

January 9, 2014

Dear Surgical Colleague:

RE: Collection and Reporting of Wait One Information for Elective Surgical Patients

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) in British Columbia has gathered and reported publicly on surgical wait times since 2010. Currently the Ministry reports ‘wait two’ data (the time between receipt of an OR booking package by a health facility and the surgery date). There is growing interest from the Ministry, health authorities, stakeholders, and patients in the period between referral from a patient’s GP to the first consultation with a specialist (‘wait one’). Wait One data collection and public reporting was identified in the *Priorities for Surgical Services in British Columbia over the next five years (2012-2017)* presented to Health Operations Council (now Integrated, Primary, Acute and Community Care Committee (IPACCC)) in Summer 2012.

Other Canadian jurisdictions (Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, PEI, Ontario, and Saskatchewan) are all currently collecting Wait One data. Two provinces, Nova Scotia and PEI, make Wait One information available to the public for some procedures. Ontario also has plans to make Wait One data for all surgical procedures publicly available in the near future.

A few health authorities in the province already collect and submit Wait One information to the Surgical Patient Registry (SPR). Beginning January 13, 2013, two new fields will be added to all Health Authority OR Booking Forms – ‘Referral Received Date’ and ‘Initial Surgeon Visit Date’. These two new fields on the booking forms will be required elements for booking patients for all forms received by health authorities on or after April 1, 2014.

The goal of this data collection is to provide surgical patients with a more complete understanding of the wait time to see surgical specialists. This data will also provide surgeons and administrators with the information necessary to improve access to timely and quality care for patients through more effective wait list management strategies.

You will receive further information from your health authority on the upcoming changes to the booking forms. If you have any questions, please contact your health authority or Margi Bhalla, Director of Surgical and Anaesthetic Services at the Ministry of Health at (250) 952-1040 or Munjeet.Bhalla@gov.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

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