

<b>Procedure:</b> 4.3 Eligibility criteria and referral procedure
<b>Approval date:</b> December 11, 2024
<b>Updated (date):</b> October 17, 2025
<b>Approved by:</b> Director, Manitoba HIV Program

### PURPOSE

This procedure outlines the eligibility criteria and referral procedure for PATHS. It is intended to support the Manitoba HIV Program and Public Health providers who refer eligible people living with HIV (PLHIV) to PATHS.

### BACKGROUND

Not all persons who test positive for HIV in Manitoba require PATHS to link and retain in care. For PLHIV that require additional supports and meet eligibility criteria, a referral to PATHS is recommended.

### PROCEDURE

#### Eligibility Criteria for PATHS

A person is eligible for PATHS if their client engagement status is (as per [Manitoba HIV Program HIV Client Engagement Status Definitions](#)):

- “Never Linked to Care” and a period of six months has passed from the date of referral to the Manitoba HIV Program
- “Never Linked to Care” and diagnosed with HIV during pregnancy with documentation\* indicating:
  - limited or no engagement with prenatal care, and
  - more than one missed appointment with assigned HIV care site
- “Disengaged in HIV care” or “Lost to HIV Care”
- “Linked to HIV Care” or “Retained in HIV Care” with a detectable viral load (>500 copies/mL) and have one or more of the following:
  - Pregnant
  - Recurrent STBBIs
  - Untreated mental illness
  - Substance use disorder
  - Houselessness
  - High use of emergency department and/or inpatient admission for care
- “Linked to HIV Care” or “Retained in HIV Care” with a suppressed viral load if suppression was achieved in a custodial setting and there is a documented\* history of treatment interruption post incarceration
- “Linked to HIV Care” or “Retained in HIV Care” with a “target not detected” viral load result if no subsequent viral load result for six months AND documentation\* of non-adherence to dispensed ART

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\*Any required documentation must be clearly included in the PATHS referral.

Referrals to PATHS will be prioritized for assignment to PATHS in the following order. Person living with HIV:

1. is confirmed to be pregnant. If there is more than one pregnant person on the PATHS waitlist, assignment to PATHS will be based on estimated due date and best available collateral.
2. Is living with advanced HIV with a CD4 count <200cells/mm<sup>3</sup> and/or <14%.
3. Has no history of CD4 test results.
4. Referral date to PATHS.

To discuss eligibility prior to submitting a referral, contact the Manitoba HIV Program Client Engagement Coordinator at 1-866-449-0165.

### **Referral Procedure to PATHS**

Referrals to PATHS may be considered by:

- The Manitoba HIV Program care sites,
- Public Health, OR
- The Client Engagement Coordinator at the Manitoba HIV Program

For referrals initiated from the Manitoba HIV Program care sites or Public Health:

1. The most responsible provider (MRP) and/or the assigned nurse should identify eligibility for referral. For nurse-initiated referrals from the Manitoba HIV Program care sites, consultation with the MRP should be completed prior to submitting the referral.
2. Complete a PATHS Referral Form and fax it to the Manitoba HIV Program Client Engagement Coordinator at 204-318-3181.
3. The Manitoba HIV Program Client Engagement Coordinator will receive the PATHS referrals and within five business days, contact the referring provider by phone to confirm receipt of referral and if required, request additional information to assess eligibility.
4. If the referral is appropriate, the Client Engagement Coordinator will assign the PLHIV to a PATHS pod and fax this confirmation to the referring healthcare provider.
5. If the PLHIV does not meet eligibility for PATHS, the Client Engagement Coordinator will contact the healthcare provider by phone and fax and explore resources to promote engagement.

For referrals considered by the Client Engagement Coordinator at the Manitoba HIV Program:

1. The Client Engagement Coordinator identifies a PLHIV who may benefit from PATHS.

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2. The Client Engagement Coordinator will contact the care site or Public Health nurse for additional information to determine eligibility. If met, the Client Engagement Coordinator will request a referral to be completed and submitted by the assigned healthcare provider.
3. The assigned healthcare provider will complete a PATHS Referral Form and fax it to the Manitoba HIV Program Client Engagement Coordinator at 204-318-3181.
4. The Manitoba HIV Program Client Engagement Coordinator will receive the PATHS referrals and within five business days, contact the referring provider by phone to confirm receipt of referral and if required, request additional information to assess eligibility.
5. The Client Engagement Coordinator will assign the PLHIV to a PATHS pod and fax the confirmation to the referring healthcare provider.

#### **PATHS Waitlist**

If the Client Engagement Coordinator is unable to assign an eligible PLHIV to a PATHS pod at time of referral, the Client Engagement Coordinator will:

- Add the PLHIV to the waitlist,
- Notify the referring healthcare provider of the persons status on the waitlist,
- Triage relevant updates from care providers related to the persons status
- Prior to assignment, contact the referring healthcare provider to determine if the PLHIV still meets PATHS eligibility, and
- Notify the referring healthcare provider when a PLHIV has been assigned to a PATHS pod by fax confirmation

While a PLHIV is on the waitlist, the referring healthcare provider will:

- Continue to offer and provide care through the assigned Manitoba HIV Program care site,
- Provide relevant updates on the persons status to the Client Engagement Coordinator, and
- Provide any relevant locating information once the PLHIV has been assigned to a PATHS pod.