

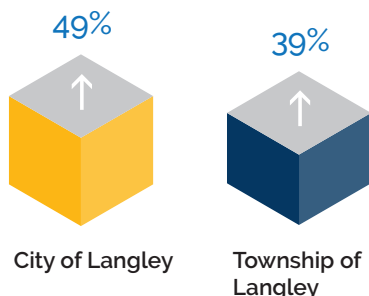
# Immigrant Healthcare Guide

## Health and Medical Services in Langley

During the last Census period (2016 – 2021) the Township of Langley welcomed 3,805 new immigrants and the City of Langley welcomed 1,310. The City had the biggest increase in its immigrant population of any community in B.C. at nearly 49% and the Township saw the second biggest increase at nearly 33%. At these numbers, Langley is welcoming three new immigrants every day, each one needing housing, employment and access to healthcare.

In a survey of immigrants living in Langley, 54% reported it was “hard to find a family doctor,” and that it was “hard to find information about health care services.” The Canadian health care system is complex and hard to navigate, especially for newcomers. English language skills, cultural differences and limited understanding of how healthcare is provided in B.C. make it more challenging. With funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Langley Local Immigration Partnership (LLIP) developed this guide to assist newcomers and those supporting them better understand the health services and supports available in Langley.

**% of Growth in the New  
Immigrant Population  
2016-2021**



**The City and Township of Langley showed the largest growth of new immigrants of any B.C. community. At least 3 new immigrants arrive in Langley daily, each needing housing, employment and access to healthcare.**

### Understanding Canadian Healthcare

**Understanding the Canadian healthcare system is important:**

**Respect for Privacy:** Any medical information and your medical files are confidential and will only be shared with your consent.

**Informed Consent:** Healthcare providers will explain treatment options, and it is important to ask questions and give consent before any medical procedures.

**Health Beliefs:** Share your health beliefs and practices with your healthcare provider to receive the care you need.

# Step by Step Guide for Newcomers

## Enrolling in the British Columbia Medical Services Plan (MSP)

New immigrants and refugees need to understand the process of enrolling in B.C.'s Medical Services Plan (MSP) to ensure they have access to essential healthcare services. Here are the key steps and information they should be aware of:

**Eligibility Requirements** All Canadian citizens and permanent residents (PRs) are eligible for MSP. To maintain access to MSP, you must be physically present in B.C. for at least six months in a calendar year.

**Waiting Period** It's crucial to apply for MSP as soon as possible after arriving in B.C. The effective date of coverage is typically the first day of the third month following the month of arrival. Applying promptly ensures that healthcare coverage begins as soon as possible. During this waiting period, newcomers should get private health insurance to cover their healthcare needs.

**Document Requirements** To enroll in MSP, newcomers will need to provide proof of permanent residency, and a permanent address in B.C. It's essential to have these documents ready when applying.

**Application Process** Newcomers must apply for MSP by completing the MSP enrollment application form. This form is available online on the B.C. government's website: [How to Apply](#); Paper copies are available at local **Service B.C. offices; Surrey: 200 – 10470 152nd Street**, and in **Maple Ridge: 22470 Dewdney Trunk Road**. You can also apply at an **ICBC driver licencing office; in Langley: 19950 Willowbrook Drive**. Newcomers can also get help with their application from settlement agencies.

**Private Healthcare Insurance** While MSP provides basic healthcare coverage, newcomers may want to have additional health insurance to cover services not included in MSP, like prescription drugs, dental care, and vision care.

**Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)** The Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) provides limited, temporary coverage of health-care benefits to people in the following groups who are not eligible for provincial or territorial health insurance: protected persons, including resettled refugees, refugee claimants, and certain other groups. For more information, please follow this link: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/summary-ifhp.asp>.

To get the most current and detailed information, visit [B.C.'s Medical Services Plan](#), or contact [Service BC](#).

## Medical Services and Supports Available in Langley

**Family doctors** To find a family doctor, add yourself to the Patient Attachment Waitlist, available by phoning 8-1-1. You can also register with the [Health Connect Registry](#) to be matched with a family doctor. There is a shortage of family practitioners, and delays are likely.

If you have a **minor health issue, you can go to a pharmacist**. They can assess, offer advice, and prescribe medication. Learn more at [Expanded Pharmacy Services](#).

The [Langley Public Health Unit](#) offers health services including pregnancy and early child health, immunizations, hearing testing and much more. Visit their website or go to **#110 - 6470 201 Street**. For more health services information, visit [Fraser Health](#).

The [New Canadian Clinic](#) is managed by the Fraser Health Authority and provides primary care for government assisted refugees, privately sponsored refugees, and refugee claimants. The clinic is located at the: **Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre at 9750 – 140th Street, Surrey**.

**Walk-in clinics** for non-emergency medical issues. If you have a health concern and you do not have a family doctor, cannot get an appointment, or need assistance after hours, you can go to a walk-in clinic. Services are free if you have a health card. If you do not have a health card, you can still see a doctor but you will have to pay a fee. This is a list of [clinics in Langley](#).

**Hospital Emergency Rooms** are for medical emergencies. Langley has one hospital called the **Langley Memorial Hospital, located at 22051 Fraser Highway**. To see wait times at Langley Memorial and other hospitals, visit: [wait times](#).

