

BACKGROUNDER

Saskatchewan Improvements to Breast Health Care

In addition to the opening of the new Breast Health Centre in Regina, the following initiatives have been implemented during the past year that have played a key role in improving access and enhancing breast health services.

- Phased expansion to lower the age eligibility for breast screening began in January 2025 to include women between the ages of 47 to 49. Women can self-refer without a health care providers referral. The next phase will begin in June 2025 and will include women 45 years of age and older. The age eligibility will be gradually lowered to age 40 by end of June 2026.
- An out-of-province initiative allowing patients to receive diagnostics at a medical facility in Calgary has been extended to March 2026 as a temporary measure to accelerate urgent diagnostic procedures until these services are fully stabilized in the province.
- Additional capacity in Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, offered to long-waiting and urgent patients from Regina and southern Saskatchewan, which has provided an additional 300 patients with timely access to breast diagnostic procedures since November 2023;
- Implementation of 3D breast imaging (tomosynthesis) for diagnostic mammograms, which will increase cancer detection, reduce the need for additional imaging views and tests, and reduce both false positive and false negative mammogram results.
- Implementation of new breast tumour localization "seed" technology in preparation for breast surgery, which results in fewer delays and cancellations, as well as less discomfort for the patient.
- Ongoing work with the Ministry of Health to train and recruit medical radiation technologists, sonographers (ultrasound technologists), and radiologists specializing in breast imaging as part of its ongoing Health Human Resources Action Plan, including two local radiologists in Regina who recently completed their breast radiology fellowships.