

Radiation Therapy Wait Time: Referral to First Consultation (Radiation Oncologist)

Full data definition sign-off complete.

Name of Measure	Access to Cancer Treatment – Radiation Therapy The maximum time that nine out of ten people will wait (in weeks) from referral to the time of their first appointment with a radiation oncologist, by facility
Name of Measure (short)	Referral to First Consultation (Radiation Oncologist)
Definition	The number of days from the date that a referral was received from a physician outside a cancer facility (e.g. family physician or surgeon) to the date that the first consult with a radiation oncologist occurred.
Domain	Domain: Health Service Delivery Dimensions: Acceptability, accessibility, appropriateness, and efficiency
Type of Measure	Process measure
Business Context	AHS Strategic Direction AHS 2010 – 2015 Health Plan: Improving Health for All Albertans Becoming the Best: Alberta's 5-Year Health Action Plan 2010-2015
Rationale	There are three indicators that are relevant and important for the above definition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of patients who had their first consult that met the 4 week benchmark • Number of weeks by which 50% of patients had their first consult • Number of weeks by which 90% of patients had their first consult <p>The purpose of these indicators is to provide a high-level perspective of how quickly patients who had a consult with a radiation oncologist over a given time period of interest received it from the date they were referred from an external physician.</p>
Notes for Interpretation	Currently there are three facilities that provide radiation therapy: Cross Cancer Institute, Tom Baker Cancer Center, and Lethbridge (opened late June 2010) that are included in reporting. Reporting for Lethbridge commenced in January 2011. Two more facilities will open over the next 4 years as part of the RT Corridor project: one in Red Deer and the other in Grande Prairie. These sites will be added to the reporting once they have 3 full months of data.
Organizational Strategy	Evaluation of radiation therapy service processes and capacity (space and human resources).
Benchmark Comparisons	The national benchmark is 2 weeks. The 2012/2013 target in Alberta is 3 weeks. This will become 2 weeks in fiscal year 2013/14.
Cited References:	The national benchmark is based on recommendations from the Canadian Association Radiation Oncologists.

Radiation Therapy Wait Time: Referral to First Consultation (Radiation Oncologist) *(continued)*

Technical Specifications

Metric	Percentage and number of days
Preferred Display Format	99.9% and 9,999
Numerator	Number of consults that occurred within 28 days of the corresponding referral date.
Inclusion Criteria for Numerator	Consultations with radiation oncologists that occurred in the time period of interest that were within 28 days (i.e., 27 days or fewer) of their referral date.
Exclusion Criteria for Numerator	Consultations that occurred in the time period of interest that were 28 days or more after their referral date. In the case of patients who had more than one consult in the reporting period but only one referral date (i.e., referral followed by two consultations (e.g. one by a medical oncologist and one by a radiation oncologist)) the second consult (and later) is (are) not counted.
Data Source(s) for Numerator	Raw data collection is via the cancer electronic medical record, ARIA. Report generation is via the cancer data warehouse.
Refresh Rate of Numerator	Weekly
Denominator	Number of patients who had their first consult with a radiation oncologist within the reporting time period.
Inclusion Criteria for Denominator	Patients who had their first consult with a radiation oncologist within the reporting time period.
Exclusion Criteria for Denominator	In the case of patients who had more than one consult in the reporting period but only one referral date (i.e., referral followed by two consultations (e.g. one by a medical oncologist and one by a radiation oncologist)) only the first consult is counted.
Data Source(s) for Denominator	Raw data collection is via the cancer electronic medical record, ARIA. Report generation is via the cancer data warehouse.
Refresh Rate of Denominator	Weekly
Technical Notes	<p>Both a referral date and a consult date have to be present in the data to be counted in these indicators. There are some complicated scenarios that arise in the data either due to scheduling errors, legitimate need for a patient to see multiple oncologists for consultations or from multiple external referrals in a short time period due to multiple cancer diagnoses.</p> <p>A consult is considered a "first consult after the referral" if it meets the following criterion: There is no other consult between the consult in question and the most proximal referral date prior to the consult in question.</p>

Radiation Therapy Wait Time: Referral to First Consultation (Radiation Oncologist) *(continued)*

Calculation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percent within 28 days is calculated by the number who had a consult in 27 days or less from their referral date divided by the total number of patients who had a consult with a radiation oncologist within the time period of interest. 2. 50th is calculated by identifying the number of elapsed days since the referral date by which time half of the patients who had a consult with a radiation oncologist in the time period had received it. 3. 90th is calculated by identifying the number of elapsed days since the referral date by which time 90% of the patients who had a consult with a radiation oncologist in the time period had received it.
Relationship to Other Indicators	<p>As listed under Calculation, there are three indicators for the interval “time from referral to first consultation with a radiation oncologist,” % seen within the benchmark, median time and 90th percentile time.</p>
Level of Reporting	<p>Facility and provincial</p>
Frequency of Reporting	<p>Monthly</p>
Limitations	<p>As a high level indicator, it does not reflect individual patient “appropriate” care, as appropriateness should take into account the urgency of each patients’ need for treatment.</p> <p>Prior to September 2010, the main completeness issue for this indicator was missing referral dates. We have QA reports that are run regularly to identify missing data and in the summer 2010 we conducted a short-term project to develop a provincial manual for collecting referral and first consult dates. Re-training occurred at all cancer facilities in September-November 2010. Monitoring for missing data will continue to ensure the manual and re-training were successful.</p> <p>Fairly good validity, however, not all patients need to have a consult with the same urgency. Sometimes a longer time period is reasonable depending on the type/stage of cancer. Urgency of treatment is not reflected in the above measures.</p> <p>Data are available approximately two weeks after the end of the month.</p> <p>Reliability is comparable from the beginning of the 2008/2009 fiscal year.</p>

Radiation Therapy Wait Time: Referral to First Consultation (Radiation Oncologist) *(continued)*

Document Version History

Version	Version Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	May 18, 2010	Final version for initial use.
	May 27, 2010	Transfer to final approved version.
1.1	June 4, 2010	Completed blank sections
	June 5, 2010	Change title to reflect Consolidated Dashboard naming. Review and adjust formatting.
	June 30, 2010	Add approval statement.
	July 22, 2010	Align title and measure names.
1.2	November 15, 2010	Update context based on collaboration with AHW.
1.3	November 15, 2010	Update context based on collaboration with AHW, specifically removing comments. Add signoff page.
1.4	December 20, 2010	Update business context.
2.0	January 12, 2011	Version ready for signoff.
2.1	September 13, 2011	Added comments
2.2	September 28, 2011	Updated Name, Domain, Rationale, Notes for Interpretation, Benchmark Comparison, Cited References, Calculation, Relationship to Other Indicators, Limitations, Sign-off Sheets
3.0	December 22, 2011	Version ready for signoff
3.1	January 10, 2012	Full data definition signoff completed. AHS completed signoff of Version 2.0 on May 3, 2011, after which AHW made some minor revision and incremented the version number completing signoff on January 10, 2012.