

A Quarterly Newsletter from Alberta Health Services' Access Improvement Team

Program Updates

As the leaves change colours and we start to transition into colder weather, we can't help but reflect on the warm summer months and the work we've been able to accomplish despite being affected by COVID-19. Like many of you, our team has been working remotely since March 2020, but we haven't let being out of the office stop our stride. We continue to make progress in our work and thank everyone who has supported us during this incredibly difficult time.

Alberta Netcare eReferral updates

Since our last update in July, we added *Neurology – Calgary Stroke Program* as a new Advice Request facility in the Calgary Zone, and the *Dermatology – Southern Alberta* facility to eReferral Advice Request in the Central (Red Deer and south), Calgary and South Zones. *Dermatology – Northern Alberta* in the Central (north of Red Deer), Edmonton & North Zones also joined us earlier this year, which makes Dermatology the latest Advice Request specialty to be available province-wide.

On October 21, we made a number of enhancements to the eReferral platform to make it easier to use for our providers. Most of these changes are not noticeable, but may help users utilize the system more effectively or save time when submitting requests. For a full account of the changes that went live, head over to [page 2](#).

In mid-November, we will be making a number of Edmonton Zone Urology changes, and specifically to the labs and diagnostic imaging of some Consult Request reasons for referral. We are also working on updating their referral pathway, so stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks. After our November updates are completed, we will wrap-up our 2021 year. We will share a recap video and provide a sneak-peek at what's coming in 2022 in December.

Quality Referral Evolution (QuRE) & Alberta Referral Pathways

In late September, Dr. David Moores from the QuRE working group proposed a motion at the Alberta Medical Association's (AMA) Representative Forum for the AMA, with partner organizations, to coordinate a Quality Improvement Initiative to address current and future challenges of consultation/referral processes in Alberta. Our motion was passed unanimously and we are working with the AMA on next steps. Ideally, we'd like to see QuRE incorporated into all referral and consultation practices across Alberta so the letters being sent to doctors and specialists have the right information to support successful quality care transitions. This might mean promoting our QuRE referral templates in community-based EMRs more broadly, holding more training sessions, or putting a QuRE Checklist in the hand of every physician. Once we know more, we will share these exciting details with you. For further information about QuRE, check out www.ahs.ca/quire.

For Alberta Referral Pathways work, COVID-19 has unfortunately slowed down the progress, but we're still working on the Edmonton Zone Adult GI and Urology pathways, and will be updating the provincial Breast Health pathway in the coming weeks. Thanks for your patience.

Until next time, stay safe and thank you for your support of Access Improvement!



Get in Touch with Access Improvement

If you have questions, email us at access.ereferral@ahs.ca or call 1-888-733-3755

For 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



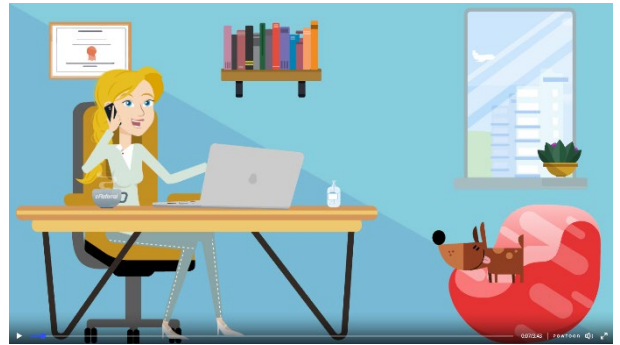
Stay Tuned

A special holiday edition of the *Access Improvement Report* will be released in December 2021.



October 2021 eReferral Enhancements

On October 21, we made a number of eReferral enhancements to make your use of eReferral friendlier. We take user feedback seriously and have made a number of enhancements based off the comments we've received over the years. While many of the enhancements are not forward-facing, or noticeable to users, there are some that are visible. To explain these changes, we've created another interactive [video](#) with Jennifer and Dr. Taylor, but to summarize, we've included the major highlights below:



- Users can add up to five files of five megabytes each for a total of 25 megabytes. This is helpful for specialties like Dermatology and Community Paediatrics (specifically for Plagiocephaly) that need to see photos, or if you want to attach documents from your Electronic Medical Record (EMR).
- As a reminder, please go to the *Activity* section on your submitted Advice and Consult Requests and click on *View form for comments and attachments*. This ensures that you are seeing all notes, attachments or comments added.
- Referring providers may notice that the address section on the Consult Request standard form is updated to make it easier to use.
- Facility details, such as address, phone number, parking and directions are no longer available in the Health Services Catalogue (HSC). For AHS facilities, search for these details through www.ahs.ca. For other facilities, search online or call the facility for this information.

