Wait Times in Canada: Another Frontier
Exploring new ways to measure, seeking out new ways to improve access

John Wright
President and CEO
March 25, 2010

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Need surgery? Here’s how long you’ll wait
Calgary Herald, July 28, 2004

Wait times tough to gauge
The Winnipeg Sun, October 22, 2004

I waited 18 months for knee replacement surgery
Vancouver Island News Group, November 10, 2004

Waiting for better wait time management
Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association Newsletter, Winter 2004
Where we started

> A few provinces report clinician-driven data
  – Various surgical procedures
  – Cancer care
  – Cardiac care

> At the national level
  – Health Services Access Survey
  – Fraser Institute
Waiting for Health Care in Canada

> Waiting for Health Care in Canada: What We Know and What We Don’t Know
  – March 2006 CIHI report

– We didn’t know a lot
# Most Provinces Meeting Benchmarks for Some Procedures

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- ✔: 75% or more meeting benchmark
- --: Less than 75% meeting benchmark

No provincial reporting against benchmark or records suppressed due to low record submission.
Less So for Joint Replacements . . .

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✓ 75% or more meeting benchmark

-- Less than 75% meeting benchmark
. . . But Waits Are Still Improving

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Unable to comment on trends for P.E.I. and Saskatchewan.

Trends not available.
Are Other Surgical Procedures Suffering?

Percent Change in Age Standardized Surgery Rates

Fiscal Years

Inside priority
Outside priority

ED Waits for Hip-Fracture Patients

5 hours for registration to ED

26 hours in an inpatient bed

Ontario: April through September 2009
How We Got Here

> Wait time reduction methods
  - Funding **extra priority procedures**
  - Looking at **new roles**
  - Clarifying **accountability** for wait times
  - Streamlining **assessment** processes
  - Managing waits via **better measurement**
How We Got Here: Measurement

> Focus on **comparability** of wait times data

> **Voluntary** collaboration

> Two years

  – **Year 1**: agreement to provide **data** for CIHI tables

  – **Year 2**: **indicator** refinement
Where We’re Going

> New standards to measure
  – Waits for specialist care
  – Diagnostic imaging waits
  – Expanded waits for cancer care, for example, New Brunswick treatment reporting
Where We’re Going

> Expanded, more timely data on emergency departments

  – Updated National Ambulatory Care Reporting System
    • Reduces burden of data collection
    • Speeds up reporting

  – More jurisdictions now participating
Where We’re Going

> Primary health care
  – New pan-Canadian data sources
  – Developing indicator standards

> New data on alternate level of care patients
  – Occupy more than 5,200 beds at any given point in time
Case Study

> Winnipeg Regional Health Authority had high wait times for hip fracture surgery

> It:
  – Changed practices
  – Reorganized surgery slates
  – Put real-time information systems in place
  – Developed new guidelines

> Efforts are working: wait times are shorter
Hospitalizations for Joint Replacements

- **Emergent Hip**: 4% increase
- **Elective Hip**: 15% increase
- **Elective Knee**: 52% increase

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- **One year before surgery**
- **One year after surgery**
## Early Revisions

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<tr>
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<th>Percent Revised Within 1 Year (p&lt;0.001)</th>
<th>Top Reason for Revision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Hip Patients</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>Mechanical Complications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective Hip Patients</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>Mechanical Complications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective Knee Patients</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>Infection</td>
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Diagnostic Imaging

> **Number of machines 2004 to 2007**
  - MRI: 149 to 222
  - CT: 325 to 419

> **Rate of exams 2003–2004 to 2006–2007**
  - MRI: up 43%
  - CT: up 28%
Thank you