

# Getting Started with the GLA:D™ Canada Program Guide

## Introduction

### What is the GLA:D™ Canada Program?

GLA:D® (Good Life with osteoArthritis in Denmark) is a clinical program developed by researchers in Denmark for individuals with symptoms of knee and/or hip osteoarthritis (OA). Research from the GLA:D® program internationally has shown positive outcomes, including reduced pain intensity, decreased use of joint-related painkillers, and fewer individuals on sick leave. Patients also reported increased levels of physical activity 12-months after start of the program.

The program consists of 3 key components:

- 1) 2 to 3 group education sessions
- 2) 12 tailored and supervised neuromuscular group exercise sessions
- 3) A national database/registry to collect patient outcome measures and support ongoing quality improvement and research

By strengthening muscles and correcting movement patterns, the program aims to reduce pain, improve mobility, and enhance overall quality of life for the patients.

GLA:D™ Canada is licensed to the University Health Network.

## Eligibility & Requirements for Implementing the GLA:D™ Canada Program

### Is the GLA:D™ Canada Program the Right Fit for Your Organization/Clinic?

If you are interested in offering the GLA:D™ Canada program, the following checklist will help you determine whether it aligns with your organization's/clinic's goals and clientele.

#### 1) Clientele

**Is there a need for this program at your organization/clinic?**

Do the individuals you serve experience symptoms of knee and/or hip OA? Do you receive referrals for knee or hip issues, or treat individuals who eventually undergo total joint replacement?

#### 2) Philosophy of Care

**Do you strive to provide evidence-based services as a clinician?**

The GLA:D™ Canada program follows evidence-based guidelines and incorporates the most up-to-date research in OA treatment.

### Is your clinical philosophy focused on achieving measurable outcomes?

The GLA:D™ Canada program includes a national registry to collect patient outcomes for quality monitoring. Annual reports are generated at both provincial and national levels. Clinicians delivering the program receive clinic-specific summary reports to support continuous improvement and demonstrate impact.

## 3) Staff

### Clinicians

GLA:D™ Canada is a clinical treatment program. To deliver the program, eligible clinicians must successfully complete a 1.5-day training course to become certified GLA:D™ Canada instructors.

GLA:D clinician training is appropriate for the following health and exercise professionals who have comprehensive knowledge of exercise prescription and who treat individuals with OA or those who are at high risk for developing OA. Course participants must be eligible to practice in Canada.

- Registered Physiotherapists
- Registered Chiropractors
- Kinesiologists
  - In Ontario, registration must be with the College of Kinesiologists of Ontario
  - In other provinces, individuals must be registered with their professional association
- Clinical Exercise Physiologists certified by the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP-CEP)

Health professionals from other disciplines are not currently eligible to take the training course.

### Multiple GLA:D trained clinicians for coverage

Consider having multiple GLA:D trained clinicians who are able to provide the program. This ensures coverage if a staff member is away and unable to deliver the program.

## 4) Resources for In-person GLA:D™ Canada Program Delivery

**\*\*Note: The GLA:D™ Canada program can also be delivered virtually via telehealth.**

### Space and Equipment for Education Sessions

The program includes two or three group education sessions, each lasting 75- to 90-minutes and delivered through visual presentations.

*Space Requirements:* Seating for all patients for in-person sessions

*Equipment Requirements:* Laptop/computer, projector, screen or blank wall

### Space and Equipment for Exercise Sessions and Functional Tests

The program includes 12 group exercise sessions, each one-hour in duration, delivered twice a week over six-weeks. Each session begins with a 10-minute warm-up, followed by a four station

circuit. Each station consists of two exercises performed in 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions. Patients are closely monitored for proper positioning and control, as well as appropriate exercise progressions. A maximum of 10 patients per trainer is recommended.

**Space Requirements:** Area sufficient for patients to complete a 14-meter walking test without interruption at the start and end of the program for in-person assessments

**Equipment Requirements:**

- Warm-up:
  - Stationary bicycle or treadmill (optional)
- Exercise Stations:
  - Exercise balls of varying sizes
  - Mats
  - Step box with variable heights
  - Therabands of varying resistance
  - Furniture sliders or plastic bags (if facility floors are carpeted)
  - Towels
  - Chairs
  - Foam pillow or thick mattress
  - Mirrors
- Functional Tests:
  - Stop watch
  - Pylons
  - Tape measure (or other device to measure floor length)
  - Chairs

**Computer and Internet Access**

Data collection is an important component of the GLA:D™ Canada program. All patients should be registered in the national database/registry. If patients do not register themselves, clinicians are responsible for completing the registration. However, the entry of an email address during registration for completing web-based questionnaires for quality monitoring is optional. If patients choose not to complete questionnaires, this does not preclude participation in the program. Patients who choose to complete questionnaires typically do so independently at home.

