

Fact Sheet - *MRI Facilities Licensing Act*

Private-Pay MRI Status in Saskatchewan

- Patients can now choose to directly pay a private facility for an MRI scan in Saskatchewan. Private facilities that conduct a private MRI scan must also provide a second scan at no charge to an individual who is waiting on the public list.
- To-date, two private firms have been licensed by the Ministry of Health to provide private-pay MRI services (listed at www.Saskatchewan.ca).
- Licensed facilities will be communicating the start and details of their service directly to the public.

Private-Pay MRI Process

- A physician referral is still required to obtain an MRI, to ensure all MRIs conducted in Saskatchewan are medically necessary.
 - Only specially trained physicians in Saskatchewan with appropriate privileges in the health region where they practice, or a physician with appropriate qualifications in their Canadian jurisdiction, may order an MRI in Saskatchewan.
- Once a referral from an appropriate physician is obtained, a person wishing to pay for an MRI will take that referral directly to a licensed private facility to book an appointment.
- After completing a private MRI scan, the private facility will provide a second scan of similar complexity to a patient on the public wait list, at no charge to that second patient.
 - Using a list of names provided by a health region, the private facility will contact the first individual waiting on the list, offering two opportunities to receive the scan within 14 days.
 - Within seven days of providing the second scan, the MRI facility will notify the health region that the service has been completed, to assist with keeping the public list up-to-date.
- As this is a private service, government will not set the price of a private MRI scan. Each private facility will set its own price based on factors that include complexity of scan, market demand and its own business model. Any patient who chooses to pay for MRI services offered by a private facility will not be eligible for cost coverage or reimbursement.

Patients waiting for MRI services: **6,649**

(Estimated, as of November 30, 2015)

Increased Public Capacity Since 2007

- To meet demand, capacity for publicly-funded Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) services has increased by about 115 per cent from 2007-08 to 2014-15. An estimated 33,825 patients are expected to receive an MRI in 2015/16, up from 15,700 seven years ago.
- With the addition of the MRI in Moose Jaw, there are now 10 public MRI scanners accessible to residents of Saskatchewan:
 - Six in provincial hospitals (four in Saskatoon, two in Regina)
 - Two additional scanners in Saskatoon since 2007
 - The newly launched MRI at Dr. F.H. Wigmore Regional Hospital in Moose Jaw
 - Two community-based MRI scanners in Regina
 - One community-based MRI scanner in Lloydminster
- Despite the increase in capacity, patients are still waiting longer for MRIs than any other specialized imaging service in our province.
- The addition of private-pay MRI services in Saskatchewan complements publicly funded scans and provides an opportunity to expand capacity even further to address demand.