Memorandum

Date: January 29, 2019
To: All MRI referring clinicians
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
Jeff Chabot, Project Manager, Lower Mainland Medical Imaging

Re: MRI Central Intake – Feb 11th Deadline for sending Outpatient MRI Referrals to Central Intake Office

Lower Mainland Medical Imaging implemented central intake for outpatient MRI referrals across Fraser Health (FH), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), and Providence Health Care (PHC) on Oct 29, 2018.

Over the last three months the Central Intake Office (CIO) has reached an average volume of 2,900 MRI referrals per week. Currently, we receive 89% of the referrals directly through the CIO while the other 11% continue to be received at the hospital MRI departments.

To meet the goals of smoothing MRI waitlists and reducing duplicate MRI requests, the referrals received at the hospital MRI departments are redirected to the CIO for distribution to the most appropriate site. This redirecting of requisitions to the CIO creates a significant amount of additional checks and balances to ensure that all referrals are accounted for.

To become more efficient and achieve our overall mandate to intake and distribute all outpatient MRI referrals we are setting a deadline of Feb 11th, 2018 by which all outpatient MRI referrals (see exceptions below) must be sent directly to the CIO at our central fax number: 1-866-588-6995. Outpatient MRI referrals that are sent to one of the MRI departments directly will be returned to the office that it originated from with direction to send the MRI referral to the CIO instead.

Guidance regarding which MRI referrals are to be sent to the MRI Central Intake Office:

- All outpatient MRI referrals must be sent to the MRI Central Intake Office except the following:
  - MRI referrals to BC Children’s Hospital – send directly to the site
  - MRI referrals to the BC Cancer Agency beside VGH – send directly to the site
  - Specialty Co-located Clinics within the hospital that order through “Order Entry” should continue to order directly with the site MRI Department
- Inpatient and Emergency MRI referrals should not be sent to the MRI Central Intake Office.
- Urgent MRI referrals that require imaging within 72 hours should not be sent to the Central Intake Office, please contact the relevant site MRI department by phone to speak with a radiologist.
- The new fax number for the MRI Central Intake Office is 1-866-588-6955
- The new phone number for the MRI Central Intake Office is 1-866-588-6954

Studies requiring an MRI Appropriateness Checklist:

- All outpatient MRI referrals for lumbar spine, knee, and hip body parts must be submitted along with a completed copy of the newly developed appropriateness checklist.
- For additional appropriateness guidance from a radiologist, please call the Rapid Access to Consultive Expertise (RACE) line at 1-604-696-2131 or visit http://www.raceconnect.ca.

The MRI Requisition & Appropriateness Checklist can be found at: http://www.vch.ca/MRI-Central-Intake.

Lower Mainland Medical Imaging is committed to evaluating and enhancing the new MRI central intake process. For questions regarding the new MRI central intake process, please email MRICentralIntake@vch.ca.