

CANADIAN CARDIOVASCULAR SOCIETY

CCS ACCESS TO CARE BENCHMARKS FOR THE ENTIRE CONTINUUM OF CARDIAC CARE

An Information Sheet for Delegates
Taming of the Queue Conference, April 4-5, 2007



Wait time reductions:
"IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PATIENT'S JOURNEY!"
Canada needs to address the "big picture"...

It was a good and necessary start, but Canada's First Ministers missed the "big picture" when they committed to addressing wait times only for CARDIAC BYPASS SURGERY (CABG) and *didn't* adopt the Canadian Cardiovascular Society's (CCS) benchmarks for the **continuum of cardiovascular care**. This "continuum of care" includes referral to a specialist upon a patient's first presentation of symptoms, and access to a variety of services and procedures through to completion of rehabilitation. Addressing only one surgical intervention such as CABG, (which is used for a limited population), will NOT have a meaningful impact on reducing Canadians' wait times for access to cardiovascular care. It will *not* restore confidence in our publicly funded health care system.

What Canadians Need:

The CCS believes that Canadians need meaningful reductions in wait times for the entire continuum of cardiovascular care, services and procedures -- and not just CABG.

Canadians will benefit only when the focus on wait times is **patient-centred** and focused on the **entire patient journey** -- and *not* focused on a single surgical procedure such as CABG. (Plus - other interventions to treat blocked arteries, such as angioplasty, are **twice as common** as CABG.) CABG is only one step in the patient journey. The CCS believes that the need to focus on the continuum of care is true for most, if not all, areas of care as well.

Why Should We Care?

One in 3 Canadians dies from heart disease and the care of these patients is not limited to one procedure. We need to look at wait times in the "big picture" of care to truly have a positive impact for Canadians.

**The CCS, as a member of the Wait Time Alliance, has developed patient-centred, evidence-based and comprehensive benchmarks for the broad continuum of access to cardiovascular care.
The CCS urges the adoption of all of these benchmarks.**

**For a copy of the CCS's benchmarks, please go to the
Position Statements/Public Policy section of our web site:
www.ccs.ca**