



# Wait Times for Priority Area Surgeries across Canada

In 2004, Canada's first ministers agreed to reduce wait times in five priority areas: cancer treatment, cardiac care, sight restoration, joint replacements and diagnostic imaging. Benchmarks were set for several of these areas, as well as for hip fracture repair, in December 2005, and the provinces agreed to report their progress against these established benchmarks. The Canadian Institute for Health Information was mandated to report on the progress being made across the provinces to reduce wait times. The following detail findings in this year's report.

Many patients receive surgery to repair hip fractures within the 48-hour benchmark.

- Across the eight provinces for which data are available, close to four out of five (79%) patients receive surgery within the 48-hour benchmark for hip fracture repair.
- The variation among provinces for hip fracture repair is small compared with other priority areas – across the eight provinces, between 75 and 83% of procedures are performed within 48 hours.

Most patients receive radiation therapy for cancer within a month of requiring treatment.

- Eight of 10 provinces provide at least 88% of patients with cancer radiation therapy within the medically acceptable 28-day benchmark.
- In the remaining provinces, the range is 62–74% of patients.

Waits for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans are longer than those for computed tomography (CT) scans.

- Though wait times information is more limited for diagnostic imaging than for other priority-area procedures, the study found that waits for MRI scans are longer than for CT scans.

- Currently, no pan-Canadian benchmarks exist for CT and MRI wait times.

Most cataract surgery patients are treated within the benchmark time frame.

- In seven of 10 provinces, at least 75% of cataract surgery patients are treated within the recommended time frame of 16 weeks.
- In two provinces, the range is 61–69% of patients.

Many patients wait longer than benchmark time frames for knee replacements.

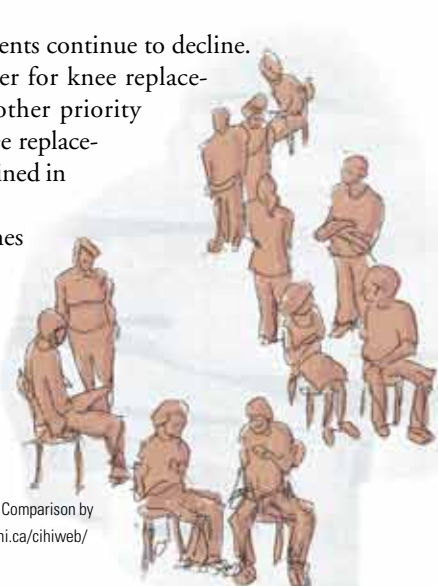
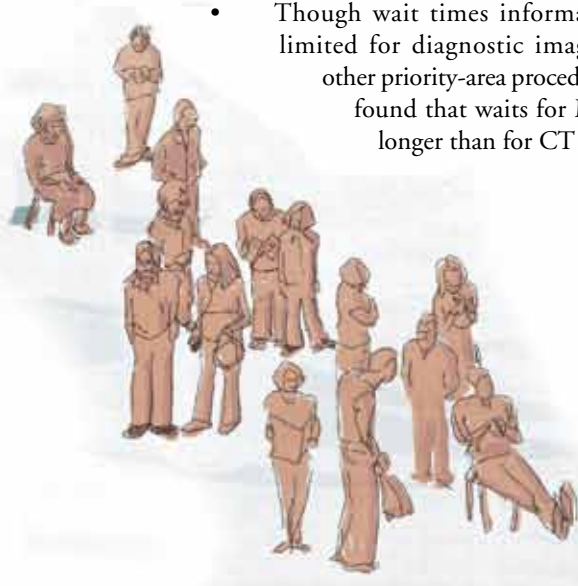
- In the three most-populous provinces (Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia), at least three quarters of patients receive knee replacements within the recommended wait time of 26 weeks.
- In the remaining seven provinces, less than three quarters of patients receive knee replacement surgery within the benchmark time frame.
- In two provinces, the median wait time exceeds the benchmark.
- Patients in all provinces wait longer for knee replacements than for any other priority procedure.

Most patients in over half of the provinces receive hip replacement surgery within the recommended wait time.

- In six of 10 provinces, at least three quarters of patients receive hip replacement surgery within the 26-week wait time benchmark.
- For the other four provinces, the range is 51–63% of patients.

Wait times for joint replacements continue to decline.

- Although patients wait longer for knee replacement surgery than for any other priority procedure, wait times for knee replacements remained stable or declined in reporting provinces.
- The same is true for wait times for hip replacements. **HQ**



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information. 2010. Wait Times Tables – A Comparison by Province, 2010. Toronto, ON: Author. Retrieved April 26, 2010. <[http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw\\_page=PG\\_2810\\_E&cw\\_topic=2810&cw\\_rel=AR\\_1909\\_E](http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=PG_2810_E&cw_topic=2810&cw_rel=AR_1909_E)>.



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