



**Patient Feedback**

WHAT PATIENTS IN THE CURRENT & NEW APPROACH ARE SAYING	
CURRENT APPROACH	NEW APPROACH — TODAY
“...the long waiting period was very detrimental to my health”	“It was extremely quick”
“The stuff that we were given was very elementary and incomplete”	“The service I got... was as good as you’re gonna get”
“That was a bad experience... I ended up not being able to eat or sleep for my whole stay there”	“Compared to any surgery that I’ve had before, or even a stay in a hospital, they were much better”

**Next Steps**

The Alberta Bone & Joint Health Institute will continue to monitor the effectiveness and patient specific outcomes until the completion of 1200 surgeries in the new system. A Progress Report will be produced by the Alberta Bone & Joint Health Institute in the spring of 2006, and Alberta Health and Wellness will have a final report submitted in May 2006.

**Our Partners**



**For More Information**

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ALBERTA  
**BONE & JOINT**  
INSTITUTE HEALTH

**ALBERTA HIP & KNEE REPLACEMENT PROJECT: INTERIM RESULTS**

DECEMBER 2005

**HIGHLIGHTS**

A new hip and knee replacement approach was designed using the world’s best evidence. As it compares to the current system, highlights of the interim evaluation of the new system include:

- Decreased wait time for patients to receive 1st orthopaedic consult from 35 weeks to 6 weeks
- Decreased wait time from 1st orthopaedic consult to surgery from 47 weeks to 4.7 weeks
- Decreased length of stay in hospital from 6.2 days to 4.3 days
- Improved patient satisfaction

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## Why Hips and Knees?

Joint replacement surgery is a proven effective intervention for relieving severe pain and poor functioning arising from degenerative joint diseases such as osteoarthritis. As our population continues to age, more joint replacements are required, which is increasing wait times. At the forefront of Canadian political debates is the concern that the wait time for Canadians to receive a total joint replacement is unacceptably prolonged. The federal-provincial accord mandates a reduction in wait times for hip and knee replacements as a top priority. Alberta's proactive response to this mandate is to advance and evaluate a new approach.

## Wait Times

The definition of wait time to receive a total joint replacement typically calculates the days between the 1st orthopaedic consult to the date of surgery. The wait to see an orthopaedic surgeon, however, can contribute significantly to the overall wait time. It is generally accepted that the longer a patient waits to see an orthopaedic surgeon the more the patient suffers, which in turn leads to a higher use of health resources.

In Alberta, the wait time from referral date to the 1st orthopaedic consult is typically 35 weeks, followed by a typical 56 week wait from 1st orthopaedic consult to surgery.

Alberta's new approach is to:

- Establish and maintain a 17 day maximum wait time from referral to 1<sup>st</sup> orthopaedic consult. Reduced wait time to see a surgeon will decrease system costs such as repeat GP visits, analgesic use, and alternative healthcare provider visits such as chiropractors.
- Establish and maintain a 4 to 16 week wait from 1st orthopaedic consult and decision date for surgery to surgery date. A patient's wait for surgery should be dependent on their medical and social condition. Optimization of these factors prior to surgery will ensure better overall outcomes.

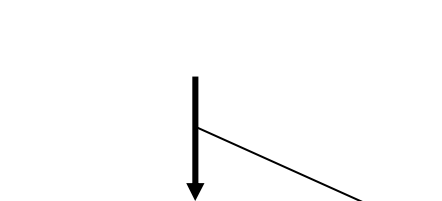
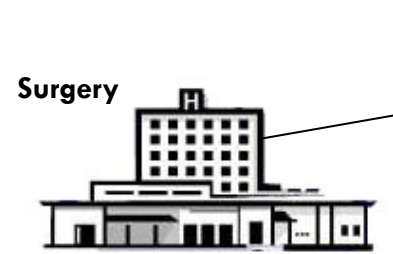
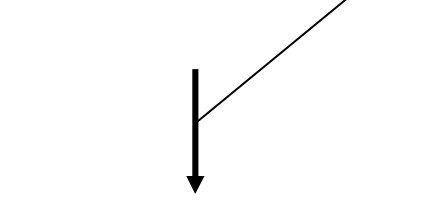
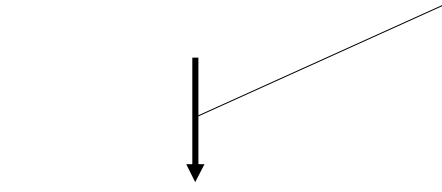
This approach will ensure that for each patient that their overall time from onset of need to return to optimal function will be faster than the current approach.

## A New Way

The Alberta Orthopaedic Society and Alberta Bone and Joint Health Institute used the world's best evidence to develop a new approach to hip and knee replacements from referral to recovery. This new approach received support from Alberta Health and Wellness and the Regional Health Authorities of Alberta, and as a result the Alberta Hip and Knee Replacement Project was launched on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer. This enabled the creation of additional capacity to allow a comparison of the new approach to the current approach.

The new approach involves 19 orthopaedic surgeons, who are expected to complete an additional 1200 hip and knee surgeries by March 2006. The new approach will undergo continued monitoring to determine its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as patient specific outcomes such as safety, function and quality of life as compared to the current approach.

# INTERIM RESULTS AT A GLANCE



WAIT TIME FROM REFERRAL TO 1ST ORTHOPAEDIC CONSULT	
<b>CURRENT APPROACH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average wait = 35 weeks</li> <li>• No Standardized Referral Tool</li> <li>• Multiple Referrals to Multiple Surgeons</li> </ul>	<b>NEW APPROACH — TODAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average wait = Less than 6 weeks</li> <li>• Standardized Referral Tool</li> <li>• Single Referral Entry Point</li> </ul>
<b>TARGET FOR NEW APPROACH: 3.4 weeks</b>	

WAIT TIME FROM 1ST ORTHOPAEDIC CONSULT TO SURGERY	
<b>CURRENT APPROACH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average wait = 47 weeks</li> <li>• Patient Sees Orthopaedic Surgeon</li> <li>• Patient Receives Little Optimization</li> <li>• Minimal Plan</li> </ul>	<b>NEW APPROACH— TODAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average wait = 4.7 weeks</li> <li>• Patient Sees Orthopaedic Surgeon and Team</li> <li>• Patient is Optimized</li> <li>• Comprehensive Plan</li> </ul>
<b>TARGET FOR NEW APPROACH: 4 to 16 weeks - patient dependent</b>	

SURGERY AND LENGTH OF STAY	
<b>CURRENT APPROACH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length of Stay = 6.2 days</li> <li>• No Standardized Approach</li> </ul>	<b>NEW APPROACH — TODAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length of Stay = 4.3 days</li> <li>• Standardized Provincial Approach</li> </ul>
<b>TARGET FOR NEW APPROACH: 4.0 days</b>	

RECOVERY	
<b>CURRENT APPROACH</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up: Variable</li> <li>• Sees Surgeon Only</li> <li>• Variable Patient Optimization</li> </ul>	<b>NEW APPROACH — TODAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up: 14 days, 6 weeks, 3 months, 1 year</li> <li>• Sees Surgeon and Team</li> <li>• Patient is Continually Optimized</li> </ul>
<b>TARGET FOR NEW APPROACH: 14 days, 6 weeks, 3 months, 1 year</b>	