

The **ACCESS** IMPROVEMENT Report

May 2019

Vol 4.3

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES' ACCESS IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Program Update

Earlier this year, five specialties were added to Alberta Netcare eReferral Advice Request, bringing the total number of specialties available on eReferral to **24** (See pg. 2 for the updated list). On May 16, 2019, additional specialties will be implemented: **Alberta Thoracic Oncology Program (ATOP), Interventional Pulmonary Medicine, Sleep Medicine (FMC Sleep Centre)** and **Tuberculosis Services** will offer Consult Requests in the Calgary Zone, and **Child & Adolescent Psychiatry** will offer Advice Requests in the Central, Calgary & South Zones.

March and April were exciting months for eReferral as we achieved two exciting milestones. On March 21, we surpassed **30,000** submitted eReferral requests. In just over eight months, we went from 20,000 to 30,000 eReferral submissions. Thank you for your support in reaching this exciting achievement!

The second exciting milestone is that **standard eReferral form has been added to TELUS MedAccess and Accuro EMR systems**. Primary Care physicians can use this QuRE-informed form to generate high quality referral letters with auto-populated information from their EMR. This form is available to all MedAccess and Accuro users in the province. Once the form is completed, users can simply print as a PDF file which can be attached to an eReferral Advice Request, Consult Request or mailed/faxed to specialty clinics.

Earlier in Q1, the Access Improvement team **moved from AHS Health Operations Northern Alberta to the AHS Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Portfolio**. Physician engagement and medical leadership support are critical to the success of Access Improvement initiatives and the move to the CMO will help with achieving these next steps. Jodi Glassford will continue to lead the team as Provincial Director. Special thanks also goes to Deb Guerrette who provided executive oversight to the Access Improvement team over the years.

Stay tuned for our next newsletter for more news, and as always, we appreciate your support in helping to transform Alberta's referral experience.

5

new specialties
added to
eReferral

New
specialties
added to
eReferral in
May 2019

30,000

eReferral
requests
received

eReferral
template
added to
MedAccess &
Accuro

Access
Improvement
moves to AHS
CMO Portfolio



Get in Touch with Access Improvement

If you have questions, email us at access.ereferral@ahs.ca

For more information about eReferral, including training support, visit [eReferral online](#)

For more about QuRE and the Alberta Referral Pathways, visit [Access Improvement](#)

Unsubscribe

If you'd like to unsubscribe from this newsletter, email access.ereferral@ahs.ca

Stay Tuned

The next edition of the *Access Improvement Report* will be released in Summer 2019.

Specialties Added to eReferral Advice Request

In early 2019, five specialties were added to eReferral Advice Request, including:

- Adult Gastroenterology (Hepatology Issue) – Calgary Zone
- Cardiology – Calgary Zone
- Community Paediatrics – Calgary Zone
- Endocrinology – Edmonton Zone
- Neurology – Calgary Zone

eReferral Advice Request allows physicians and clinical support staff to submit non-urgent questions and receive a response from a specialist within five calendar days. In many cases, an Advice Request is all that is needed to manage the patient in their medical home and avoid an in-person appointment with a specialist.

As of April 15, 2019, there are **24** specialties accepting eReferral Advice Request. The full list includes:

Specialty	Zone
AMH – Opiate Agonist Therapy	All
Adult Gastroenterology (Adult GI Issue)	All
Adult Gastroenterology (Colon Cancer Screening)	Edmonton, North
Adult Gastroenterology (Hepatology Issue)	Calgary, Edmonton, North, South
Cardiology	Calgary, Central
Chronic Pain Medicine	Calgary
Community Paediatrics	Calgary
Endocrinology (Diabetes)	Calgary
Endocrinology (Endocrinology Issue)	Calgary, Edmonton
General Internal Medicine	Calgary
General Surgery (Breast Health)	Calgary
Infectious Disease	Edmonton
Pulmonary Medicine	Calgary
Nephrology	Calgary & Edmonton
Neurology	Calgary
Spinal Neurosurgery	Calgary
OBS-GYN	Calgary
OBS-GYN - Maternal Fetal Medicine	Edmonton
Ophthalmology (Adult & Paeds)	All
Orthopaedic Surgery (Hip & Knee Joint Replacement)	North
Otolaryngology	Central
Palliative Care Medicine	Calgary
Urology (Adult)	Central & Edmonton

For a list of Advice Request reasons for referral, go [online](#)

Consult Request Specialties Available

Consult Request, or requests for in-person specialist appointments, are available for **eight** specialties in Alberta, including:

