

Hip & Knee Replacement Program

Frequently Asked Questions about the Toronto Central HKRP process

Overview

The Hip and Knee Replacement Program (HKRP) will lead to **the following changes in the referring physician's current referral process:**

- A standard referral form, entitled ***Request for Consultation***, will be used for all hip and knee replacement surgery referrals for the Toronto Central LHIN;
- **Referrals will be faxed to Central Intake** for review and triage, instead of directly being faxed to the surgeons' offices.

The **main benefits** of the HKRP for Referring Physicians include:

- Fast referral response times;
- Comprehensive feedback regarding patient assessments;
- Suggested next steps;
- Improved access to care; and
- Reduced wait times for patients.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I use the new form?

The standard *Request for Consultation* will help the Central Intake team process the referral faster, which in turn, will lead to quicker access to the Assessment Centre or surgeon consult for your patient. A complete referral form also reduces the likelihood of delays due to follow-up with your office, and ensures that your referral is triaged based on a complete summary of information.

What constitutes a complete Request for Consultation?

We strongly encourage you to complete all fields on the form and provide additional information where appropriate.

When will I be informed of the outcome of my referral?

Central Intake will triage all complete referrals within a maximum timeframe of **2 days after receiving a complete *Request for Consultation***. In urgent cases, Central Intake will communicate with the surgeon's office within 1 day of the referral being triaged as urgent. The surgeon's office will then contact the referring physician's office to book an appointment for the patient. In all other cases the referring physician's office will be notified of the outcome of the triage by fax within a maximum of 5 business days after the referral has been deemed complete.

What happens at Central Intake?

The *Request for Consultation* is screened for completeness by administrative staff and a patient record is created in the Wait Times tracking system. The referral is then handed off to an Advanced Practice Physiotherapist (APP) for an appropriateness review and triage.

What is the Appropriateness Review?

The appropriateness review determines the patient's appropriateness for a physical screening at an Assessment Centre or for a consultation with a surgeon. Once the patient is deemed appropriate for an Assessment Centre visit or surgeon consult, the APP will assess the urgency of the referral.

What happens at the Assessment Centre?

The main function of the Assessment Centre is to perform a comprehensive physical assessment focusing on clinical, functional and radiological findings. The assessments are primarily performed by an APP.

How does an Assessment Centre visit differ from a surgeon consult?

During the Assessment Centre visit, the patient will benefit from a visit that will last approximately one hour. The visit includes a consultation with a dedicated multi-disciplinary assessment team comprised of APPs and/or specially trained nurses. The patient will undergo a comprehensive physical assessment and receive education materials about potential treatment options.

What is an Advanced Practice Physiotherapist (APP)?

An Advanced Practice Physiotherapist is specially trained to conduct a comprehensive physical assessment to confirm the need for surgeon consult. The goal is to ensure that each patient is assessed promptly after referral, managed proactively and triaged to a surgeon based on urgency and appointment availability.

The role of the Advanced Practice Physiotherapist is intended to reduce the time spent by orthopaedic surgeons seeing new patients who are not surgical candidates and to develop non-surgical treatment plans for these patients. APPs also play a key role in patient education and in conducting the routine follow-up assessments for patients after surgery.

Will I still have the ability to refer my patient to the surgeon of my or the patient's choice?

Yes, on the *Request for Consultation*, under the box entitled "Consultation Requested From" you have the ability to state your preference or your patient's preference for one of the following:

- The **next available consult** with a non-specified surgeon;
- A **specific hospital**; or
- A **specific surgeon** of choice.