



RAAPID Navigates Coordinated Care

Provincial service connects physicians with specialists, and patients with beds.

by Erin Rohl

Before 2005, rural physicians did not have a coordinated service for patient consultation requiring transfer to medical facilities within urban centres. Physicians would contact hospital switchboards, their colleagues – or units directly. It was a confusing string of calls to find advice, vacant beds, transfer protocols and specialists who were available, all under the pressing timeline of an urgent or emergent case.

RAAPID (Referral, Access, Advice, Placement, Information & Destination) was created to offset these problems, and to provide a central point of contact for practitioners to access a physician or specialist that could provide a higher level of care. The service quickly expanded to become a call centre for advice, a customer service department for protocol, and a navigation system that works with regional hospitals to allow for patients to be closer to home in a facility that can meet their needs, with enhanced utilization of the skills and services available in non-tertiary areas.

RAAPID works with a variety of customers, including the referring and consulting physicians, EMS Patient Transport, referring hospital staff and receiving hospital staff and, most importantly, the patient. Each person or group has different opinions and expectations on how the service should meet their needs.

RAAPID ensures that rural or regional physicians now have access to quick advice, can keep caring for patients in their community where appropriate, and for emergent cases a coordinated process to link transportation, availability, dispatch and specialty care.

“Whether it’s for advice or for the transfer of a patient, you can call RAAPID. If we don’t know the answer, we’ll find one for you.”
- John Monpetit, RAAPID Director

John Montpetit, Director of RAAPID, has been involved with the provincial program for three years – so he’s had a chance to see the program evolve to meet the needs of Albertans. He is eager for referring physicians to see the value of RAAPID in providing access to consultants. “Our hope is for sites to realize that centralized coordination contributes to the safe delivery of care, and efficient utilization and assignment of resources.

“We have many call dispositions that end with advice being

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provided. The ability for a rural physician to have access to advice allows them to continue to care for patients in their community without compromising the quality of care the patient receives”.

The service is not unique to Alberta, as there are similar services in Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Many will perform the same tasks in relation to urgent/emergent referral coordination and repatriation. However, the Alberta advantage is in the relationships built with physicians and operational leadership groups, which has

gained trust and reliance on the service and RAAPID's ability to advocate for the patient.



When a physician calls RAAPID, they are advised where beds are available and for the service they are requesting. RAAPID coordinates the transfer and navigates the patient to the right bed and the right service, at the appropriate time. But they're also a go-to when

people need assistance with building a process that involves referral and the movement of patients. Currently, they are partnering with multiple Strategic Clinical Networks (SCNs) to share information and experience and to link processes.

Looking to the future, RAAPID hopes for continued growth and support for physicians, with an expansion of services based on stakeholder needs. Montpetit sees this future involving ongoing collaboration with AHS in building, sustaining, and exemplifying processes and standards in the transfer of patients and the centralization of coordination services. “Whether it's for advice or for the transfer of a patient, you can call RAAPID,” explains Montpetit. “If we don't know the answer, we'll find one for you”.

Find more information about RAAPID and the services they provide at [Alberta Health Services](#).

For all emergencies, refer directly to the Emergency Department

or contact the RAAPID Line

North: 1-800-282-9111 or 780-735-0811

South: 1-800-661-1700 or 403-944-4486