- Adult Gastroenterology (Fit + Non SCOPE) – Edmonton Zone
- General Surgery (Breast Health) – Calgary Zone
- Pulmonary Medicine – Calgary Zone
- Nephrology (including the Northern Alberta Renal Program) – Central, Edmonton & North Zones
- Oncology – Breast Cancer (All Zones)
- Oncology – Lung Cancer (All Zones)
- Orthopaedic Surgery – Hip & Knee Joint Replacement Surgery (Calgary, Edmonton, North & South Zones)
- Urology (*Adult only*) – Edmonton Zone

eReferral Training Available

If you have questions about using eReferral, resources are available:

1. Call the eHealth Support Services team at 1-855-643-8649.
2. [Email](#) the eHealth Support Services team.
3. Visit the [Alberta Netcare Learning Centre](#)
4. Join a Wednesday Webinar. [Email](#) the eHealth Support Services team for more information.
5. Visit eReferral [online](#)

For an in-person eReferral training session, please email access.ereferral@ahs.ca

8,285

eReferral requests
submitted



838

submitting users

61% are support staff

39% are physicians

2,259

referring providers
using eReferral

Top reasons for referral

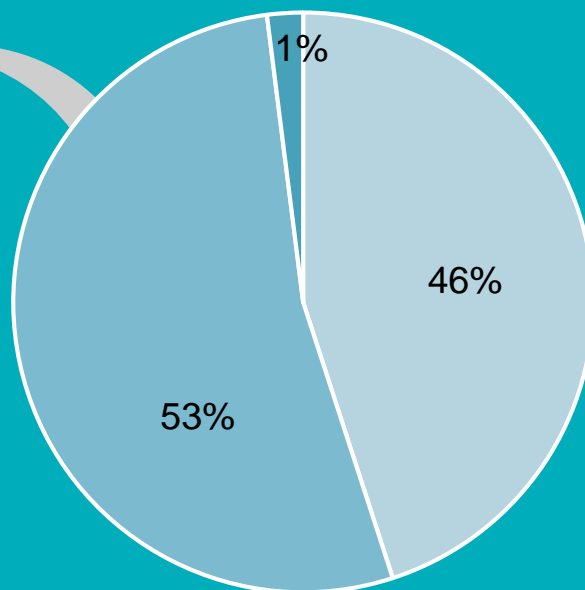
1. Urology issue
2. Dyspnea (shortness of breath)
3. Node negative breast cancer
4. Hematuria microscopic (greater than 3 rbc/hpf)



Average number of days to
first response (for an Advice
Request)

2 days

The general rule is **five days**
so that's **three days faster!**



46% of Advice Requests can continued to be managed by primary care providers in the community. This can prevent unnecessary wait times for in-person appointments to see a specialist.

Edmonton Zone SHARPGI Releases Clinical Pathways

Single Hub Access Referral Program for Gastroenterology (SHARPGI) is an initiative to streamline access for patients who need gastrointestinal specialist care. In April 2019, SHARPGI released three new pathways - GERD, H.Pylori and Dyspepsia - and encourages physicians to download and use the pathways in their practice.

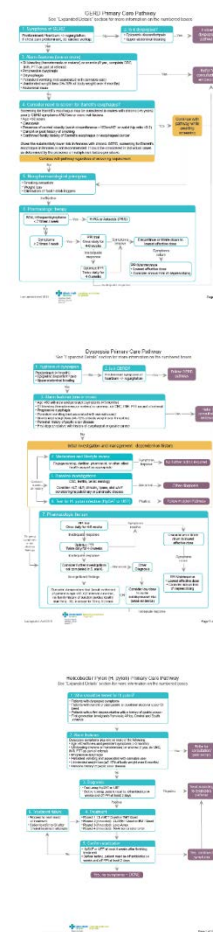
When referring to SHARPGI, referring providers are not required to complete a standardized form. The SHARPGI team will triage patients based on the history provided by the provider and all available Alberta Netcare reports and documents.

Physicians are encouraged to review the pathways and specifically, the investigation/treatment boxes, and ensure that these steps have been finished prior to submission, including:

- **GERD** – Non pharmacological principles and pharmacologic therapy
- **H. Pylori** – Diagnosis and treatment
- **Dyspepsia** - Medication and lifestyle review, baselines investigations, test for H. Pylori infection (HpSAT or UBT), pharmacologic therapy. *(If medication and lifestyle review, baselines investigations and test for H.Pylori infection (HpSAT or UBT) are ruled as inappropriate, please state the same information).*

To ensure a successful referral, please provide evidence of pathway completion (to the best of your ability).

For more information about SHARPGI, go to www.ahs.ca/SHARPGI or email sharp@ahs.ca



Provider Notifications – An Update

Provider Notifications is an enhancement to the eReferral platform that will allow all users to receive an email notification when an activity has occurred on an Advice or Consult Request.

