Frequently Asked Questions

COMMON QUESTIONS (for All Roles):

1. What is the eReferral Pilot Program?

The eReferral pilot program will introduce the use of a standardized referral form for Orthopedics. In addition, the form will be submitted by Primary Care Providers through the Provincial Electronic Health Record (EHR), supporting a single-entry process for non- urgent orthopedic referrals to Zone 3 (Fredericton and River Valley Area) and Zone 6 (Bathurst and Acadian Peninsula Area).

Benefits of the program include increasing transparency of the referral process, streamlining specialist's referrals and allowing for a standardized measurement of patient wait times (i.e. Wait 1).

2. How does eReferral work?

Primary Care Providers will access the eReferral solution from within the provincial Electronic Health Record (EHR). Health Services Access Program staff at the Department of Health will review all eReferrals submitted through to the single-entry model process for completeness. eReferrals will be assigned to the next available Specialist by means of an assignment algorithm. If a specific Specialist is requested as part of the eReferral, the eReferral will be assigned to the desired Specialist. In addition, the Health Services Access Program staff will liaise with Specialist's offices to ensure referrals are reviewed and processed in a timely manner.

3. What Specialties are currently included in the eReferral Pilot Program?

The eReferral Pilot Program includes non-urgent referrals from Primary Care Providers (Physicians and Nurse Practitioners) to **Orthopedic** Specialists in Zone 3 (Fredericton and River Valley Area) or Zone 6 (Bathurst and Acadian Peninsula Area).

4. What types of referrals are considered in scope for the pilot program?

Referrals in scope for the pilot program are as follows:

- Non-urgent referrals from Primary Care Providers to Orthopedic Specialists in Zone 3 (Fredericton and River Valley Area) and Zone 6 (Bathurst Acadian Peninsula Area)

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The pilot program does not include:

- Urgent referrals (to be seen in 3 weeks)
- Referrals from OT/PT
- Referrals from Out of Province Providers
- Referrals for Out of Province Patients
- Referrals from Specialist to Specialist
- WorkSafe NB
- Private Insurance Companies

Please Note: The traditional process must be followed for sending referrals to Orthopedic Specialist offices in Zone 3 and Zone 6 for those deemed out of scope during the pilot program.

All Spine Referrals should use traditional means (i.e. fax, letter, etc.) for referring to the Moncton and Saint John orthopods. The Orthopedic Specialists in Zone 3 and Zone 6 do not accept Spine Referrals.

5. **What about referrals to other Specialities and referrals to Orthopedics in other Zones (excluding Zone 3 and Zone 6)?**

   For the Pilot, eReferral is implemented only for Orthopedic referrals (excluding Spine) in the following zones:

   - Zone 3 (Fredericton and River Valley Area) and
   - Zone 6 (Bathurst and Acadian Peninsula Area).

   All referrals to other Specialities, as well as Orthopedic referrals to all other Zones, (excluding Zone 3 and Zone 6), will follow the normal referral process, i.e. fax, scanned email, mail, etc.
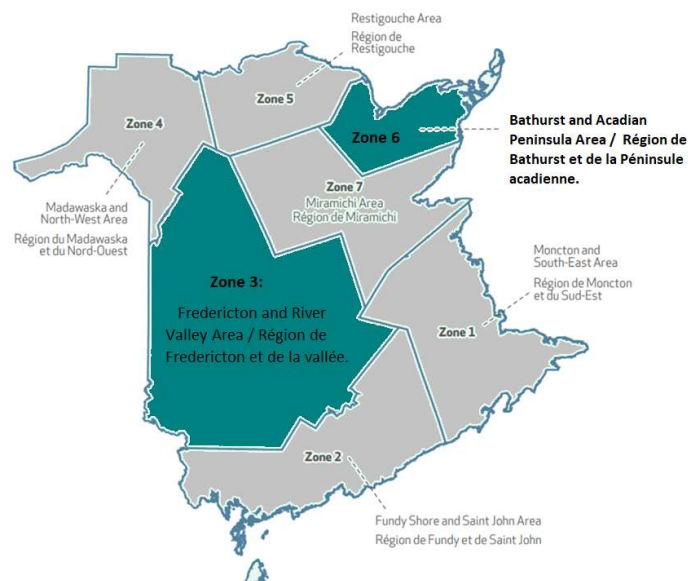
6. Who is a Delegate?

A Delegate is a person in the Primary Care Provider's (PCP) or Specialist's Office who is designated by the PCP or Specialist to perform certain tasks in the eReferral solution on their behalf. Although the most common scenario is for a delegate to be a Medical Office Administrator (MOA), it is also possible to assign clinical staff such as a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse to be a delegate.

To access the eReferral functionality as a delegate, the Specialist or PCP must first assign the MOA or Clinical staff to be their delegate in the EHR.

7. What if I don't have access to the Electronic Health Record (EHR)?

To obtain access to the EHR, please send an email to EHRAccess@gnb.ca requesting access to the EHR. As part of the access process, you will be required to complete online training modules: Privacy (approx. 15 minutes) and EHR (approx. 20 minutes).

8. I am interested in eReferral. How do I obtain more information?

For more detailed information regarding the functionality of eReferral please refer to the training materials located in HP / SP (gnb.ca) or contact the Health Services Access Program Staff at: eReferral@gnb.ca.

In addition, Quick Reference Guides on how to use the system are available on the Health Portal at: https://hps.gnb.ca.

9. How can I get help with using the solution?

For support on how to use the eReferral solution, please contact eReferral@gnb.ca.

