Diagnostic Imaging Review at Stanton Territorial Hospital

What Happened?

- The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) has become aware of a recent media report from British Columbia (BC) regarding concerns with the practice of a specific radiologist employed by one of the Health Authorities in that province.
- The practice concern that was identified in BC relates to inaccuracies in interpretation of diagnostic imaging examinations and the possibility of missed or inaccurate diagnoses.
- It has been determined that this physician was employed as a locum radiologist at Stanton Territorial Hospital from December 19, 2015 to January 23, 2016, and from May 8 to May 14, 2016.
- It is important to note that we are not aware of any inaccurate reports in the NWT at this time, nor that any concerns were raised about this physician’s practice while he was employed in our system.

What are the next steps?

- The NTHSSA has taken the proactive step of initiating a quality review process to determine whether any diagnostic imaging examinations of NWT patients may have been inaccurately interpreted by this physician during the periods he was practicing in our jurisdiction.
- The quality review will include the following steps:
  - Reviewing all diagnostic imaging reports from the period of this radiologist’s employment. A total of 2,355 examinations have been identified that were read by this radiologist.
  - Securing a contract with a southern radiologist service for an expedited review of the identified examinations.

What types of examinations are impacted?

- This issue is contained to diagnostic imaging exams. After each exam is imaged it needs to be read, or interpreted, by a radiologist. These exams include computerized tomography (CT scans), ultrasounds, general radiography (X-rays), and mammography.
- Only exams completed just before and during this radiologist’s time in the NWT are potentially impacted. The date range being reviewed includes exams completed from December 18, 2015 to January 25, 2016 and from May 6 to May 16, 2016.
- Not all exams in the above date ranges will be impacted; however the NTHSSA is doing a thorough examination of all exams to ensure all potentially impacted exams are reviewed for accuracy.
- The review does not mean that all of the original exams in question are inaccurate or incomplete. It also does not mean that the review will result in negative clinical concern or impacts to the individuals examined. These exams are used to support a physician diagnosis, and
are not the only factor considered.

How many people’s examinations may have been read by this physician?

- During this time this physician was responsible for reviewing 2,355 diagnostic imaging exams. As clients may receive more than one exam, the 2,355 exams represent a total of 1,491 individuals who are having cases reviewed.

What are we doing to ensure patients get the care they need?

- Anyone who has had an exam where an error is discovered in the report will be contacted immediately and appropriate follow up will be completed.
- The NTHSSA is committed to patient safety and quality of care. As we make changes within our Authority and the wider health and social services system we will continue to place our focus on quality.

How will any impacted clients get more information?

- As we complete the review of the exams, we will be contacting any clients whose report contained an error.
- We will only contact clients if there was an exam that was reported inaccurately.
- Individuals whose exam report contained an error will be provided with more information on what follow up steps will be required to ensure they receive appropriate care and services.
- If individuals have questions about their care they are encouraged to contact their local health care provider.