

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN
ON A
CORONARY ARTERY BYPASS GRAFT
WAIT TIME GUARANTEE

Both governments share a common interest in enhancing timely access to insured health care services within the publicly funded health care system.

Both governments recognize that progress is being made to manage and reduce wait times, and that continued efforts are required to further this progress.

Both governments recognize that moving toward a wait time guarantee, utilizing the existing pan-Canadian benchmarks for coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery established in December 2005, is only one part of broader strategies to provide effective, efficient publicly funded health care in a timely and appropriate manner within the publicly funded health care system. Continued work in such areas as health human resources, health information technology and development of new surgical and management initiatives is important to further enhancing access to health services within the publicly funded health care system.

This Memorandum of Understanding is limited to addressing wait times for coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery and does not apply to any other publicly funded health service or area.

The Government of Saskatchewan will establish, for all beneficiaries of publicly funded health services, a wait time guarantee for CABG surgery across Saskatchewan's regional health authorities (RHAs) within the publicly funded health care system, as follows:

- Level I Patients within 2 weeks;
- Level II Patients within 6 weeks; and
- Level III Patients within 26 weeks.

A wait time guarantee for CABG surgery has two components:

- i. a timeframe that is set out herein; and**
- ii. timely access to CABG surgery across RHAs for beneficiaries who wait longer than the defined timeframes.**

If timely care options are unavailable within the defined timeframes at the beneficiaries' usual provincial referral centre, the beneficiary will be given the opportunity to receive timely access to CABG surgery at another public health care institution in another RHA within the province, or within another Canadian jurisdiction in accordance with procedures set out in provincial legislation.

The Government of Saskatchewan will also undertake a pilot project in the area of recourse for cardiac patients receiving CABG surgery, and other specialized cardiac procedures as determined by Saskatchewan, involving the use of a provincial pathway for cardiac services, including referral guidelines, service protocols and consideration of specialized transportation requirements.

The Government of Saskatchewan will implement the wait time guarantee and formalize the recourse process for CABG surgery by January 1, 2010, or sooner if possible.

The Government of Canada commits to transferring to the Government of Saskatchewan the provincial share of the \$612 million recently announced in the Government of Canada's 2007 Budget. The Government of Saskatchewan's share of this \$612 million is estimated at \$24.8 million.

Both governments recognize the success of Saskatchewan's Surgical Care Network (SSCN) in supporting efforts to manage, report and reduce wait times. In recognition of the need for continued support of electronic health record development, the Government of Saskatchewan is also eligible to benefit from the new \$400M investment in Canada Health Infoway, based on Infoway's current approval process. The Government of Saskatchewan is also eligible to benefit from the \$30 million pilot project fund to be created by Health Canada.

This Memorandum of Understanding comes into effect upon signature, but it is understood by both governments that the establishment of the CABG wait times guarantee is dependent upon Saskatchewan accessing funding from the Government of Canada through the Patient Wait Times Guarantee Trust.

The Government of Saskatchewan will evaluate the operation of the wait time guarantee for CABG surgery in 2012, relative to its performance against the pan-Canadian benchmarks announced for CABG in December 2005.

The Government of Canada supports the direction taken by the Government of Saskatchewan. The Government of Canada provides support through the 2004 *10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care* and will continue to support wait times initiatives, focussing on the development and adoption of compatible electronic health information systems, which will, amongst other benefits, assist in the evaluation of the operation of the wait time guarantee for CABG surgery.

It is understood that the Government of Saskatchewan may not be able to meet the wait time guarantee in the area of CABG surgery as a result of catastrophic events, and other events that could have a serious impact on the functioning of the health system such as, but not limited to, pandemics, terrorist activities, labour disputes, strikes, lockouts, or interruption or failure of utilities such as electricity or telephone service. Following the resolution of the situation, the Government of Saskatchewan will make all necessary and reasonable efforts to meet the wait time guarantee in the area of CABG surgery.



The Honourable Len Taylor
Minister of Health
Government of Saskatchewan



The Honourable Tony Clement
Minister of Health
Government of Canada

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