**Urgent and Primary Care Centres (UPCCs)** provide access to same-day, urgent, non-emergency health care. Langley does not have a UPCC; go here to [see a list of Centres](#) near Langley. UPCCs are open on evenings, weekends and statutory holidays. Hours vary by clinic.



## Barriers to Accessing Healthcare Faced by Immigrants and Refugees

Many new immigrants and refugees here and in other B.C. communities face access to healthcare issues for a variety of reasons. These are some of the barriers and challenges they experience:

**Language Barriers** Many new immigrants and refugees have limited English; this, of course, hinders access to healthcare information, communicating with healthcare providers, and understanding medical instructions.

**Delay in Health Insurance Coverage** New immigrants should apply for B.C.'s Medical Services Plan (MSP) as soon as they arrive; there is about a three-month waiting period before they can access these benefits, leaving them without coverage for essential healthcare services.

**Limited Knowledge of the Healthcare System** Navigating a new healthcare system can be confusing, especially for those from countries with different models. Understanding how to access care, finding a family doctor, and knowing when to seek emergency services can be challenging.

**Cultural and Religious Considerations** Some immigrants and refugees may have cultural or religious practices and beliefs that affect their perception of healthcare and their willingness to seek medical treatment. This can lead to delays in seeking care or refusal of certain treatments.

**Trauma and Mental Health Issues** Many refugees and some immigrants have experienced traumatic events in

their home countries. This trauma can have a significant impact on their mental health, and make accessing the appropriate health services difficult.

**Transportation and Geographic Barriers** Langley, like other parts of B.C., is geographically large. Accessing healthcare services may be challenging for newcomers who live in areas with limited public transportation.

**Cultural Competence of Healthcare Providers** Healthcare providers may not always be culturally sensitive or knowledgeable about the specific needs and backgrounds of immigrant and refugee patients. This can result in misunderstandings and suboptimal care.

**Financial Constraints** Even though essential healthcare is covered by insurance in B.C., there are still costs

associated with medications, treatments, and specialized care that some newcomers may struggle to afford.

**Stigmatization and Discrimination** Immigrants and refugees can face discrimination or stigma in healthcare settings, which may deter them from seeking care or disclosing sensitive information to healthcare providers. Many newcomers also worry about the stigma associated with mental health issues and may not access the treatment they need.

**Limited Access to Specialty Care** Some healthcare services, especially specialized care, often have long waiting lists or limited availability, which can disproportionately affect newcomers who may require prompt attention and who have limited understanding of the system and how to advocate for themselves.

## Prescriptions and Dental and Vision Care Financial Supports

**Prescriptions** can be very expensive. People with lower incomes may be able to get **financial support** from [BC PharmaCare](#). This program will assess your ability to pay and provides financial help for medications. Service is available in several languages.

**Dental and vision care** in B.C. is not covered by MSP and can be very expensive. There are a few government support programs available to those with lower incomes. If you receive income assistance, you may qualify for coverage of basic vision and dental costs, including assistance for dental emergencies. In addition, there is the [Canada Dental Benefit \(CDB\)](#) program that helps reduce dental expenses for families earning a net income of under \$90,000 per year.

## Mental Health Supports

The government of B.C. has compiled information and a list of resources and services covering all types of mental health and substance use. Go to [Mental Health and Substance Use Supports](#) to learn more.

The **Langley Mental Health and Substance Use Centre** offers a range of services to support people experiencing mental illness and substance use concerns. The offices are located at **305-20300 Fraser Highway**. Go to [Langley Mental Health and Substance Use Centre](#) to learn more.

**Foundry Centres** offer physical and mental health supports to youth ages 12 – 24. In Langley, the centre is located at **20616 Eastleigh Crescent**. To learn more, go to: [www.foundrybc.ca](http://www.foundrybc.ca)

## Important Healthcare Phone Services

**For emergencies, call 9-1-1** or go to the nearest hospital. Emergency response is available 24/7 and is free for everyone, regardless of MSP coverage. *Expect wait times.* [Check wait times here.](#)

**For non-emergency health questions, call 8-1-1.** You can speak with a health expert who can provide guidance or connect you with healthcare professionals. Service is offered in over 130 languages, anytime.

**Call 2-1-1 to get help finding various services,** including health support and mental health services. Service is offered in over 150 languages, anytime.

## Other Health Resources

Langley offers various community resources that can help improve your well-being:

**Settlement Services** There are many immigrant and refugee serving agencies in Langley that assist newcomers with health-related information and integration into the community. To find a list of settlement service providers, go to [NewToBC Immigrant Programs and Services](#).

**Advanced Care Planning** This guides you to write down your wishes for present or future healthcare treatment if you cannot make decisions for yourself. To learn more, visit [Planning for Advanced Care](#).

**Medical Equipment and Devices** The B.C. Ministry of Health can assist those in need. To learn more, visit [Medical Equipment and Devices](#).

**Interpretation** The Provincial Health Services Authority offers interpretation and translation services in more than 200 languages. To learn more, go to [Provincial Language Services](#).

## About the Langley LIP

The **Langley Local Immigration Partnership** is one of more than 86 Immigration Partnerships in Canada. With funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Langley LIP was established in April 2020 to bring community leaders together to develop and implement a plan to improve immigrant and refugee settlement and integration in the City and the Township of Langley.

For more information about the Langley Local Immigration Partnership contact:

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For more info on the Langley Local Immigration Partnership, visit our website at [www.langleylip.ca](http://www.langleylip.ca)

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