



Appropriateness of Care “Better Care, Made Easier”

Lumbar Spine CT Checklist March, 2017

Saskatchewan’s healthcare system has identified improving Appropriateness of Care (AC) as a key priority. Improving AC means looking into where there may be overuse, underuse, misuse and unjustified variation in tests, treatments and medications offered to patients.

In the fall of 2015 a provincial Clinical Development Team of clinical experts including orthopedic and neurosurgeons, radiologists, family physicians, chiropractors and patients developed a checklist that included best practice guidelines for ordering lumbar spine MRIs. The team also identified an opportunity to better manage ordering lumbar spine CTs based on analysis of data from the Radiology Information System (RIS) and clinical best practice guidelines for ordering L-spine CT scans.

The analysis suggested there are few indications for lumbar spine CTs, and as well, there are patients in the province receiving lumbar spine CTs and being exposed to unnecessary radiation, when an MRI is likely the best medical imaging test.

The Clinical Development Team is recommending that a **Lumbar Spine CT Checklist** be completed and accompany each requisition for an L-Spine CT. The checklist provides an easy way to present important patient information and help better understand the reasons for ordering a CT and whether or not these reasons match current guideline recommendations.

The new L-Spine Checklist will be tested in Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region, Five Hills Health Region, Saskatoon Health Region and Prairie North Health Region for a three month trial starting on **April 3, 2017. The checklist will be required to accompany L-spine CT requisition forms for all adult outpatient lumbar spine CT referrals.**

Please complete the checklist along with the usual requisition and fax both to Medical Imaging as per usual process. If Medical Imaging staff receive a requisition without the checklist they will send a faxback explaining the checklist, asking you to complete it and indicating that the CT referral will not be processed until the checklist is received.

The intent is to use this current draft checklist until **June 30, 2017** and then make revisions based on feedback received. At the bottom of the checklist is a space for you to provide comments/feedback regarding the process of both the content of the checklist and completing the checklist.

This work is consistent with the Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) campaign which has been endorsed by the Saskatchewan Medical Association, and aligns with the Appropriateness of Care Framework that was developed in Saskatchewan.

Although the checklist may take a minute more of your time, the accompanying patient information, provided by CWC provides information that can be shared with patients and may save several minutes in your discussion with patients.

Thanks for your help in making this a reality. We are confident that with the support of health care providers, we will be able to manage the delivery of this Medical Imaging test in a manner that provides the maximum clinical benefit to patients.

Please find attached the Lumbar Spine CT Checklist and the patient information pamphlet. Copies of the Lumbar Spine MRI and CT Checklist, as well as CWC's Patient Information are available online via the Health Quality Council's website and Appropriateness of Care's webpage:

<http://hqc.sk.ca/improve-health-care-quality/appropriateness-of-care/>

The Appropriateness of Care Program team is working on embedding the Lumbar Spine CT Checklist on existing Electronic Medical Records (EMRs).

If you have questions about the Lumbar Spine Checklist, please feel free to contact the following physicians who are co-leading the provincial Appropriateness of Care Program:

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