

Reduction in Wait Times for Diagnostic Imaging in Manitoba, Thanks to Canada's Government

STEINBACH, MANITOBA, Sep 02, 2008 -- The Honourable Vic Toews, President of the Treasury Board, on behalf of the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, today announced further developments in wait time reduction efforts in Manitoba with a federal investment of up to \$870,000. The project, Demand-Side Control in Diagnostic Imaging in a Primary Care Setting, will test a multi-faceted approach aimed at improving efficiencies and reducing costs and wait times for diagnostic imaging.

"Canadians who are waiting for diagnostic imaging need assurance that when their tests are ordered, the system performs as efficiently and quickly as possible," said Minister Toews. "This innovative project will improve efficiency, which will help to reduce costs and cut wait times. This is another step in our Government's continued efforts to reduce wait times for all Canadians," said Toews.

The aim of this project is to review and test the effectiveness of an electronic order entry system for diagnostic imaging, reduce unnecessary and inappropriate diagnostic imaging tests, reduce unnecessary exposure to radiation, control costs and reduce wait times for these tests. The project, taking place in Steinbach, Manitoba, is also expected to help improve links between health care providers such as physicians and radiologists. The results of the study will be widely shared so that other areas of the province and the country can benefit from the lessons learned. In April 2007, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced that all ten provinces and three territories will establish Patient Wait Times Guarantees by 2010, fulfilling a key commitment to Canadians. Budget 2007 committed \$612 million for the Patient Wait Times Guarantee Trust, \$30 million for wait times pilot projects, as well as \$400 million for Canada Health Infoway, the independent, non-profit corporation that has been helping advance the use of health information technology across the country.

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