

Program Update

Since our last newsletter, the Access Improvement team has been busy. Whether we're adding new specialties to eReferral, updating the QuRE referral checklist or creating new Referral Pathways, we're always working hard to enhance Alberta's referral experience. Here's a brief update of what we've been working on over the past seven months.

In late 2017, the Alberta Netcare and Orion Health developers started to build the new standard eReferral form. This form was developed based on a review of over 100 different referral forms and includes prompts to improve the quality of the information from the [Quality Referral Pocket Checklist](#). Primary care clinic EMRs often have over 500 unique referrals forms that they use – when referring through eReferral, they are able to complete the standard eReferral form or attach an EMR generated referral or letter. Any additional information such as labs or investigations could be attached or linked to from within Netcare.

Provider notifications, or the ability for a physician or support staff member to receive a notification (i.e. email) when a referral has been submitted, is another important initiative currently in development. Several design sessions were held with physicians and support staff to identify what notifications they would like to receive and when they'd like to receive them. Provider notifications are currently in the design phase and will be incorporated into future eReferral updates in mid-2019.

In February, two new specialties were added to eReferral for advice requests; AMH Addiction Medicine – Opiate Agonist Therapy was released province-wide and General Internal Medicine was released in the Calgary Zone. On June 29, we also added nine new specialties for advice requests and two new specialties in the Edmonton Zone for consult requests, bringing the total number of specialties available to eReferral to 22. This is a huge milestone and a big congratulations to all teams involved. *(For more about the June release, go to page 2.)*

On June 29, the standard eReferral form was enabled for Northern Alberta Urology Centre (NAUC) and Edmonton Zone GI Single Hub Access Referral Program (SHARP) consult requests. NAUC is already using eReferral Advice Request and enabling Consult Requests will allow for additional tracking of a referral's status such as when the appointment date is. SHARP is new to



Get in touch with Access Improvement

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

For more information about eReferral including training, visit the [eReferral webpage](#).

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

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



Northern
Alberta Urology
eReferrals – By
the #s

15

responding
urologists

6,816

advice requests
completed
since
September

2,464

advice requests
that received
advice to
continue
managing in the
community

663

submitting
advice request
users

1,280

referring providers
submitting advice
requests

Congrats!!!

Program Update - Continued

eReferral and is focusing on streamlining access for patients who have a positive FIT, but do not meet the established [SCOPE criteria](#). With referral to SHARP, your FIT+ patient will be assessed by a gastroenterologist, and if appropriate, optimized for screening.

One of the specialties accepting advice and consult requests in the Edmonton Zone is Urology. Since 2017, they've completed more than 6,000 eReferrals and 36 per cent of their advice requests received were able to be handled in the community, rather than with specialist appointments. The participation of the specialties in the eReferral initiative will ensure that patients are provided with the right care, at the right time, and in the right place. A huge congratulations to the Urology team and many primary care offices that have made this possible!

New specialties added to eReferral for advice requests and consult requests

On Friday, June 29, new specialties were added to eReferral allowing physicians and support staff who submit requests on their behalf the ability to submit advice requests and consult requests for these new specialties.

Specialties accepting advice requests include:

- **Calgary Zone** – Chronic Pain, General Surgery (Breast) and Palliative Medicine
- **Central Zone** – Adult Gastroenterology, Cardiology, Otolaryngology and Urology
- **Edmonton Zone** – Infectious Disease, OBS/GYN and Urology (Paeds)
- **Provincial-wide** (available to all Zones) – Ophthalmology (Adult & Paeds)

Specialties accepting consult requests include:

- **Edmonton Zone** – Adult Gastroenterology (SHARP) – FIT Positive – Non-SCOPE and Urology at the Northern Alberta Urology Centre.

For a full list of specialties and their reasons for referral, go to our [eReferral webpage](#). For training and user guides, visit the [Alberta Netcare Learning Centre](#).

Netcare Governance & Priorities – How Clinical Feedback Drives Decisions

By Howard Louie

The provincial electronic health record (EHR), also known as Alberta Netcare, is the source many care providers go to for patient results and reports. Over 50,000 healthcare providers have access to Alberta Netcare on a daily basis when providing patient care. With the focus on the continuity of care, health care providers in the community and acute care settings can access Alberta Netcare to get a longitudinal view of the patient's relevant health information that has been collected from a number of service points of care across the province.

