

**Guidelines for the Submission and Review of
Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
Stakeholders' Copy**

**Implementation Branch
LHIN Liaison Branch
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
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1. Purpose

These guidelines set out the process that hospitals, Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (ministry), should follow when submitting, reviewing and/or recommending the approval of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) requests/proposals.

2. Application and Scope

The guidelines apply to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Local Health Integration Networks, and Health Service Providers (HSPs).

These guidelines apply to proposals for new machines/equipment.

3. Applicable Legislation

Public Hospitals Act (PHA)

Hospitals may be designated as Group N hospitals pursuant to subsection 32.1(1) of the *Public Hospitals Act* (PHA). Group N hospitals, in accordance with clause 1(1)(n) of Regulation 964 of the PHA, may acquire and operate magnetic resonance imaging equipment, and may charge and accept payment from other hospitals for the performance of magnetic resonance imaging.

The authority of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (“Minister”) to assign hospitals to classes and grades under s.32.1 of the PHA has been delegated to the Director, LHIN Liaison Branch (LLB), Health System Accountability and Performance Division.

Health Insurance Act

Regulation 552 of the *Health Insurance Act* (HIA), subsection 9(6) states: “Subject to subsection 11(1), an insured person is entitled to receive magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services in a hospital graded, under the *Public Hospitals Act*, as a Group N hospital without paying any charge to the hospital for such services”.

4. Process - Roles and Responsibilities

STEP 1 – Hospital / Provider Submission

MRI Proposal Components

A hospital requesting funding approval to acquire and operate an MRI should submit a business case to the local LHIN Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The application should be signed by the hospital CEO or someone with signing authority.

A hospital that purchases an MRI with its own funds, and not requesting any operating funding, should advise the local LHIN. The LHIN, in turn, should advise the ministry. This will enable the ministry to keep a more complete record of all MRIs across the province.

The business case should address the following:

A. Overview & Current Status

- Outline the rationale for developing the business case at this time. A brief environmental scan should be included.
- List the individual MRI machines/equipment currently operating at the specific hospital site. (A separate list may be attached to the business case). Include:
 - Name of device
 - Date installed
 - Total number of MRI machines / equipment per hospital site

For each scanner/equipment, please also indicate the purpose:

- Research
- Clinical

A statement from the hospital should be included:

- confirming that it will have a balanced operating budget or has an acceptable plan in place to reach a balanced operating budget in the same fiscal year that the MRI machine/equipment is anticipated to become operational; and
- confirming that the MRI machine/equipment will be purchased with previously-secured funds.

- Include a brief description of the sponsoring hospital, including programs/services available, overall bed numbers, catchment area, etc.
- Identify any “unique” factors that would make this business case critical for the community stakeholders.
- Other criteria as identified by the LHIN.

B. Strategic Analysis

- Provide an impact analysis for both the hospital and the LHIN to verify that the MRI implementation is consistent with the service provision goals outlined in the LHIN’s Integrated Health Services Plan (IHSP).
- Explain the goals of the proposal and how it relates to the hospital’s strategic plan and Wait Time Strategy.
- Provide an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the acquisition and operation of new MRI equipment.
- Describe all alternative options and the rationale for the recommended option.
- List key assumptions and any dependencies which exist with other projects or initiatives.
- Describe target benefits, future success measures, dates for achievement, and critical deliverables.
- Describe the impact on and communication plans with stakeholders.
- Describe the proposed “reach” of MRI services to other communities within the district, county, and/or region.

C. Resource Analysis

- List all start-up, one-time capital, and annual operating costs.
- Conduct a cost/benefit analysis which includes a multi-year financial plan addressing the sources of funding for both capital and operating costs.
- Describe any infrastructure work (i.e. renovations or new construction) that will be required to accommodate the MRI equipment.
- Include an analysis of the health human resources impact, the impact on other services, and the utilization management strategy.
- Provide a sound fundraising strategy and outline the impact on the hospital’s current cost-share ratio, if applicable.

