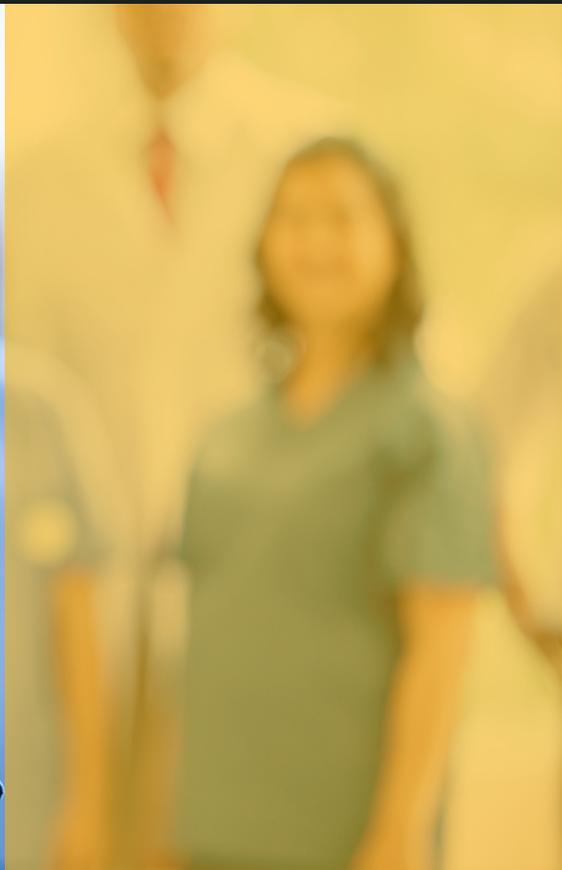


A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO THE DISABILITY TAX CREDIT



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The Disability Tax Credit (DTC) offers significant benefits for people with disabilities who qualify. Physicians can play a key role in supporting patients' applications for the DTC.

This guide will be regularly updated to reflect ongoing changes to the form.



WHY SHOULD PATIENTS APPLY?



- [The DTC](#) is available to individuals with any level of income, including patients receiving disability assistance, patients who work full time, and patients with no income.
 - The DTC can help reduce the amount of taxes owing:
 - In the 2021 tax year, DTC recipients could claim \$8,662 on their taxes. Parents with an eligible child younger than 18 years of age could claim an additional \$5,053, for a total of \$13,715. Returns they receive will be based on income tax.
 - The credits can be claimed retroactively, going back up to 10 years.
 - Even if someone does not owe income tax, unused credit amounts can be transferred to a family member or spouse.
 - The DTC gives access to many [tax-related benefits and supports](#) including an added disability amount to the Canada Workers Benefit, the Canada Disability Benefit, and the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). Those under the age of 50 with an RDSP may qualify for up to \$90,000 in government grants and bonds to support their long-term financial security.
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WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To qualify for the DTC, a person's disability must be:

Prolonged:

The disability must last, or be expected to last, at least 12 months.

Severe:

The patient is unable or takes an inordinate amount of time (approximately three times longer) to perform the activity, even with appropriate therapy and devices. This restriction must occur all, or substantially all of the time.

Patients who have a disability in one or more of the following areas may qualify for the DTC:

- Vision (acuity and field of vision)
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Walking
- Dressing
- Eliminating
- Feeding or preparing food
- Mental functions necessary for everyday life

*Only one severe (marked) restriction is required to qualify.

Patients with two or more restrictions that are less severe may qualify for the DTC under the Cumulative Effects of Significant Restrictions category.

Example:

Your patient can prepare food but must take time to recuperate afterward due to pain or inflammation. They can carry out most mental functions but struggle to initiate or respond appropriately in social interactions due to their acquired brain injury.

Patients can also qualify if they receive life-sustaining therapy. To qualify, a therapy must be:

- needed to support a vital function even if it eases the symptoms,
 - needed at least three times per week, for an average of at least 14 hours per week. These hours can include:
 - i. reasonable time spent determining dietary intake and/or dosage of medication that must be adjusted daily,
 - ii. medical appointments to receive therapy or to determine the daily dosage of medication, and
 - iii. medically required recuperation after therapy.
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HOW CAN I HELP MY PATIENTS?

Medical practitioners can help their patients apply by detailing the patient's functionality in Part B of the application form ([form T2201](#)).



