

March 15, 2007

INDEPENDENT COUNCIL TO CERTIFY DATA ON WAIT TIME INFORMATION SYSTEM

The government has responded to Senator Michael Kirby's recent review of Ontario's Wait Time Information System by:

- Creating a Data Certification Council that will review the wait time data before it's publicly released.
- Making the website more user-friendly with the addition of consumer and health care provider sections, and using simpler language to explain the data.

Data Certification Council

This independent council will review the processes on how the wait time information is collected and reported prior to its public display on the Ontario government website. The three signing members of the Council will certify that the data accurately reflects the wait times reported by hospitals, using current methodology and that the process and final reporting of the data has been independent and free of bureaucratic or political interference.

The Data Certification Council will include:

- Michael Decter, Chair, Cancer Quality Council of Ontario and former Chair of the Canadian Institute for Health Information
- Graham Scott, QC, Chair of Canadian Institute for Health Information
- Hilary Short, President/CEO, Ontario Hospital Association

This council will acknowledge that the data on the website:

- has been confirmed by and submitted directly by the hospitals to the Wait Times Information Office (WTIO) embedded within Cancer Care Ontario;
- has been subject to health information industry standard data quality checks and processes conducted by the WTIO; and
- has not been subject to revision or manipulation by any member or representative of the Government of Ontario or any other Members of Provincial Parliament.

The following individuals will assist the certification council on information validation:

- Allan Gross, Professor of Surgery, University of Toronto; Department of Surgery, Div of Orthopaedic Surgery, Mount Sinai Hospital; Chair of the Orthopaedic Expert Panel
- Phil Hooper, Professor of Ophthalmology, Ivey Eye Institute, London Health Sciences Centre; Chair, Ophthalmology Expert Panel
- Alan R. Hudson, Lead, Access to Services and Wait Time Strategy (employed by Cancer Care Ontario)

- Anne Keller, Deputy Chief, Department of Medical Imaging, University Health Network and Mount Sinai Hospital; Chair of the MRI and CT Expert Panel
- Sarah Kramer, VP and Chief Information Officer, Cancer Care Ontario; Chair of the Access to Care eHealth Expert Panel
- Valerie Zellermeier, RN, Program Director, Perioperative Services, St. Michael's Hospital; Chair of the Surgical Process analysis and Improvement Expert Panel

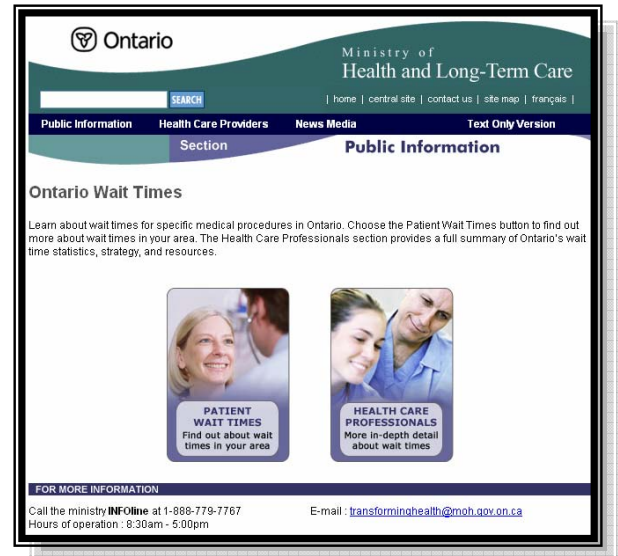
Improving the Public Display of Information on www.ontariowaittimes.com

Senator Kirby recommended that the Ontario government enhance the display of information on the public website.

The website has been enhanced to include his recommendations, along with other changes recommended through plain language and usability testing in the fall of 2006.

These specific changes include:

1. A revised main page to include a clear statement of the benefit of the website, the purpose of the site, what the information means to the individual patient or family member, how it can and should be interpreted and used;
2. Reformatted search tool to improve site navigation and accessibility to the data;
3. Charts have been removed from the main page and have been added as a separate section on the homepage in a printable PDF format. Graphs have been reformatted as line graphs;
4. Pages/language has been revised to improve comprehension and readability; and
5. Pop-up definitions and boxes have been added to simplify the content in a way that is easier for the public to understand.



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