D. Capital Component

As part of the business case, the hospital **must clearly** confirm that the following four conditions will be met:

1. that the equipment and any required construction and/or renovations will be fully funded by the hospital;
2. that the construction and/or renovations will be related solely to the installation of the equipment and its operation, and that there will be no additional program, service or structural changes resulting from the installation;
3. that the MRI installation proposal will not change the hospital's Master Plan options and/or Site Plan. Or, if the HSP does not have a current Master Plan / Master Program, that the HSP (along with its Health Care Facility Designers and relevant Health Care Facility Stakeholders) will verify that the project will not have a negative impact on the Vision for the facility and its site(s). The ministry's Master Planning Guide specifies that a Master Plan *must provide for optimum flexibility to adapt to changes in community needs as well as changes in health care delivery. P1 of 11, Version 1, June 9, 2007; and*
4. that if the hospital is in the planning or construction phase of an approved major project, the MRI installation: (a) will not have an impact on this pre-existing project if it is located at the same hospital site, and (b) will not negatively impact the hospital's Master Local Share plan.

If the hospital is unable to confirm any or all of the above criteria, the Implementation Branch – Wait Times will lead discussions between the LHIN and the ministry, as required, to determine whether the proposal will or will not be regarded as a capital project, subject to the ministry's capital review and approvals process.

Note:

If it is determined that the proposal is subject to the ministry's capital review and approval process, the Health Capital Investment Branch will lead the capital process as per section 4(3) of the *Public Hospitals Act*. See the Section 4 Approvals under the *Public Hospitals Act* Protocol for additional information.

STEP 2 – LHIN Review and Recommendation

The LHIN is not expected nor asked to comment on the capital component (section D) in its written advice to the ministry.

The local LHIN will review each MRI funding request, and will provide a letter of support to the ministry (Implementation Branch – Wait Times) outlining the rationale for recommending (or not) that a specific MRI funding request be approved.

The decision to approve MRI machines/equipment is solely that of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. However, the LHIN's advice does form an important part of the ministry's submission and recommendation to the Minister.

Once the proposal is received by the LHIN, it should be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Are there any issues related to the strategic analysis and/or the resource analysis that the LHIN will need to follow up with the hospital?
- If required, has the hospital addressed the issues raised by the LHIN?
- Is the proposal aligned with the LHIN Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP), and with the LHIN strategic direction?
- Has the hospital confirmed base hours of operation?
- Are there any issues related to resource requirements (as per hospital outline of necessary operating funding, and relevant capital costs)? Is there sufficient availability of health human resources?

Please note that all capital costs (including renovations) will be the responsibility of the hospital.

**** We recommend that you use the Web Enabling Reporting System (WERS) to confirm balanced budget.***

The LHIN will forward the MRI proposal to the Implementation Branch – Wait Times, along with the LHIN's recommendation. If the LHIN recommends approval contrary to any of the criteria, then a detailed rationale is required. On the other hand, if the LHIN does not recommend approval, then a rationale for this recommendation is required.

STEP 3 – Ministry Review

The Implementation Branch – Wait Times, Health System Accountability and Performance Division, will lead the review and coordination of MRI proposals for the Minister's consideration.

Appendix A: Criteria of MRI Expert Panel

- ❖ 90th percentile Wait Time (total within a LHIN and regional within a LHIN)
- ❖ Population base scan rate (i.e. scans/1000 people/year)
- ❖ Efficiency of pre-existing facilities
- ❖ Geographic distribution of population and health facilities within a LHIN
- ❖ Community vs. tertiary/teaching hospital
- ❖ Cancer clinic presence
- ❖ Required mix of technology
- ❖ Facility requirements for the training of radiologists and radiology technologists
- ❖ Training, recruitment and retention of non-imaging physicians
- ❖ The clinical needs of the hospital and the community:
 - Size of hospital
 - Number of beds
 - Number of ICU beds and number of ICU visits per year
 - Number of ER visits per year (if applicable)
 - Number of inpatients transported to another hospital
 - Number of surgeons on staff
 - Number of patients visiting trauma centre per year (if applicable)

**Expert Panel reports can be found on the Wait Times website www.ontariowaittimes.com*