

Frequently Asked Questions: Direct Referral for Breast Imaging

Direct Referral for Breast Imaging is a quality initiative to eliminate suspicion of cancer or diagnose a breast cancer more quickly. You are an integral part of the patient's journey to diagnose a **breast cancer suspicion**.

What is "Direct Referral" for Breast Imaging?

When a radiologist reviews a breast imaging case and recommends your patient for another breast imaging test (**except breast MRI or periodic follow up tests**), the imaging site will either:

- Book and complete the test **if done on site**; OR
- Forward the test request to where the test is done and they will make the appointment.

You will receive all patient imaging reports and be notified of all appointments made for your patient to reach a diagnosis.

Which patients will be Direct Referred?

All patients in Manitoba who require additional breast imaging to reach a diagnosis on a breast concern will be direct referred to their next test. This does not include MRI requests, as the MRI questionnaire must be completed before the test can be approved. Periodic follow ups will not be automatically booked as they are not urgently booked to reach a diagnosis.

How will I continue to be involved with my patient's care and diagnosis?

If a patient will be Direct Referred to the next test, the imaging report will state:

- Test needed & where test location , Level of Suspicion ("**high**" or "**not high**")

The Primary Care Provider is responsible to follow up if they are not informed of an appointment within three days, as you remain the physician of record. Call the imaging site to ensure they received the referral.

You may need to accommodate your schedule to see a patient who is referred on if they have questions or concerns between appointments or help them understand potential outcomes of testing.

What do I need to tell my patients?

It is important that patients are aware that they may require additional imaging tests after their initial visit. This is not uncommon and does not mean that they have breast cancer. Encourage your patients to accommodate the appointment times that are offered to diagnose concerns as quickly as possible.

What tools are available for me to support Direct Referral?

New Provincial Breast Imaging Requisition Form: This universal form will be accepted at all private and public breast imaging locations throughout Manitoba.

Patient Brochure: Diagnostic Breast Exams– What to Expect: This brochure has been developed to supplement your conversation with your patients and aid in preparing them for their diagnostic journey.

Where can I get more information, the new requisition form and brochure?

For more information on the Direct Referral Process, to access the new Breast Imaging Requisition Form, and how to obtain copies of the brochure, see dsmanitoba.ca/medical-practitioners/reference-material or call DSM's Client Services at 1-866-633-1787.