting clothes (like pyjamas or sweatpants). Tight-fitting clothes are **not** allowed. This helps with your recovery.
- Robe and slippers
- Flip-flops to wear in the shower
- Sneakers to wear for recreation and outings
- Medications
- Toiletries (like shampoo and conditioner, period pads or tampons)
- Bedding. Hospital bedding is provided, but you may want to bring your own pillow and blanket.
- Pictures
- Activities
 - › Games
 - › Craft supplies
 - › Laptop or tablet
 - › Cell phone
 - › Headphones
 - › Books
 - › Journal

Note: Sharp items (like razors) are locked in the patient belongings room. Please ask a member of your health care team if you would like to use something.

- Please leave all valuables (like jewelry, money, credit cards, cheque books) at home or send them home with a support person. The hospital is not responsible for the loss of any item.
- We will check your belongings when you are admitted. You can be there while we check them.

What treatment will I have?

Medical monitoring

- We will monitor your physical health:
 - › You will have a blood test each day for the first 7 days (1 week) you are in the hospital. You may have extra blood tests after this, if needed.
 - › You will have an electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG) to check how well your heart is working on your first day in the hospital.
 - › Your nurse will check your vital signs (blood pressure, heart rate, temperature) as needed.

Meals

- You will be supported to eat 3 meals and 3 snacks a day. We believe that all foods fit and that **there are no good or bad foods**. You will be exposed to a wide variety of foods. Nursing staff will support you in finishing your meals.
- After a meal, you will be asked to check in with the nurse. The nurse will ask you to talk about how you felt while eating. We try to avoid talking about nutrition. We focus on the emotional or psychological experience of eating.
- During and after each meal, we will give you emotional support and teach you skills to help improve your relationship with food.

Activity

- Depending on your care plan, you may be on bedrest. You may wish to bring activities that can be done while sitting or lying in bed (like crafts, journals, books, or a device with headphones to watch movies). Our recreation therapist can help you find activities you enjoy.

Washroom

- Depending on your care plan, you may be supervised while using the washroom. This is to help stop any behaviours that are getting in the way of your recovery.
- Your washroom door may be locked for your own safety or for the safety of your roommates.

Weight

- We will monitor your weight on Monday and Thursday mornings. This will help us track your progress while you are in the hospital.
- We understand that this experience can be hard. We are here to support you.

Therapy

- You will meet with nurses once a week. These nurses have training to provide therapy for different types of eating disorders. These meetings are called **case management**.

- Your health care team will teach you skills to help you cope, like:
 - › Distress tolerance skills (like deep breathing, ways to distract from negative emotions, mindfulness)
 - › Emotional regulation (how to manage your feelings)

These skills will help you get ready for the next step in your recovery.

Medication

- Your health care team will help you manage your medications. If you have any questions about your medications, please ask a member of your health care team.

Passes

- You may be given a pass to leave the unit or to go home. This will depend on what stage of the program you are in. You and your health care team will decide when you are ready for a pass.

Visitors

- Visitors can help improve your mood.
- Ask your support persons if they are comfortable visiting.
 - › Talk with a nurse to make sure the visiting room is free when you plan to have visitors.
 - › Tell the front desk staff so they can let your visitors on the unit.
- Everyone can have visitors from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. each day.
- Additional visiting hours are based on your treatment plan. You and your health care team will decide what visiting hours are right for you.

How can my support persons help with my recovery?

- It is up to you to decide what you are comfortable sharing with your loved ones, classmates, or coworkers. You may choose to share why you are in the hospital or to keep it private.
- **Your health information will be kept private unless you consent (agree) for it to be shared.** If you would like your health information to be shared with a support person, please talk with your nurse.

Ask for help

- Your loved ones may want to help, but not know how. If you need something (like a visitor, extra clothes, or someone to talk with), please ask.

Planning for discharge

- Moving from the inpatient program to the outpatient program is a positive step in your recovery, but it can be hard. Your support persons can help you as you continue to recover.
- For more information, ask a member of your health care team for pamphlet 2381, Nova Scotia Eating Disorder Provincial Service, scan the QR code below, or visit:
 - › www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/2381

Scan the QR code on your device (open the camera on your device, point the camera at the code, and tap the banner or border that appears



- You may choose to include your support persons in your discharge plan. Think about what they can do to support your recovery. For example, they can:
 - › Eat meals with you
 - › Check in with you regularly

Feedback

People who have been in the program have said:

“Accepting inpatient treatment was not easy, but it was easily one of the best decisions I have made. It taught me how to take charge of my own health and gave me the tools I needed to recover from my eating disorder.”

“My time as an inpatient was challenging yet liberating. I remember feeling scared and uncertain at first, but as time went on I could feel myself breaking free from my eating disorder. I am so glad that I committed myself to the process and very thankful to my care team for helping me recover.”

“Becoming an inpatient was the first step I took to push back against my eating disorder. The time I spent in hospital was challenging, but worth every minute. Now that I am healthy again, I can see just how important the inpatient experience was to my recovery.”

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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