## 5) Clinic and Clinician Registration in the GLA:D™ Canada Registry

To register a clinic to begin implementing the GLA:D™ Canada program, the clinic must have at least one certified GLA:D clinician who will deliver the program. The implementation process enables the registration of both the clinic and its certified GLA:D clinician(s) in the GLA:D™ Canada national registry. Only clinics and clinicians registered in the national registry are authorized to offer the GLA:D™ Canada program. For additional details, please refer to the section below '[Commitment to Data Collection](#)'.

## **Benefits of Providing the GLA:D™ Canada Program**

### **Commitment to Providing a Quality Program**

Clinicians who successfully complete the training course must sign a permission document confirming their agreement to deliver the GLA:D™ Canada program as taught. Upon signing, clinicians will receive certification authorizing them to offer the program to patients. GLA:D™ Canada is a licensed program and cannot be altered; however, clinical judgement remains essential for managing patients with knee and/or hip OA.

GLA:D™ Canada provides flexibility in how clinics implement the program within their own setting, including scheduling and logistics. Program rates are determined by the individual clinics. Following the established protocols helps ensure optimal clinical outcomes.

### **Commitment to Data Collection**

GLA:D™ Canada is a clinical program with a quality monitoring component. All patients must be registered in the national database/registry, and may choose to consent to providing outcome measures through web-based questionnaires.

Sites are required to obtain appropriate **ethics approval**, as well as sign a **data sharing contract** to register with GLA:D™ Canada and provide data to the registry. A **standard cost** will apply to cover the work required to register your clinic in the national registry. Please note that special rates may apply, and will be published on the website.

If your clinic/organization is affiliated with an institution that can complete your ethics submission, the GLA:D™ Canada team will provide all protocol and consent documentation to support this process. If your clinic/organization is not affiliated with such an institution, the GLA:D™ Canada team can complete the ethics submission on your behalf. A data sharing contract will also be facilitated by the GLA:D™ Canada team. You will be provided with site-specific quarterly reports to monitor and evaluate patient outcomes.

### **Evidence-Informed Program Updates**

There is significant ongoing research in OA, and the GLA:D™ Canada program is updated regularly to reflect the latest evidence. This updated information is shared with the GLA:D™ Canada trainers to ensure they remain current in their knowledge and practice.

### **Promotion of GLA:D™ Canada Sites**

Once a site is registered in the national registry, it will also be listed on the locations page of the GLA:D™ Canada website. This website is regularly referenced and promoted through local, provincial, and national initiatives led by the GLA:D™ Canada team.

## **Registering for a GLA:D™ Canada Certification Course**

### **Attend a Training Course**

Clinicians interested in providing the GLA:D™ Canada program must attend a 1.5-day training course, which includes:

- Theoretical component detailing the pathophysiology of OA and up-to-date research on OA management strategies
- Information on how to implement the program within your clinical setting, adhering to the GLA:D™ Canada program standards and data collection for quality monitoring
- Practical session that includes instruction on how to perform the functional tests, deliver education sessions, and tailor and progress the neuromuscular exercises

The course is highly participatory and discussion-based, ensuring clinicians gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

The course includes:

- A comprehensive training manual
- A user profile on the GLA:D™ Canada website, which grants access to up-to-date program materials and a community of certified GLA:D™ Canada clinicians
- A certificate and permission to provide the GLA:D™ Canada (upon successful completion)
- Follow-up implementation support from the GLA:D™ Canada team post-training

Registration for these courses can be found on the GLA:D™ Canada website: [Sign up for a Remote Certification Course – GLA:D Canada](#)

### **Have Questions? Contact Us**

**Email:** [gladcanada@uhn.ca](mailto:gladcanada@uhn.ca)

**Phone:** 416-603-5800 ext. 2880

**Website:** [www.gladcanada.ca](http://www.gladcanada.ca)