

Central Intake for Outpatient MRI

As a referring physician at an MRI hospital, here's what you need to know

What is Central Intake and what are the key features?

Single Point of Access: The Central Intake Program (CIP) will coordinate access to MRI services for Ontario outpatients seeking non-urgent MRI exams. This new intake process will help patients access high-quality services that meet their individual requirements and preferences, taking into account the queue length at the various sites.

As of December 9, 2019, all outpatient MRI referrals must be submitted through Central Intake. Referrals can be submitted by fax at 613-737-8944, eReferral, or (at some hospitals) computerized physician order entry (CPOE).

The process for submitting inpatient and emergency referrals to MRI will not change. The process for submitting referrals for CHEO's ambulatory care pediatric patients will also not change.

How will my workflows be impacted?

Regional Standard Requisition Form, MRI Screening Form, and Fax Number:

- There is a new regional requisition form and a new regional safety screening form for outpatient MRI scan requests. The new forms, which will be distributed to referring physicians and the region's imaging departments in November 2019, will replace the hospital-specific forms that are currently in use.
- The new requisition form will be available for download from the Central Intake Program website and, for community providers, will be available for download to Telus and QHR EMRs.
- There is a new single, centralized fax number. This centralized fax will give you a single point of access to the 6 MRI programs (8 sites) in the region.
- Physicians ordering from within their hospital CPOE will continue to use those systems and the associated processes. Those sites currently include TOH, the Atlas Alliance sites, CHEO, and Cornwall Community Hospital.

Focus on Appropriateness:

Improving the appropriateness of requests for MRI services is an important component of Central Intake. In an effort to support leading practice and to reduce the number of low-value scans, evidenced-based guidelines have been developed to support decisions regarding advanced imaging for headache and low-back pain. The guidelines and associated decision support checklists can be found in this package or on the Central Intake website at

www.ottawahospital.on.ca/en/mricentralintake

What will happen to the referral once it is sent to Central Intake?

The Central Intake Program (CIP) will review submitted referral documents, checking for completeness and potential duplicate requests. Central Intake will then route the referral to one of the region's MRI service providers. This routing decision will be based on a number of factors, including: patient age, the type of exam requested, the MRI locations that can provide that specific type of imaging, location of the patient's residence, MRI site queue lengths, the patient's preferred language, and any other patient preferences that are indicated on the referral form.

MRI sites will continue to contact your patient directly to confirm scheduled appointments. The MRI site that your patient's request is routed to will complete the exam and send reports back to you using familiar processes that are currently in use.

If I have any questions, who can I contact?

- Referrers may contact Central Intake by email at: MRICentralIntake@TOH.ca
- All referrals and correspondence may be faxed to Central Intake at: 613-737-8944
- Please visit the Central Intake website at www.ottawahospital.on.ca/en/mricentralintake