

The Art of the Possible: Reducing Wait Times in Priority Areas: Diagnostic Imaging

Presentation to
Taming of the Queue II
March 31, 2005

Prospects for Reducing Wait Times in Diagnostic Imaging

- Immediate
 - Efficiency improvements; no shows and cancellations; reminder systems; patient and physician education
 - Increase hours of operation
 - Sharing agreements
- Long Term
 - Longer term funding arrangements
 - Increase capacity

Top 3 Challenges

- Supply Side
 - Human Resources
 - Equipment
 - Hours of Operation
 - Fixed Annual Budget
 - Purchasing constraints – bad decisions
 - Political Decisions

Top 3 Challenges

- Demand Side
 - Utilization increasing
 - Utilization patterns changing
 - new indications
 - Inappropriate utilization
 - criteria
 - Self-referral

Top 3 Challenges

- Operational Management
 - Efficiency
 - Productivity
 - Internal incentives, disincentives and constraints
 - Union
 - Budget

State of the Evidence

- Reviewed work nationally and internationally
 - Western Canada Wait List Project
 - Ontario Wait List Project
 - New Zealand, Britain
- Created target wait times, clinical opinion
- Consulted with the diagnostic imaging community
- Made recommendations to Steering Committee - accepted

Impact of Adoption of Evidence Based Benchmarks

- Establishing evidence-based benchmarks would be challenging
- May not be possible or feasible given the nature of the area
- But if possible would likely help acquire the necessary resources to meet the benchmark (supply side)
- May help with managing the demand side as well

Impact of Adoption of Evidence Based Benchmarks

- Implications of benchmarks
 - Liability
 - Collaborating with Ministries of Health
 - Public expectations and demands
 - Sufficient funds

