Alberta Coding Access Targets for Surgery (ACATS)

The Goal

ACATS is an Alberta developed, standardized system to help prioritize elective surgeries offered at facilities throughout the province, depending on a patient's diagnosis and level of urgency. For physicians, it means they can deliver the right treatment at the right time, from the time a decision for surgery is made to the surgical date. For patients, it means they will know how long they can expect to wait, based on their diagnosis, procedure and level of urgency. For the health system, it means consistent measurement to monitor elective surgery access pressures and performance.

The Process

ACATS helps identify surgical bottlenecks in the system and streamlines the surgical booking processes across the province. When both the patient and the health provider decide surgery is required, an ACATS code is assigned based on the patient's diagnosis. The surgery booking process requires that a decision to treat (DTT) date, a ready to treat (RTT) date and an ACATS code is present on the booking. The IT systems capture these data points and reporting measures how surgical wait time 2 performance compares to ACATS surgical access targets.

The Outcome

Currently, ACATS has been implemented at over 40 surgical sites and numerous non-hospital surgical facilities in Alberta that are responsible for approximately 94 per cent of all surgeries and procedures in Alberta. ACATS codes and process is being built into Connect Care as part of the surgical booking process and the surgical wait time analytics strategy.

The Team

ACATS is sponsored by the Surgery Strategic Clinical Network (SCN) with the support of Zone operational teams. The ACATS team works daily on the optimization of ACATS and improving the quality of the project.

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