

TITLE

DETERMINATION OF EXTERNAL BEAM RADIATION THERAPY WAIT-TIME INTERVALSSCOPE

Provincial

DOCUMENT

HCS-03-01

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice President, Quality & Chief Medical Officer

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SPONSOR

CancerControl Alberta

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PARENT DOCUMENT TITLE, TYPE AND NUMBER

External Beam Radiation Therapy Wait Time Access Policy
(#HCS-03)

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July 5, 2020

NOTE: The first appearance of terms in bold in the body of this document (except titles) are defined terms – please refer to the Definitions section.

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OBJECTIVES

- To describe how to identify, schedule, modify and confirm the **ready-to-treat date** in order to ensure that **wait-time interval** calculations are consistent across Alberta Health Services (AHS) **radiation therapy** treatment sites.
- To ensure that all radiation therapy treatment sites in Alberta collect and report **external beam radiation therapy** wait-time intervals using data within the provincial electronic chart/scheduling system ARIA Medical Oncology.

APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this document is required by all Alberta Health Services employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, Students, Volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of Alberta Health Services (including contracted service providers as necessary).

ELEMENTS**1. ARIA Medical Oncology Scheduling Requirements**

- 1.1 ARIA Medical Oncology shall be used to track wait-time intervals for external beam radiation therapy.

- 1.2 Each **eligible patient** who will receive external beam radiation therapy must have two distinct events scheduled in ARIA Medical Oncology in order to calculate the wait-time interval:

Event	Sub-Event	Allowable Locations	Description
Radiation therapy treatment	N/A	All defined external beam radiation therapy treatment locations	Scheduled on each date when external beam radiation therapy treatment will be delivered
Other-cc	Ready-to-treat	Radiation Oncologist booking (CCI, JACC) Radiation therapy booking (TBCC)	Scheduled once per course, on the eligible patient's ready-to-treat date for that course of external beam radiation therapy

- 1.3 One (1) ready-to-treat date event and at least one (1) radiation therapy treatment event are required for each course of external beam radiation therapy.
- 1.4 The ready-to-treat date event must be entered in a standardized format to ensure inclusion in the wait-time interval reports.
- 1.5 The elapsed calendar days from the date of the scheduled ready-to-treat date event (start of interval) to the date of the first instance of scheduled radiation therapy treatment event (end of interval) will be the calculated wait-time interval for that eligible patient course.

2. Identifying the Ready-to-Treat Date

- 2.1 The ready-to-treat date is a specific calendar date. Date ranges (e.g., mid-January, three to four [3 – 4] weeks after last chemo) are subjective and should not be used.
- 2.2 The **Radiation Oncologist** is responsible for identifying the ready-to-treat date for each course of treatment:
- the ready-to-treat date must be on or after the Radiation Oncologist consult date;
 - when the **decision to treat** is not made on the Radiation Oncologist consult date, the ready-to-treat date must be on or after the date the decision to treat was made; and
 - the ready-to-treat date will be after the decision to treat when there is a medically prescribed planned delay for multi-modality treatment (e.g., post-operative or post-chemo).
- 2.3 The ready-to-treat date must be indicated on the radiation therapy booking form.
- If the ready-to-treat date is not definitive at the time that the booking request is completed, the Radiation Oncologist shall provide a tentative ready-to-treat date and indicate the reason.

- 2.4 The ready-to-treat date may be determined by eligible patient preference, e.g., a request to start external beam radiation therapy at a future date to accommodate a vacation.

3. Scheduling the Ready-to-Treat Date

- 3.1 The initial ready-to-treat event scheduling must occur at the same time that the first pre-treatment bookings are completed, i.e., when a request for computed tomography (CT) simulation is received. This ensures the inclusion of the eligible patient case in the wait-time interval and surveillance reports.
- 3.2 If the ready-to-treat date is indicated as a specified interval (e.g., four (4) weeks after last chemo), the booking clerks will convert that order to a specific calendar date to the best of their ability based on the information they have access to in the electronic chart.
- 3.3 If the ready-to-treat date is indicated as tentative, the booking staff shall enter the preliminary ready-to-treat event on the tentative date indicated and shall add comments to the scheduled appointment indicating the rationale as provided by the Radiation Oncologist.

