

# INFOBulletin

Keeping health care providers informed of payment, policy or program changes

**To:** Nurse Practitioners

**Published By:** Health Services Branch

**Date Issued:** October 6, 2010

**Bulletin #:** 10012

**Re:** New Central Referral Process for Bariatric Surgery Patients

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## Changes to the Referral Process

The Ontario Bariatric Network is launching a Centralized Referral Portal as the first phase of the Ontario Bariatric Registry. There is now one standardized referral form to complete and submit in order to refer Ontario patients for bariatric surgery.

**Note:** at this time the registry is for surgical referrals only, not for patients requiring medical management

Once received at the central intake, the referrals will be allocated to the Bariatric Centre closest to the patient's home address (determined using their postal code) and the referral information will be forwarded to the Centre. In addition to helping streamline referrals for bariatric surgery, the Central Referral Portal will be used by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) to monitor patient wait times.

## How to Refer a Patient

- To refer patients into the Central Referral Portal – please go online to [www.bariatricregistry.ca](http://www.bariatricregistry.ca) and click on the Referring Physician tab.
- Physicians will be required to register as a referring physician and will be asked to provide contact information.
- Physicians will be given a Bariatric Registry Referral ID number (to be used when referring any bariatric surgery patient) and given access to a secure area of the site where the referral form can be printed.

- When referring patients – please complete all fields on the referral form, as this information is critical to the Bariatric Centre.
- Once the form has been completed, please fax the referral to 1-800-268-2370 (also indicated on the website and the referral form). If information is missing, the Central Referral Portal staff will contact you. Once the information is complete and entered into the system – your patient will be contacted directly by the Bariatric Centre and given an appointment time as per the intake process at the individual sites. As of the date on this Bulletin, please do not refer surgical patients directly to the Bariatric Centres – any surgical referrals not received through the Central Referral Portal will be returned to you for resubmission through the portal. Multiple referrals on the same patient will not be accepted into the system. Medical patients will not be referred through the Central Referral Portal at this time – the ministry will provide an update of changes as they occur.

### Background

The Ontario government is improving access to treatment for Ontarians who are struggling with severe obesity by creating a province-wide network of services that include bariatric surgery. In 2008, MOHLTC committed an additional \$75 million over three years towards the development of comprehensive Bariatric Centres of Excellence in Ontario, increasing treatment capacity by over 750%.

See news releases

[www.health.gov.on.ca/english/media/news\\_releases/archives/nr\\_09/feb/nr\\_20090223.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/media/news_releases/archives/nr_09/feb/nr_20090223.html) and

[www.health.gov.on.ca/english/media/news\\_releases/archives/nr\\_09/may/nr\\_20090526.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/media/news_releases/archives/nr_09/may/nr_20090526.html)

The Ontario Bariatric Network currently consists of four Bariatric Centres of Excellence, Regional Assessment and Treatment Centres, and a Paediatric Regional Assessment and Treatment Centre:

- Hamilton Bariatric Centre of Excellence
  - St Joseph's HealthCare Hamilton
  - Hamilton Health Sciences (Regional Assessment and Treatment Centre)
- University of Toronto Collaborative Bariatric Surgery Program
  - Humber River Regional Hospital
  - St. Joseph's Health Centre
  - Toronto East General Hospital

St. Michael's Hospital

The Hospital for Sick Children (Paediatric Regional Assessment and Treatment Centre)

University Health Network's Toronto Western Hospital site

- Guelph General Hospital
- The Ottawa Hospital
- Windsor Regional Hospital (Regional Assessment and Treatment Centre)
- Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (Regional Assessment and Treatment Centre)

See [www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/ohip/ont\\_bariatric\\_surgery](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/ohip/ont_bariatric_surgery) for more details on the MOHLTC bariatric strategy.

Please direct any inquiries regarding the Bariatric Registry to [www.bariatricregistry.ca](http://www.bariatricregistry.ca) or call the Bariatric Registry Hotline at (905) 522-1155 ext. 35346.