Medical doctors and nurse practitioners can fill out all sections of the form, while other health professionals can help their patients certify specific categories.

For example:

- psychologists can help patients with restrictions in mental functioning;
- occupational therapists can certify restrictions in areas of walking, dressing, feeding, or a combination of these categories.

Health professionals may wish to consult or share medical information with one another to get the full picture of a patient's restrictions.

There are two ways medical practitioners can fill out Part B of the form:

Paper Form

The paper form will include sections for each category. Fill all categories in which your patient is restricted, regardless of severity. Other categories can be left blank. If your patient is not markedly restricted in any single category, be sure to fill the “cumulative effects of restrictions” section.

Eligibility is not based on diagnosis. It is important to be specific and to give examples about your patient’s restrictions.

Online Form

As of October 2021, the application can be started online at:

www.canada.ca/dtc-digital-application

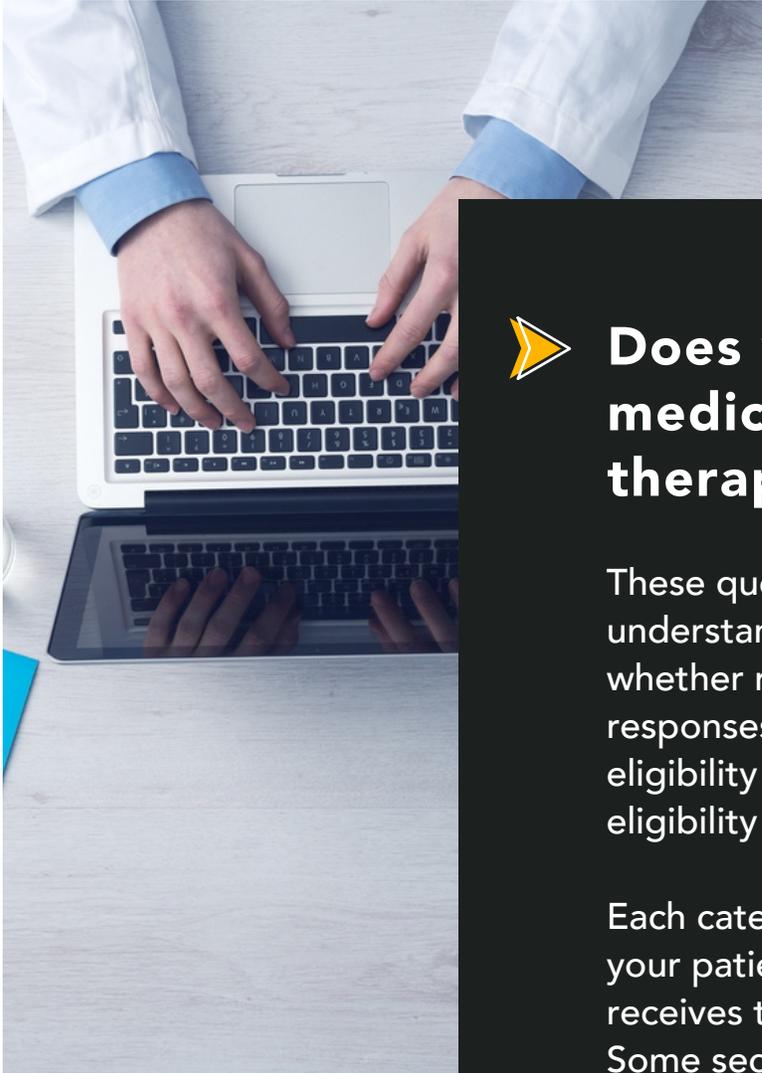
The online form has a questionnaire that will generate a PDF for the client to finish.

When completing the application online, you will be asked to list all the categories your patient is restricted in. It is important here to list all of their restrictions, regardless of severity.

If your patient's restriction does not qualify under a marked restriction, the online application form will automatically consider all restrictions listed to determine whether your patient would qualify under the Cumulative Effects of Significant Restrictions category.

Eligibility is not based on diagnosis. It is important to be specific and to give examples about your patient’s restrictions. Anything not captured in the form’s multiple-choice sections should be entered in the “Other” sections. The online application will automatically enter these responses in the final application form.

GENERAL APPLICATION TIPS



➤ Does your patient take medication or receive therapy?

These questions help the CRA better understand your patient's condition and whether restrictions will improve. Your responses may impact the duration of eligibility but have less of an impact on eligibility itself.

