BULLETIN

Thousands more MRI scans to be performed by HSA members

March 27, 2018

HSA welcomes today's announcement that government will fund 37,000 more MRI scans in the public system during the coming year, compared to last year.

BC has had the longest wait times for MRI in the country for several years, resulting in many patients paying for medically necessary scans at private clinics. Some of these patients then use these scans to jump the queue to obtain surgery or other treatment in the public system, meaning those already on public wait lists for treatment wait longer.

"Providing MRI scans within medically recommended time frames is an important part of strengthening our public health care system," said HSA president Val Avery. "It's good to have a government that is taking a comprehensive view of what needs to be done to reduce surgical wait times, and that realizes this extends to reducing wait times for related diagnostic procedures like MRI."

Government's ambitious plan to increase the number of MRI scans and cut patient wait times will be achieved by:

- Operating existing MRI scanners for longer hours
- Changing the intake system to a centralized model at the regional level to reduce duplicate referrals, optimize use of scanners and to offer patients the earliest appointment available in their region
- Installing new MRI machines that have previously been announced and
- Adding additional new MRI scanners around the province.

HSA members, especially MRI technologists, will have an important part to play in delivering the additional scans. "At today's announcement, both Health Minister Adrian Dix, and Fraser Health President and CEO Michael Marchbank, made a point of thanking HSA imaging technologists for their efforts to meet the new targets," said Avery. "HSA looks forward to working with both government and employers to ensure that there are enough MRI technologists to get the job done."

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