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

FYI

Access Improvement Team Update

Over the past months, we've welcomed a few new faces to the Access Improvement team. These Senior Consultants are working on elements associated with the Alberta Surgical Initiative and you may hear from them.

Our Senior Consultant, Tomi Aremu, who is based out of Edmonton, is also away on leave. In her absence, please contact [Janet George](#) or [email us](#).

Maternal Fetal Medicine No Longer Accepting eReferral Advice Requests

Due to the nature and urgency of requests, the Edmonton Maternal Fetal Medicine Clinic is no longer accepting Alberta Netcare eReferral Advice Requests as of November 1, 2021. Please do not submit Advice Requests to this service going forward.

For any Maternal Fetal Medicine-related questions or phone consultations, please contact the Maternal Fetal Medicine physician on call through the Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH) switchboard at 780-735-4111.

Important note: Same day referrals/Urgent referrals should NOT be sent via FAX, and a phone consultation with the Maternal Fetal Medicine physician on call is required to prevent any delays in patient care.

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS

with community-based practices

Tired of being in the dark about your patients?

Sign up for Community Information Integration and Central Patient Attachment Registry (CII/CPAR) to:

- Improve continuity and transitions of care for patients
- Share important information about your patients in Alberta Netcare
- Take the next step to build your Patient's Medical Home

→ Receive notifications in your EMR for your paneled patients when they're discharged from hospital or ED

→ Alberta Netcare will display your name as the primary care physician



- Fully integrated with EMRs from:
- Microquest
 - QHR
 - TELUS

Email us to ask how
continuity@albertadoctors.org



Join us at the Pearls for Practice Conference on Nov. 25 & Nov. 26 and speak to a member of the eReferral team via Zoom.
[Email us](#) for more info.

Giveaway Time!

As a special thank you for subscribing to the *Access Improvement Report*, we're doing a giveaway of Access Improvement swag. And who doesn't love swag, right?!

To enter, send an email to access.ereferral@ahs.ca before November 19, 2021 and one random person will win our prize pack.

Provider Notifications to the Rescue!

Do you wish there was an easier way for you to know what's happening with your eReferral Advice and Consult Requests without having to be logged into Alberta Netcare? Are you finding yourself checking multiple times to see if an answer has been provided to your Advice Request? If you said yes to any of these questions, then eReferral has the perfect solution for you!

With a quick and easy set-up of eReferral Provider Notifications you can receive notifications on the status' of your Advice and Consult Requests directly to your email inbox. Depending on your role (i.e., Referring, Receiving or Triage user), you can pick and choose what notifications you want to receive, and you can also decide if you would like an email notification sent instantly or as a summary at the end of the day. What's better is that there is no identifiable patient data transmitted via Provider Notifications so it's safe to use through whatever email you check and use regularly.

Quick references have been developed for each user and are available on our [eReferral website](#). Additional training support is available through the eHealth Netcare Support Services team by calling 1-855-643-8649 or emailing healthsupport@cgi.com. For more information, visit our [Provider Notifications Portal](#).

For questions about Access Improvement, email access.ereferral@ahs.ca

Check Referral & Consultation Questions Off Your List with QuRE

Early October was Patient Safety Week and during this time we like to reflect on the work we do that can make a difference in the lives of our patients. Although most of our QuRE work is behind-the-scenes, we do have one initiative that is front and centre for patients – [The QuRE Patient & Caregiver Journal](#).

One key section of the Journal we're featuring in this edition of the *Access Improvement Report* is the [Referral & Consultation](#) Checklists. We recognize that attending an appointment with a doctor or specialist may make some patients nervous, so much so that they may forget to ask the questions they want and leave the appointment feeling unsure. We wanted to make these appointments more effective and designed the Checklists as “guides” or “prompts” to ensure patients can ask all the questions they need. Patients, we encourage you to review the Checklists prior to your appointment and “star” or **highlight** any question you want to ask during your appointment.

