

# Ontario 2021

## Budget Submission

February 2021



SPINAL CORD INJURY ONTARIO  
LÉSIONS MÉDULLAIRES ONTARIO

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Modernizing Ontario Public  
Coverage for Intermittent  
Catheters and Related Supplies

## ISSUE – Red Tape; Complexity and Duplicity with Public Coverage Programs

Individuals with a neurological condition, including a spinal cord injury, may not be able to empty their bladder on their own which can lead to chronic urinary retention and serious health problems such as bladder damage or kidney disease.

To prevent these problems from happening a catheter is used up to five times a day to drain the bladder, a process called “intermittent catheterization”. In Ontario, an estimated **33,000 individuals** rely on intermittent catheterization for their daily life<sup>1</sup>.

All intermittent catheters are sold *sterile* and for *single use only*, but due to a lack of public funding, many people need to **reuse their catheters** to save money. **Reusing** single-use catheters poses both a safety risk with individuals suffering from **repeated urinary tract infections (UTIs)** and **potential liability risk** when healthcare professionals provide information about how to clean catheters as that is considered **off-label use** according to the Canadian Medical Protective Association<sup>2</sup>.

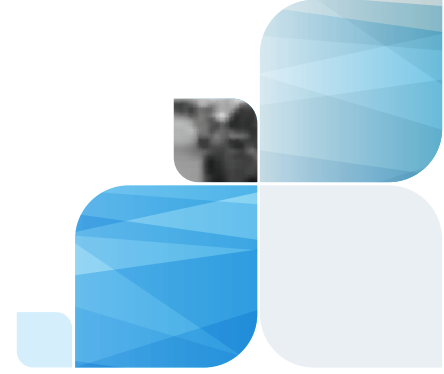
Provincial programs to fund intermittent catheters across **multiple government departments**, are **cumbersome** to apply for, **expensive to administer** and **fail to take a value-based approach** for how government can improve upon the money they are already spending to provide better public coverage for these essential medical supplies.

### RECOMMENDATIONS – ONTARIO 2021 BUDGET

1. Conduct a review of all intermittent catheter government funding programs to find both system and cost efficiencies;
2. Commit to this work in the 2021 Ontario Budget;
3. Ensure SCIO Community has a seat at the table to analyze the review findings and advance value-based procurement for intermittent catheters and supplies.

<sup>1</sup> Health Quality Ontario. Intermittent catheters for chronic urinary retention: A health technology assessment. ON Health Technol Assess Ser. 2019;19(1):1-153. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6395058/>

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Medical Protective Association. Risk management when reusing drugs or medical devices off-label. Retrieved from: <https://www.cmpa-acpm.ca/en/advice-publications/browse-articles/2012/risk-management-when-using-drugs-or-medical-devices-off-label>



## **Path To Modernize Ontario Public Coverage for Intermittent Catheters and Supplies**

The following provides the Government of Ontario with a path forward for **modernizing** the funding available for individuals needing to use intermittent catheters and related supplies<sup>3</sup>.

If implemented, government programs will reduce red tape, improve procurement practices, achieve greater value for the government and provide people with what they need; simply and efficiently.

### **Reducing Red Tape and Finding System Efficiencies**

1. Conduct an examination of the overlapping government programs for intermittent catheters to uncover hidden costs and opportunities to reduce red tape.
2. Prioritize the implementation of a new modern funding program for intermittent catheters that delivers system and financial efficiencies for better patient care.
3. Leverage best practices from other jurisdictions e.g., Saskatchewan style program via approved distributors.

### **Optimizing Procurement to Achieve Greater Value**

4. Procure for a comprehensive medical supply coverage program that both allows for consistency of product choice through the continuity of care and prevents patients from needing to reuse single-use catheters.
5. Support the Health Canada, nursing and physician position that single-use catheters should not be reused as they are approved to be used only once and then discarded.

### **Providing Patient-Centred Care**

6. Ensure access to specialty nurses with knowledge, skills and judgement in bladder health and continence.
7. Improve the hospital to community transition of Indigenous Ontarians who have suffered a spinal cord injury (SCI) or other health conditions that cause bladder dysfunction.
8. Increase access to specialist nurses to improve assessment and timely access to products and supplies by filling out and submitting forms correctly.
9. Determine how to better support Ontarians who work seasonally and who may have limited access to current funding information.

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<sup>3</sup> Spinal Cord Injury Ontario ( November 2020): A Path to Modernize Public Coverage in Ontario for Intermittent Catheters and Related Supplies. Retrieved from <https://sciontario.org/advocacy/advocacy-scio/your-move-ontario-2021-policy-report/>