

Patient Demographics: Best Practices

Registering a New Patient

When registering a new patient, it is important that you attempt to collect these five pieces of patient information in your EMR. These identifiers will be needed to link to other provincial data sources and information systems:

- Full legal name (first, middle, and last)
- Personal Health Identification Number (PHIN) If the patient is not an insured Manitoba resident, you should record their jurisdictional health card number
- Date of birth
- Gender; values compatible with Manitoba's claims system include M (male), F (female) and U (unknown)
- Address and phone number
- Manitoba Health Registration Number (when applicable); this is a family registration number and may not be unique to the individual patient

Did you know?

The patient's middle name can be the determining factor when distinguishing between patients with the same first and last name.

Recording Patient Address Information

- Always follow Canada Post Standards <https://www.canadapost.ca/tools/pg/manual/PGaddress-e.asp?ecid=murl10006450> for address street name spelling and abbreviations
- Connect apartment or unit number to house or building number with a hyphen but with no spaces (e.g. 15-23 Main St)
- Capture a civic address with a numeric street name by placing a space in between (e.g. 123 22 Ave)
- Do not use periods to enter a post office (PO) box
- Do not use a number sign when entering a PO box
- If the patient has no fixed address, enter "no fixed address" in the street address field; do not enter another party's address, a dummy address or your clinic address
- If a patient has both a PO box number and a street address, but your EMR has only one field for address, record the post address. That ensures your correspondence will reach the patient

More tips

Name

- If permitted within your EMR product, record other patient names such as a maiden name or alias, if applicable
- If the given or family name is not known, enter “unknown” or “infant” in the case of an unknown given name of a newborn
- Limit the use of punctuation to hypens, periods, and apostrophes
- Do not record initials unless the patient’s name is actually a one-character name or they refuse to give their first name
- Do not record titles such as Dr. in a legal name field

PHIN

- All Manitoba PHIN are nine digits and begin with the number 1
- If the PHIN is unknown, enter nine zeros
- Do not enter a family member’s PHIN; they are unique to each patient

Date of Birth

- If the patient’s date of birth is unknown, use 1900-01-01
- If the day of birth is unknown, the partial date of birth may be entered as YYYY-MM-00 (e.g. 1985-12-00)

- If a patient advises that the day portion of their date of birth is incorrect on their health card, capture the correct day, not the day indicated on the card

Manitoba Health Registration Number (MHRN)

- All MHRN are 6 digits or 6 alphanumeric characters and should always include any leading zeros and capital letters only (when applicable)
- The mother’s MHRN is used as the newborn’s number; do not use the father’s number unless it is the same as the mother’s

Did you know?

At birth, an infant’s family name is recorded as the mother’s family name (as it appears on the mother’s health card).

When first registering twins with unknown given names, you may use Infant A and Infant B as their given names.

Did you know?

Patients may update an incorrect “day” of birth over the phone

Did you know?

When a patient turns 18, they automatically get their own MHRN