Doctors and specialists, we also encourage you to share the Journal with your patients and caregivers. *Why?* Patients have told us that they want to be part of the conversations you are having about their health. Encouraging your patients to use the resources within the Journal ensures patients are engaged in their care and that they can become better informed of the referral/consultation process.

For more information about the Journal, or to get your copy, visit [QuRE online](#).

Do you use Healthquest, TELUS Health or QHR Accuro EMRs? If so, you can now create referrals using the QuRE-informed templates!

Inadequate or missing information on a referral can lead to delayed access to care, patient frustration, poor compliance, and is ultimately a patient safety issue. These new templates include key information that help referring providers include pertinent patient information like a clear reason for referral or current and past management, so specialists have the right information at their fingertips. They also use macros that help pull information from your EMR directly into the referral letter.

For step-by-instructions on how to access they referral templates in your EMR, head over to our [website](#).

Keeping Spirits High During COVID-19

As a typically close-knit team, the Access Improvement team was used to going for lunches, connecting over a great cup of coffee, or raiding our snack bin to curb our sweet tooth. However, when the pandemic hit, our in-person connections became virtual connections. To keep morale high, we started using technology to stay connected. We held holiday Zoom parties over lunch where the team would dress up or share a favourite family recipe, sent out funny jokes, played Zoom bingo or sent out drawings (see to your right). None of these replace the feeling of being in person, but they bring a smile to our faces when times are tough. Like many of you, we look forward to connecting in person in the near future, but are thankful for technology for keeping us together.

We'd like to hear what you've done during the pandemic to keep your spirits high? Send your thoughts or pictures to access.ereferral@ahs.ca and we may try them as a team in the near future!



Commissions available. Contact access.ereferral@ahs.ca for yours!
(Don't worry, we recognize these are horrible!!)

Who's Who – Access Improvement Edition

Get to know the hardworking team behind eReferral, QuRE and Alberta Referral Pathways with the *Who's Who* employee segment! This edition we're chatting with Paul Agbulu, Senior Consultant.



What do you do on the Access Improvement team?

I am a Senior Consultant covering the North Zone of the Alberta Surgical Initiative - Specialty Access Bundle. My key responsibilities include providing resources and informing discussions to gain shared understanding of each of the Bundle's components of the surgical initiatives, including minimum requirements needed for implementation of the program. I will be supporting co-chairs of the working group in the Zone in the coordination of the Bundle's implementation planning process, validation of current state, prioritizing and assessing stakeholder readiness, conducting tests of change, and documenting standardized processes.

How is your role helping transform Alberta's referral experience?

My role will primarily help in reducing patient wait times while accessing surgical care in our facilities. It will also help in improving the patient journey towards recovery from surgery, and assist providers to be more efficient as they help in that journey.

What's a fun fact about yourself?

I have worked in three major continents - Africa, Europe and North America. I have also lived in eight major cities in the world. I was born in Nigeria but have visited over 18 major cities for leisure, vacation and conferences - Five in Europe, 12 in Canada, 10 in USA and three in the Caribbean!

What is your favourite quote?

"Success is getting what you want; happiness is wanting what you get." – W.P. Kinsella.

Paul's favourite music: Contemporary rhythm and blues. Alicia Keys is his favourite artist!

Paul's favourite places to visit: Niagara Falls in Ontario, or Cape Town in South Africa.

ARD Corner

Check out the Alberta Referral Directory and see how easy making patient referrals to specialty care can be.



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

We would like to recognize that our work takes place on historical and contemporary Indigenous lands, including the territories of Treaties 6, 7 & 8, and the homeland of the Métis. We also acknowledge the many Indigenous communities that have been forged in urban centres across Alberta.

Your feedback is always welcome

Do you have an idea for the next *Access Improvement Report*? Send us your suggestions by email at access.ereferral@ahs.ca and they may be featured in the next edition.

CONTACT

T: 1-855-889-8899
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W: ahs.ca/ard



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Photo by [Aaron Burden](#) on [Unsplash](#)