Each category begins by asking whether your patient takes medication or receives therapy for their condition. Some sections, including Vision or Hearing, may also ask you to provide results for specific tests including audiograms, visual acuity measurements, or word discrimination scores.



➤ **How does the CRA assess if a patient has a marked restriction?**

At the end of each section, the CRA will ask you to evaluate your patient's functionality, despite the use to medication or devices. These questions are crucial for the CRA's assessment of the application.

If your patient is unable to complete an activity, or if it takes them a very long time, they will be considered markedly restricted. To qualify as a marked restriction, a restriction must also occur "substantially all of the time". Make sure to compare your patient to someone their age without restrictions.

If your patient has difficulty performing an activity, but it does not take them a long time, this will be considered a significant restriction. A significant restriction will need to be combined with other significant restrictions for a successful application under the Cumulative Effects category.





➤ Frequency and Severity

In each section, practitioners are asked to determine the level of severity of your patient's restrictions using a scale ranging from "mild" to "severe". When determining severity of restrictions, remember to compare your patient's functionality to someone their age without their restrictions.

- If your patient's restrictions are "Moderate to severe" or "Severe" they may qualify with a marked restriction.
- If restrictions are "Moderate", "Mild to Moderate" "Mild", restrictions may be considered significant restrictions and can be applied to the Cumulative Effects category, but will not be considered a marked restriction.

Some sections also assess how often restrictions occur, using a scale that measures frequency from "Rarely" to "Always".

- If restrictions occur "Always" or "Usually", patients may qualify with a marked restriction.
- If restrictions occur "Often", "Occasionally", or "Rarely", restrictions may be considered significant restrictions and can be applied to the Cumulative Effects category, but will not be considered as a marked restriction.

If specific restrictions do not occur all of the time, consider the additional ways that your patient is impacted. If a recurring symptom might be triggered at any point, and it severely restricts their functioning, this may cause someone to be restricted substantially all of the time.



Provide specific examples

Consider the following questions when writing descriptions:

- How often does this effect occur? Explain how a patient is restricted substantially all of the time.
- Do they require help with daily activities? Do they need any supervision?
- Do they use any assistive devices?
- What are some examples that demonstrate how their daily life is impacted? Compare their functionality to someone their age without restrictions. Do they take 2 or 3 times longer to do a task?
- How has their mental health been impacted by their disability?



SECTION- SPECIFIC TIPS

Mental functions necessary for everyday life

Patients may qualify under this category if they are markedly restricted in either:

1. adaptive functioning;
2. memory; or
3. problem solving, goal setting and judgement.

They may also qualify if the cumulative effect of their significant restrictions in any of the three areas, combined with any physical restrictions, is equal to a marked restriction.

When writing descriptions, be sure to include details and examples, such as their:

- need for assistance,
- inability to manage personal care,
- risk of self-harm/suicide,
- effect on social relationships (peers and family members),
- need for repeated instructions or cues,
- impulsivity

People whose mental health impairments are characterized by periodic episodes may qualify if they are restricted substantially all of the time due to the unpredictability of their condition(s).

Certification

At the end of the application form, the CRA will ask how long you have been seeing your patient and if you feel comfortable certifying information for all the years they are applying for. This question will help determine how long your patient will be able to claim any tax credit amounts they may be owed before they apply.

If you feel uncomfortable certifying information for the years before they became your patient, they will only receive the DTC from the year they became your patient. You may wish to consult medical practitioners your patient has previously seen if you feel you are missing information for any years your patient is applying.



