



MRI WAIT TIMES CLIMBING DUE TO STAFFING SHORTAGES HSC, Grace, Children's MRI Wait Times Reach 30+ Weeks

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Winnipeg, MB – Manitobans are waiting longer for MRIs (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), and chronic underinvestment in health human resource planning is a big reason, Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT-MB), the professional association representing medical radiation technologists (MRTs) in Manitoba, is sounding the alarm on this situation and the conditions it is creating for the MRI technologists asked to carry the load.

According to a 2022 statement from Shared Health, the recommended wait time for elective MRIs is 60 days, approximately 8.5 weeks. Manitoba's Wait Times Dashboard shows January 2024 wait times for MRI heading in the wrong direction, with patients waiting more than twice as long as in 2019 at some Winnipeg sites. Health Sciences Centre is the highest at 37 weeks, up from 17 in 2019, while the wait at Children's Hospital has risen to 30 weeks from 13 in 2019. "Manitobans should not be waiting."

At the time of the 2022 statement, a Shared Health representative indicated that an additional 15 to 16 MRI technologists (representing 11-12 FTE) would be needed to drive down the wait times to meet the recommended target. However, investments recommended in 2022 were not made and the number of MRI technologists certified in the province has only risen marginally.

Among other factors, the aging population also means demand for MRI steadily increases year after year, and the MRT workforce expected to take on the increased load, without adequate support is wearing thin. CAMRT data on the mental health of MRTs shows that 70% of MRTs in Manitoba are now showing signs of burnout, and another recent survey revealed 50% of MRI technologists in Manitoba were considering leaving their job (for reasons other than retirement), citing safety concerns as a common reason.

Said Jenna MacLaine, CAMRT Vice President and Board Member for Manitoba:

"Manitobans should not be waiting so long for MRI scans when a solution is in reach."



CAMRT-MB along with the Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals (MAHCP), the union representing MRI technologists in Manitoba, recommend the employer commit to posting and filling existing vacancies as well as funding an increase in the number of permanent MRI positions in the province to ensure Manitobans receive the scans they need without having to wait 30+ weeks.

About the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists

The Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) is the national professional association and certifying body for radiological, nuclear medicine and magnetic resonance imaging technologists and radiation therapists. CAMRT provides leadership on standards for entry-level education and offers a suite of programs and services that advance the profession and the health of Canadians. Established in 1942, the CAMRT today represents over 12,000 members. CAMRT-MB is the home for provincial association services for MRTs in Manitoba. CAMRT-MB provides an array of services to its members, including communicating with Provincial Governments, providing local education events and advocating for the profession.

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