

NEWSLETTER: March 2024



Project: WE-CARE 2 IMAGE OH West Central Intake Program

WELCOME

Dear OH West,

Welcome to the first edition of the WE-CARE-2 IMAGE* Newsletter! This newsletter will provide important updates on the OH West Central Intake Program and give you a platform to share feedback. Our goal is to keep the OH West community informed and foster collaboration.

The **WE-CARE 2 IMAGE program** aims to provide equity for CT and MRI accessibility across the OH West region. The project is a significant investment for the health system and is expected to enhance patient access to CT/MRI services, simplify the process of routing patients by receiving and filtering referrals from clinicians based on a set of criteria, improve patient and care team experience, optimize system capacity and enable future modernizations and innovative changes.

In each monthly edition, you will receive key updates across several of the active workstreams. This edition introduces all five workstreams. Newsletter updates will include the latest developments, achievements, and upcoming initiatives across the workstreams. We believe that by sharing these highlights, we can celebrate our collective progress and build positive momentum.

At the end of the newsletter, you will find a frequently asked questions (FAQ) section to address your most common questions. The FAQ section will be updated in each edition of the newsletter, sharing with you the responses to questions asked by your OH West colleagues.

Stay up-to-date and connected with our regular newsletter releases. We hope you find it informative and valuable in providing you with visibility into the WE-CARE 2 IMAGE Central Intake Program.

Thank you for your dedication and contributions to date.

Warm Regards,

Sarah-Jane Adams & Dr. Narinder Paul
WE-CARE 2 IMAGE (OH West Central Intake) Co-Chairs



DID YOU KNOW?

***WE-CARE 2 IMAGE** is the name for the OH West Central Intake Project. It was developed in collaboration with Town Hall and Steering Committee. The name represents the following:

- **WE** is inspired by the collaboration between organizations across the OH **WEST** region
- **CARE** stands for **C**oordinated **A**ccess **R**egional **E**quity
- **2 IMAGE** was added given the focus of this program is diagnostic imaging



Project: WE-CARE 2 IMAGE

OH West Central Intake Program

There are several workstreams engaged in the Central Intake Project, all of which are overseen by a diverse group of leaders from various roles and departments, including OH West executive, DI leadership, clerical leads, technologists, radiologists, primary care providers, patient advisors, EDI specialists, and ethicists, are actively involved in project leadership.

PROJECT UPDATE

Project Workstreams: Areas of Focus

1. Referrals & Baseline Protocolling

Aimed at developing a common requisition form and common core protocols across key clinical areas to streamline and support the future central intake model. Common requisition form and common core protocols will enable clinical and operational consistency as well as allow organizations to share and align on leading practices/standards.

Key Outcomes to Date:

- ✓ Clinical experts have identified elements that are to be considered core for MRI and CT.
- ✓ Clinical teams have mobilized and begun to identify common core protocols across CT Cancer, MRI Neuro, MRI MSK, and MRI Body.
- ✓ Drafting has begun for elements of CT and MRI requisition forms, including revised versions to incorporate feedback from diverse stakeholder groups (i.e., primary care, radiologists, operational staff).

2. Enabling Activities

Oversees ongoing upgrades for Foreign Exam Management (FEM) and MRI software, streamline clinical workflows and optimize key clinical procedures, through technology improvements. These upgrades will critical for enabling central intake.

Key Outcomes to Date:

- ✓ Upgrades to FEM and MRI software are underway. The working group is collaborating closely with the hospitals to advance this work.

3. Load Balancing

Aimed at developing and testing of a live simulation of requisitions and referral patterns across OH West in the central intake model. The objective is to refine and finalize load balancing criteria, such as situational information that influences referral needs. This will inform the algorithm to be deployed through the eSolution. This work will also result in a service catalogue to index capabilities and services offered across all 28 regional hospitals.

Key Outcomes to Date:

- ✓ Worked collectively with OH West to define and gather data to test load balancing criteria through a central intake simulation model.
- ✓ Aligned on questions that will serve to expand the current service catalogue and inform the simulation model and algorithms that will be integrated in the eSolution.



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PROJECT UPDATE



Project Workstreams: Areas of Focus

4. Proof of Concept

Implementing a proof of concept for the central intake model in OH West to test patients’ willingness to travel. This will provide the project team with lessons learned that will inform the requirements of the full central intake program implementation.

Key Outcomes to Date:

- ✓ Proof of concept was successfully launched and completed for priority three and priority four CT patients
 - Partnering site(s) that completed the proof of concept included: London Health Sciences Centre, St. Joseph’s Healthcare London, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital and South Bruce Grey Health Centre.
- ✓ Over 140 patients were contacted, with 70+ patients being rebooked for earlier appointments – saving over 4000 days of patient wait time. This validates a cohort of patients are willing to travel, and that the future central intake model has the potential to greatly improve patient outcomes.

5. eSolution

Collaboration between Host Hospital and the eSolution team through a procurement process to establish a master price agreement for technology solutions focused on central waitlist management across the province. OH will be going to market this year for appropriate solution(s) to enable the full central intake program implementation.

Key Outcomes to Date:

- ✓ Through a rigorous identification process, Hamilton Health Sciences was selected as the host hospital for OH West’s central intake program.
- ✓ OH has been working closely with the project team to understand all requirements of the project, including identification of key RFP requirements.
- ✓ Internal teams at Hamilton Health Sciences have been mobilizing sub-working groups (e.g., HR, Procurement) to drive this effort forward.





Project: WE-CARE 2 IMAGE

OH West Central Intake Program

FAQ

Responses to commonly asked questions :

Q: What is Central Intake?

A: Central intake is a single, regional program designed to receive requests from physicians and prescribers and route the referral to the appropriate hospital within OH West based on a set of criteria. The design of the central intake is to improve equity in CT and MRI patient wait times across the OH West region.

Q: Why is Central Intake being undertaken?

A: Central Intake is being undertaken to increase equity in access to CT and MRI procedures across all hospitals in OH West. Currently, there is wide variation in wait times for patients, leading to inequitable patient experience and potential outcomes. Central Intake will help to close patient gaps and ensure increased accessibility to all patients regardless of location.

Q: What work has been completed to date?

A: Since early 2023, the OH West team, a multi-disciplinary group of radiologists, clinicians, front-line staff and administrators, have been working towards designing a centralized intake program for MRI and CT requisitions across the West region. After successfully submitting a business case to Ontario Health and receiving approval, the OH West team started the second phase of work in November 2023 to prepare the region for future program implementation and operations.

Q: Who is engaged through the project leadership team?

A: Leaders from various roles and departments, including OH West executive, DI directors, clerical leads, technologists, radiologists, primary care providers, patient advisors, EDI specialists, and ethicists, are actively involved in project leadership. This diverse group ensures representation across sub-regions and hospitals of different sizes. Their responsibilities include overseeing the program, monitoring its overall performance, and promptly escalating any critical risks to the OH West DI leadership.

Q: How can I get involved?

A: Please reach out to the project team at WECARE2IMAGE@hhsc.ca.



If you have any questions regarding the central intake program, please submit your questions and feedback anonymously via our form: <https://forms.office.com/e/LKKCXyXqij>. Thank you.

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