Memorandum

Date: October 19, 2018

To: All FH, VCH and PHC Medical Staff and Operational leadership; all LMMI site leadership

From: Dr. Jonathon Leipsic, Regional Medical Director and Department Head, VCH/PHC Medical Imaging  
Dr. Emil Lee, Regional Medical Director and Department Head, FHA Medical Imaging  
Taralyn Day, Director, Special Projects, Lower Mainland Medical Imaging

Re: Important Changes to Outpatient MRI Referral Process

On October 29, 2018, Lower Mainland Medical Imaging is implementing central intake for outpatient MRI referrals across Fraser Health (FH), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and Providence Health Care (PHC) with the aim to improve access to MRI by streamlining the referral process, smoothing MRI wait times across the region and reducing the number of duplicate bookings and missed appointments.

The MRI referral process for inpatients (IP) and emergency room (ER) patients is not changing. Please continue to order IP and ER MRI exams, including future orders for discharged patients, through the existing process at each site.

Changes to the outpatient MRI referral process and the impact on IP and ER referrals:

1. **New central fax number for outpatient MRI referrals**
   
   A single toll-free fax number will accept all outpatient MRI referrals for sites across FH, VCH and PHC. Beginning October 29, 2018, referring clinicians will need to fax outpatient MRI requests to central intake as they will no longer be accepted at individual MRI sites. The new fax number will be communicated closer to the implementation date. The new fax number is not for IP or ER MRI referrals. Please submit IP and ER referrals to your local MRI department through the existing site process.

2. **New lower mainland MRI requisition form**
   
   An updated regional MRI requisition form will be implemented October 29, 2018 as part of the new central intake process. The new MRI requisition form will be available on health authority intranet sites and online at [http://www.vch.ca/MRI-Central-Intake](http://www.vch.ca/MRI-Central-Intake).

3. **Appropriateness checklists for MRI lumbar spine, knee and hip**
   
   As part of our commitment to quality improvement, and to provide decision support to referring clinicians, appropriateness checklists have been developed to accompany outpatient referrals for MRI lumbar spine, knee and hip. Appropriateness criteria are consistent with the Choosing Wisely Canada recommendations.

   Beginning October 29, 2018 appropriateness checklists must be faxed to central intake along with outpatient MRI requisitions when requesting MRI lumbar spine, knee or hip. Appropriateness checklists are not required for IP or ER MRI referrals at this time.

Lower Mainland Medical Imaging is committed to evaluating and enhancing the new MRI central intake process following the initial launch on October 29, 2018. For more information on the new MRI central intake process please visit [http://www.vch.ca/MRI-Central-Intake](http://www.vch.ca/MRI-Central-Intake) or email MRICentralIntake@vch.ca.