10. Privacy

As a prerequisite to accessing the eReferral, the user must have completed the Privacy Training offered as part of the EHR access process.

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11. Privacy Considerations when communicating by email with the Access Staff.

Due to the PHI contained within an eReferral, the appropriate use and safe keeping of this information is essential. When communicating with the Access Program Staff via email, it is recommended that Specialists and PCPs refer to the eReferral ID when an eReferral exists for a patient.

If an eReferral ID does not exist, please communicate this information to Access Program Staff using your Vitalité Health Network (VHN) or Horizon Health Network (HHN) emails. The use of personal emails, such as Gmail or Hotmail, will not be processed.

12. How do I setup eReferral email notifications?

To receive email notifications regarding eReferral information, you must update your email information in the EHR as follows:

1) Select 'My Details' under 'COMMON' on the 'left-hand menu'.

2) Under the 'My Attributes' section, enter the preferred email address in the 'Subscription to eReferral notification email' field.

3) Click on the 'Update Preferences' button.

13. Can I add notes to an eReferral?

PCPs, Specialists and Specialist Delegates can add notes to an eReferral until it is closed. Notes can be added to capture / communicate information related to the eReferral. Notes will be visible to all users with access to view eReferrals.

Note: No email notification will be triggered from the solution when a note is added. To communicate any information which may be important for patient care, please contact the intended PCP or Specialist directly, advising additional information has been added to the eReferral.

14. Why do I see a blank HCN displayed on My eReferrals view?

Patients with non-NB Medicare HCNs will have a blank HCN displayed on dashboards.

15. Is eReferral accessible on Mobile Phones?

The eReferral solution is supported for use on iPads. However, the solution cannot be accessed on Mobile Phones and will display the error message below:

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FAQs FOR PCPs

16. How will this affect my current practice?

For Primary Care Providers referring to a **Specialist in Zone 3 (Fredericton) or Zone 6 (Bathurst)**, it will require the use of a standardized referral form for Orthopedics, the submission of the form through an electronic system (EHR/eReferral) to a centralized program unit and the monitoring of requests (from a Specialist or Health Services Access Program) for additional information. Direct contact with an Orthopedic Surgeon's office to establish a referral will no longer be accepted for elective/non-urgent referrals.

17. Can my Medical Office Administrator (MOA) submit an eReferral to a Zone 3 or Zone 6 Orthopaedic Specialist on the PCP's behalf?

Medical Office Assistants can submit an eReferral on behalf of a Primary Care Provider as a 'Delegate'. Access to the provincial Electronic Health Record as well as mandatory training must be completed in order to be granted 'Delegate' access to eReferral. For more details regarding EHR and eReferral access and training, contact EHRAccess@gnb.ca.

18. Will I or my Delegate be able to generate and/or submit the referral form through my Electronic Medical Record (EMR)?

Primary Care Providers or their Delegates will not have the ability to generate and submit the referral form through their Electronic Medical Record (EMR) at this time. However, the Department has arranged for a select number of approved EMRs in use in Zones 3 and 6 to have the standardized orthopedic referral form available for data entry and storage within the patient's chart. The completed referral form in the EMR may then be saved as a digital file (PDF format) and attached to the referral submission via the eReferral solution with minimal data entry. Note: Use of this form is not mandatory.

For PCP offices not using one of the EMRs with the standardized referral form configured, the referral can be entered in full and submitted via the eReferral solution, accessed via the EHR.

19. Can a Locum filling in for a PCP submit eReferrals?

A Locum can submit eReferrals. However, eReferrals previously created by a PCP will not appear on the Locum's "My eReferrals" list. The Locum can search for the patient in the EHR and access the eReferral. Similarly, eReferrals created by a Locum will not appear on the PCP's "My eReferrals" list and the PCP can search for the patient in the EHR and access the eReferral.

If the Locum and PCP have assigned the same Delegate, the Delegate will be able to view or access both the Locum and PCP's eReferrals.

When submitting an eReferral, the Locum should indicate the Patient's regular PCP in the 'Other Information' field. This will ensure that the correct PCP can be contacted if needed after the Locum has moved on.

FAQs FOR SPECIALISTS

20. How will this affect my current practice?

During the eReferral Pilot Program, assigned referrals will require review using the digital solution through the EHR, along with the entry of information pertaining to a patient's unavailable time, the scheduled appointment date and the subsequent decision made following the patient's consultation.

21. How will a referral by prioritized?

Once the referral has been assigned, the Specialist will review and assess. It will be assigned one of the following priorities, indicating the time period in which the patient should be seen:

- • Priority 2 - Within 3 months
- • Priority 3 – Within 6 months
- • Priority 4 – Within 12 months
- • Priority 5 – Within 12 to 18 months

22. How does a Specialist redirect an eReferral to a Specialist who is not participating in the eReferral Program?

If it is determined that the patient needs (or is better suited) to be referred to another Specialist not participating in the eReferral program, the original assigned Specialist will reject the eReferral and provide further instructions to the requesting PCP. The PCP will send the referral directly to the suggested Specialist using traditional referral processes (ie, fax, mail, etc).

23. What should a specialist do when the PCP from whom they requested additional information is unavailable?

The Specialist may contact the Health Services Access Program staff for any queries or follow ups.

Access Staff will run reports on a regular basis to follow up with PCPs who have not responded to requests for additional information In exceptional cases, the Access Staff have the ability to respond to the request so that the eReferral is back with the Specialist for next steps.