

Medical imaging and laboratory services make progress through November and December

Professionals from the fields address challenges, opportunities, potential governance models, and operations in Alberta and Manitoba

Medical laboratory services

In early November 2013, the medical laboratory and medical imaging services business case Lead and Operations Committees, together with members of the 3sHealth Patient Advisory and Provider Advisory Committees, met for mini-visioning sessions in Regina. The medical laboratory services session attracted participants from across the province, many of whom braved winter driving conditions in order to attend. The group received a detailed update on the progress of the business case, and was then invited to discuss the findings from the provincial site visits and validate the challenges as they relate to quality, access safety, operational effectiveness, and financial sustainability.

The participants were engaged in all aspects of the day, but particularly energetic conversation took place around current state challenges and potential opportunities for improvement. Following a large-group discussion, participants formed smaller groups and ranked the improvement opportunities according to level of value and degree of difficulty to implement. The groups also identified quick win possibilities, which they prioritized for rollout over the coming months.

The afternoon session consisted of a detailed roundtable discussion of different governance models for medical laboratory services. The project team presented several governance options identified by the Project Lead Committee and explored those models at the operational, functional and organizational levels.

Several weeks following the foundational work done at the mini-visioning session, representatives from the medical laboratory services business case, including clinical and operational leadership from the health regions, eHealth Saskatchewan, and 3sHealth, conducted a jurisdictional site visit to Calgary Lab Services (CLS). As part of its itinerary, the group examined the “CLS Quality Management System,” which features indicator tracking, quality assurance planning, and key performance metrics that are captured provincially. The team benefitted from opportunities to speak with CLS clinical and operational leaders, learning about their processes and clinical experiences on the front lines of service delivery. A few days later, the group conducted another site visit at Diagnostic Services of Manitoba (DSM). A total of 22 participants toured the facility, participated in DSM’s annual provincial

leadership forum, and met with operational and clinical staff willing to discuss the challenges DSM faced throughout the service delivery transition period. This open conversation produced valuable information for the team to consider.



Participants gather to discuss medical imaging services at a mini-visioning workshop in November 2013.

Medical imaging services

Following closely on the heels of the medical laboratory services mini-visioning session, clinical and operational members of the medical imaging services business case team, together with patients and providers, gathered to examine some of the same issues. After hearing an update from the business case leaders, the medical imaging services group validated current state challenges and brainstormed potential opportunities for improvement. The perspectives of the patients and providers in attendance added great value to the discussions. Conducting a deeper dive into the current and future state issues, the group discussed the types of strategic, tactical, and operational decisions required in order to provide high-quality medical imaging services in Saskatchewan. The session participants, like their medical laboratory services counterparts, also generated a list of quick wins.

Responses at the mini-visioning session to the business case process were positive. One radiologist in attendance explained, “Medical imaging is crucial to obtaining a patient diagnosis, so improved efficiency will help patients access required treatment.” Reflecting on the development of the business case, she noted, “This process is important because it reaches all stakeholders and tries to find solutions that are workable and may help initiate change where needed.” Similarly, other participants noted that seeing the medical imaging

system from many perspectives is crucial to developing lasting solutions and putting patient needs first.

Governance was also a central topic of conversation in the medical imaging session. The group spent several hours considering the desired future state attributes of a medical imaging governance structure. The insights gathered from the participants will help to inform the project team's recommendations as the business case progresses into the New Year. Clinical and operational representatives from medical imaging services in the province then gathered for jurisdictional site visits at Mayfair Diagnostics in Calgary and Diagnostic Services of Manitoba (DSM) in Winnipeg in late November. At Mayfair's Calgary location, the site visit group, composed of eight representatives from across Saskatchewan, had the opportunity to see public and private care delivery coordinated within a single facility. The following day, the site visit participants toured DSM's facility, meeting with individuals prepared to discuss DSM's challenges around transitioning to its current service delivery model and coordinating with the health regions. Several of the medical imaging site visit participants met with the provincial leadership forum, which provided them with a glimpse into the collaborative work of Manitoba's diagnostic leaders.

Next steps

The medical imaging and medical laboratory services site visits allowed the teams to examine different governance structures in practice. The business case development teams are now reviewing the information gathered from the mini-visioning sessions and the jurisdictional site visits and continuing to build the business cases, which are expected to be complete by March 2014. For more information, visit the [medical imaging](#) and [medical laboratory services](#) pages on the [3sHealth website](#).