

OHIP+ associated with increased stimulant dispensing among children and youth

Stimulants are the most common type of medicine used to treat ADHD, yet not everyone has drug coverage to be able to access this treatment.

Between January 2013 and March 2020:

241,794

individuals 24 years of age or younger were dispensed a stimulant in Ontario.



Median age:

13 years

68%

Male

January 2018:

OHIP+ was introduced

(free, universal access to medications for anyone age 24 years or younger).

Associated with a **significant immediate increase** in the monthly rate of stimulant dispensing:

54 individuals per 100,000 population



Rates increased

14% between December 2017 and March 2019

April 2019:

The program was adjusted to cover only children and youth **without private insurance**.

Associated with an increase in monthly stimulant dispensing trends:

10 individuals per 100,000 population



Rates increased

7.5% between March 2019 and March 2020

Most pronounced and consistent immediate increases observed among **males**, those living in the **highest income neighbourhoods**, and individuals **aged 20 to 24**. Complementary interventions which address sex- and income-based disparities in treatment are needed.