

December 16, 2005

## **MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT SETS ONTARIO WAIT TIME TARGETS**

The Ontario government is setting wait time targets for five key health services that comprise its Wait Times Strategy. These targets take an even more aggressive approach than the common benchmarks announced on December 12th by the provincial and territorial ministers of health, adding cancer surgery and MRI and CT scans, as well as setting targets for four different priority categories within each service. These categories, developed by clinical experts across the province, are being built into Ontario's new Wait Times Information System and will be used daily by physicians and administrators in 50 hospitals by the end of 2006. A similar priority system has been in place and working successfully within cardiac care for more than a decade.

Ontario's wait times data, available at [www.ontariowaittimes.com](http://www.ontariowaittimes.com), has been updated for August/September 2005.

These wait time targets are for the time from when a patient and doctor decide to proceed with surgery or exam until when the actual procedure is completed.

### **Explanation of Priority Classifications**

#### **Cancer Surgery:**

- Priority I -- Threatens life of person, such as airway obstruction or bleeding
- Priority II -- Very aggressive tumours such as central nervous system cancer
- Priority III -- Person with known or suspected invasive cancer, that do not fall into Priority I, II or IV
- Priority IV -- Patients with slow-growing tumours

#### **Cardiac: Bypass Surgery**

- Priority I – Immediately life threatening
- Priority II – Person had one heart attack, is at risk of another; is admitted into the hospital
- Priority III – Person had one small heart attack and may or may not be at risk; can be in hospital or at home
- Priority IV – Person in stable condition, continues to work, but may benefit from cardiac surgery

#### **Cataract Surgery:**

- Priority I – Cataract is producing, or impairing ability to treat, another ocular disease.
- Priority II – Unable to function without assistance
- Priority III – Person cannot continue to work, drive, or care for others
- Priority IV – One good eye, functional vision, but possibly loss of speed and function on many tasks

#### **Joint Replacement Surgery: Hip and Knee**

- Priority I – Maximum pain and disability
- Priority II – Conditions or complications that negatively affect a person's independence. (e.g. bed-ridden)
- Priority III – Some bearable pain and disability that threatens a person's independence
- Priority IV – Minimal pain and disability with role and independence not threatened

## Diagnostic Imaging: MRI and CT Scans

- Priority I – Emergency scan needed
- Priority II – Potential for deterioration
- Priority III – Cancer restaging
- Priority IV – Non-urgent scan

### Summary of Pan-Canadian Benchmarks and Ontario Targets

Service Area	Pan-Canadian Benchmarks Announced Dec 12, 2005	Ontario's targets (in weeks) Announced Today
Cancer Surgery	N/A	Priority I: Immediate
		Priority II: 2 weeks
		Priority III: 4 weeks
		Priority IV: 12 weeks
Cancer Radiation	4 weeks of being ready to treat	N/A
Cardiac-Bypass Surgery	N/A	PI: Immediate
	Level 1: 2 weeks	PII: 2 weeks
	Level 2: 6 weeks	PIII: 6 weeks
	Level 3: 26 weeks	PIV: 26 weeks
Cataract Surgery	16 weeks for patients at risk (which correlates with Ontario's PIII priority rating)	PI: Immediate
		PII: 6 weeks
		PIII: 12 weeks
		PIV: 26 weeks
Hip & Knee Surgery	Hip fracture 2 days	N/A
	26 weeks	PI: Immediate PII: 6 weeks PIII: 12 weeks PIV: 26 weeks
MRI/CT Scan	N/A	PI: Immediate PII: 48 hours PIII: 2 - 10 days PIV: 4 weeks
Mammogram screening	ages 50-69 every 2 years	N/A
Cervical cancer screening	ages 18-69 every 3 years after 2 normal scans	N/A

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