4. Modifying the Ready-to-Treat Date

- 4.1 During the pre-treatment period, modification to the ready-to-treat date may become necessary.
- 4.2 The ARIA Medical Oncologist user who schedules treatment, makes a change to a treatment start date or makes a change to a simulator date, is responsible for critically reviewing the previously scheduled ready-to-treat activity and to adjust if necessary.
- 4.3 The ready-to-treat date may be revised only in cases of clinical necessity or eligible patient choice.
- 4.4 A list of change request instructions has been developed for clerical and administrative staff to provide standardized information for when and how the ready-to-treat activity should be modified.
- 4.5 When it is determined that the ready-to-treat activity needs to be modified, the user will indicate a comment on the rescheduled appointment activity to reflect the rationale for the change and to assist with quality assurance activities throughout the pre-treatment period.
- 4.6 For ready-to-treat dates that are rescheduled multiple times, comments must be added for each instance where a change occurs.
- 4.7 Rescheduling the ready-to-treat activity to another date in ARIA Medical Oncologist automatically generates a cancelled appointment record with date stamp and user details so the complete history, if changed, can be audited for any given eligible patient.

5. Confirming the Ready-to-Treat Date

- 5.1 Recognizing that a tentative ready-to-treat date may have to be adjusted in the future when further information comes available, each treatment center in Alberta is responsible for assigning tasks and responsibility to manage the accuracy of the ready-to-treat date for all active eligible patient cases.
- 5.2 The ready-to-treat date should be verified in ARIA Medical Oncologist when the treatment start date is scheduled.
- 5.3 The ready-to-treat date may change after treatment is scheduled when unforeseen events arise or as per eligible patient preference. The rules for modifying the ready-to-treat date shall apply as in section 4 above.

6. Weekly Quality Assurance

- 6.1 Data will be extracted from ARIA Medical Oncologist to produce and distribute quality assurance reports to the Radiation Therapy Managers at all Cancer Care facilities providing radiation therapy.
- 6.2 *EBI-2009-003 Radiation Therapy Wait Times Alerts* combines all of the individual quality assurance reports into one consolidated report which is distributed electronically every Monday morning to each of the clinical sites.
- 6.3 The Radiation Therapy Manager(s) at each site receive only the report for their site. These reports summarize all active eligible patient cases that:
 - a) contain a clerical error or omission which must be corrected in order to be included in the interval reports;
 - b) have been booked for treatment and are approaching or exceeding the external beam radiation therapy access target; or
 - c) have not been booked for treatment and could exceed the external beam radiation therapy access target if treatment is not scheduled soon.
- 6.4 Radiation Therapy Managers are responsible for investigating all interval reports and recommending action when necessary.
- 6.5 Clerical errors and omissions may be assigned back to the booking staff for corrections.
- 6.6 A summary document is available which describes the various reports and how investigations and corrections are to be done.

DEFINITIONS

Decision to treat means, for the purpose of this procedure, the mutual agreement between a patient diagnosed with cancer and a Radiation Oncologist that the patient will undergo external beam radiation therapy for treatment of cancer.

Eligible patient means, for the purpose of this procedure:

1. an Albertan who is registered with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan; or
2. a Canadian who is currently registered with a provincial or territorial health care insurance plan; and
3. an Albertan/Canadian who has been diagnosed with a cancer requiring external beam radiation therapy; and
4. an Albertan/Canadian for whom:
 - a) decision to treat; and
 - b) ready to treat date have been determined by a Radiation Oncologist in Alberta.

External beam radiation therapy means radiation therapy that directs radiation beams at cancer cells and surrounding tissue, from a machine outside the body.

Radiation oncologist means a regulated member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta under the *Health Professions Act* (Alberta) who holds a practice permit respecting the practice of medicine, surgery or osteopathy, or a professional corporation registered with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, and is entitled to use the title Radiation Oncologist, and is a physician with active attending staff privileges with Alberta Health Services as a Radiation Oncologist

Radiation therapy means x-ray therapy radiation treatment, cobalt therapy, electron beam therapy or irradiation using high energy, penetrating waves or particles such as x-rays, gamma rays, proton rays or neutron rays to destroy cancer cells or keep them from reproducing; sometimes called radiotherapy.

Ready-to-treat date means the date on which all pre-treatment diagnostic testing is complete and the eligible patient is ready to begin the treatment process based on clinical decision and patient choice.

Wait-time interval means the number of days an eligible patient waits from the ready-to-treat date (start of interval) to the start-of-treatment date (end of interval).

REFERENCES

Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:

- *External Beam Radiation Therapy Wait Time Access Policy* (#HCS-03)
- *External Beam Radiation Therapy Wait Time: Patient Notification Procedure* (#HCS-03-03)

VERSION HISTORY

Date	Action Taken
July 05, 2017	Revised
July 14, 2017	Non-substantive change