QUESTIONNAIRE

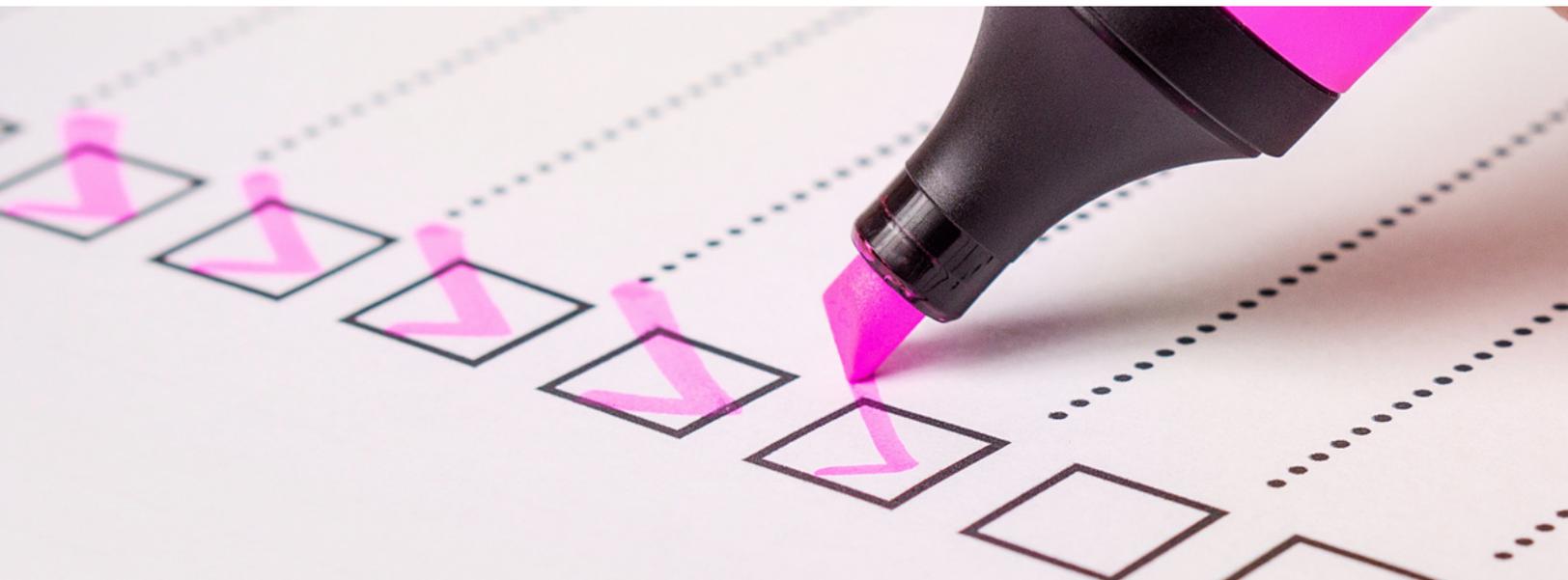
The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) frequently requests additional information regarding the applicant in a follow-up questionnaire specific to each patient.

In this questionnaire, the CRA may ask you to:

- provide examples from your patient's life, explaining how they require additional time to perform activities or are unable to complete certain activities, or
- verify that your patient experiences their restriction(s) substantially all of the time, and that the restrictions are severe.

You may need to re-submit information you already provided. It is best to stay consistent with the original application.

Please use our guidelines in General Application Tips and Section Specific Tips to assist you in completing the questionnaire.



RESOURCES



Canada Revenue Agency Resources

- [Guide RC4064 Disability-Related Information](#)
- [Tax credits and deductions for persons with disabilities](#)
- A dedicated CRA line for health care providers is available to discuss the DTC program, application criteria and the Income Tax Act. Call 1-800-280-2639

Access RDSP Resources

We provide free supports and services for physicians and patients, including:

Tools for your patient:

- [Benefits wayfinder](#): Your patient can find out which disability supports are right for them.
 - [DTC Tool](#): Your patient can go through this questionnaire that will generate materials that can help you with their application.
 - [RDSP Calculator](#): Your patient can use this tool to find out how much they can make if they open an RDSP.
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One-on-One Disability Tax Credit Support:

- Email: rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org
- Toll-free: 1-800-663-1278

RDSP Support:

- Assistance to open an RDSP
- Specialized support and navigation for Indigenous peoples
- RDSP & Disability Planning Helpline
- RDSP & DTC Info sessions for individuals, organizations, and professionals
- \$150 grant for low-income BC residents
- Toll-free 1-844-311-7526 / Email info@rdsp.com

One-on-one DTC and RDSP support for Indigenous patients:

- Email: rdsp1@bcands.bc.ca
- Toll Free: 1-888-815 -5511



CONTACT US:

Access RDSP
Change your tomorrow today



RDSP & Disability Planning Helpline

1-844-311-7526



Email

info@rdsp.com



Website

www.rdsp.com

About Access RDSP

Access RDSP is a province-wide partnership between [Plan Institute](#), [Disability Alliance BC \(DABC\)](#), and [BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society \(BCANDS\)](#) to encourage financial security via uptake of the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

These initiatives are made possible with generous support from the [Vancouver Foundation](#).