Alberta Netcare currently provides access to laboratory results, diagnostic images and reports, acute care discharge reports, immunizations and adverse reactions to immunizations, clinical reports (operative / procedural reports, discharge summaries, treatment plans, specialist consults, and senior's health profiles) and community prescribed medication dispense information. Netcare continues to expand the data available as new data sources are added. As well as expanding data, new functionality and product upgrades are implemented through regular release cycles.

The Ministry of Health and Alberta Health Services work collaboratively on prioritizing the future content, new data sources, and system improvements for Alberta Netcare, using an established governance structure. It is often input from our clinical stakeholders that drives the priority. Two committees have been established that provide the clinical perspective on the EHR initiatives; the Clinical Advisory Committee (CAC) and Continuity of Care Leaders Group (CCLG). The CCLG deals with the strategic direction of Alberta Netcare (from a clinical perspective) while the CAC provides practical clinical advice from a more operational perspective. Both groups have members who are physicians, nurses, optometrists, pharmacists and other health care professions. Their input is sought to ensure the clinical value and impact to

clinical work flow are considered when prioritizing new data sources or considering future enhancements in Alberta Netcare. In particular, the CAC meets regularly with its clinical membership to seek opinions on the priority of new data sources wanting to contribute to Netcare. As well, the CAC provides a clinical perspective to any new project or initiatives that are integrated with Alberta Netcare.

To broaden the ability of our clinical stakeholders to provide feedback on Alberta Netcare, the Ministry of Health and Alberta Health Services work closely with the eHealth Support Services team on an overall communications plan. Several strategies have been brought forward from engaging the community stakeholders directly, leveraging existing Netcare feedback tools, engaging colleges and associations, and participating in various conferences and user meetings throughout the province. The collected feedback will be reviewed and discussed at the Ministry of Health and the summary of the new suggestions will be prioritized.

Want further information?

Alberta Netcare users can refer to content at [Alberta Netcare](#) and [Alberta Netcare Learning Centre](#) for more information and contacts.

Howard Louie is the Director, EHR Delivery Services at Alberta Health.

7,238

requests

2,262
consult requests

4,976
advice requests

of requests per zone

# of eReferral requests	Zone
5,852	Edmonton
1,016	Calgary
203	South
140	Central
26	North
1	AMH – Opiate Agonist Therapy

eReferral by the #s

(Jan – July 2018)

37%

of requests can be managed in the community rather than a patient travelling for an appointment



720

submitting users



34%

are physicians



66%

are support staff

Average advice request response time per specialty*

Specialty	Zone	Response time (days)
AMH – Opiate Agonist Therapy	Provincial	2
Infectious Disease	Edmonton	1
IM – Adult Gastroenterology	Calgary, Edmonton, Central, North, South	5
IM – Endocrinology	Calgary	5
IM – General Internal Medicine	Calgary	2
IM – Nephrology	Calgary, Edmonton	5
IM – Pulmonary Medicine	Calgary	6
Neurosurgery – Spinal Neurosurgery	Calgary	4
OBS/GYN	Calgary, Edmonton	3
Urology	Edmonton, Central	8+ weeks**

(Data Jan.1 - July 15, 2018). *Some specialties released in June 2018 have not received advice requests at time of this newsletter, so they are excluded. **Timing due to large volume of requests received.

June 2018 User Acceptance Testing Results Revealed

Prior to the June 2018 specialty release, some users were asked to review and validate eReferral functionality through User Acceptance Testing (UAT).

The results were successful, as all UAT passed. Of the 17 sessions conducted, 58 per cent provided valuable feedback, including:

- Too many extra click steps.
- The font size is too small.
- After a 'Consult Request' is completed, there should be more information on next steps.
- On the navigation pane, a flag should appear when there is something new or a change has occurred.

All of the comments were compiled into a report and are being considered for future releases.

If you'd like more information about this UAT, email us at access.ereferral@ahs.ca

eReferral in the news!

eReferral awareness is growing in Calgary. In June, the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI) posted an article on their website sharing the impressive work of Specialist LINK, a non-urgent phone advice line that is answered by a specialist within one hour, and eReferral.



Aside from sharing the specifics of what Specialist LINK and eReferral do, the article shows how the Calgary Primary Care Network and Alberta Health Services are partnering together to improve the referral process in Calgary.

For the full article, go to [CFHI](#). (Photo credit: CFHI)

QuRE patient focus groups

The Quality Referral Evolution (QuRE) committee is engaging patients in the development of teaching materials that will assist doctors to better understand the impact of communication on patient care and quality of life. The focus groups will take place this summer to gain insight into the patient's perspective and improve the quality of communication during the healthcare provider referral/consultation process.

Once focus groups are completed, we will release more information about the results. Stay tuned for more.