To ensure you are receiving Provider Notifications, please confirm or update your email address to a current preferred email address (this is the address that notifications will be sent to). To change your email address in *My Details*, follow these steps:

1. Login to Alberta Netcare
2. On the left-hand side of your screen, click *Common* and then *My Details*.
3. Scroll down to *Users* and confirm or enter your email address.
4. Click *Update Preferences* to validate your changes.

You will be automatically subscribed by default to a notification list based on your role (i.e. whether you a referrer, responder or triage user), but you can customize these subscriptions at any time.

How are we going to communicate these changes?

When Provider Notifications goes live this Spring, you will receive an **email** with information about how to manage your notifications. Our eReferral website will also feature information on a new *Provider Notifications Portal*. Upon implementation, resources will be available through online Quick References and support from the eHealth Support Services team.

If you have any questions about Provider Notifications, please email access.ereferral@ahs.ca



in the News

In early May, QuRE will appear on the newly launched *Joule* website, a Canadian Medical Association subsidiary that is designed to help physicians with clinical excellence initiatives. The article, which features QuRE and our drive to improve referral and consultation practices, is one of the first articles to be posted on the new website.

We'll post the article in the next edition of the *Access Improvement Report*, but we encourage you to visit the [website](#) for more information about *Joule*.

Need Referral Information? Check Out the Alberta Referral Directory

AlbertaReferralDirectory.ca



Authentication-free Access

Healthcare providers can now view referral information at **AlbertaReferralDirectory.ca** without logging in, making it easier to search and select the right services for patients. Try it out today!



Alberta Referral Directory
Your online source for referral information

1-855-889-8899 | ard@ahs.ca | AlbertaReferralDirectory.ca

Who's Who - Access Improvement Edition

Who are the people working behind the scenes on eReferral, QuRE and the Alberta Referral Pathways? You'll soon find out! Over the next several editions, we'll highlight our team members so you can meet the people who are making Access Improvement initiatives possible.

In this inaugural article, we talk to Carrie Newman, Data Quality Analyst.

What do you do on the Access Improvement team? As the Data Quality Analyst, my role is primarily responsible for the data collection, validation and submission of information for the Health Services Catalogue (HSC). I work with our team to ensure that the data in the HSC is correct when we onboard new specialties, and also updated (as required) through our monthly maintenance cycles.

How is your role helping transform Alberta's referral experience? I am currently working on HSC stabilization, which is focused on ensuring that all of our specialties are on the most recent version of our spreadsheets. This will allow us to make timely updates for all specialties, as well as supporting our IT and Alberta Netcare teams in resolving some issues in the system as we work towards continuously improving the quality of the eReferral platform.

What's your favourite hobby? I am an avid reader and can often be found with my nose buried in a book over my lunch break. When I get into a particularly good book, I have been known to finish it in one sitting...sleep is overrated!

The next edition will feature one of our Change Management Analysts, so stay tuned for the next *Who's Who* edition.



Carrie Newman at her desk in Calgary.

Jodi Glassford wins AHS President's Excellence Award

A very special congratulations goes out to Access Improvement Provincial Director, Jodi Glassford, for her win in the *Service Excellence* category.

"Jodi's leadership and contributions to Alberta Netcare eReferral, Alberta Referral Pathways and Quality Referral Evolution have improved communication and transparency in the referral process, resulting in better patient access to appropriate and timely care," says the award bio.

AHS President's Excellence Awards encourage AHS employees to nominate individuals and teams who demonstrate the highest level of commitment, innovation and dedication to Albertans. A record 153 groups were nominated for this year's awards, with Jodi and a handful of others taking the top honours.

QuRE was also nominated in the *Innovation & Research Excellence* category, but did not win. On behalf of the entire Access Improvement team, we congratulate Jodi and cannot be more proud of this outstanding win!

To see QuRE and Jodi's bios, and to see the other nominees, go to [Alberta Health Services](#) online.



Left: Jodi Glassford

Bottom: QuRE working group



What we're reading

Check out these fascinating reads the Access Improvement team have been into this quarter:

- [Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative](#) – A website for patients waiting for surgery
- [Transforming the specialist referral and consultation process in Canada](#)

Do you have an article we should read? Send it to access.ereferral@ahs.ca and we may feature it in the next edition.

Story ideas?

Do you have a story idea? Email us at access.ereferral@ahs.ca and we'd happy to discuss adding your story into the *Access Improvement Report*.

Access Improvement Celebrates Pink Shirt Day

Employees in the Calgary office wore their pink proudly in support of anti-bullying initiatives. The donuts even matched their outfits!



Left: Jen Colp, Carrie Newman, Kemi Ajayi, Annabelle Wong & Shannon Morcom

