

The Alberta Facilitated Access to Specialized Treatment (FAST) Program Update

As part of the Alberta Surgical Initiative (ASI), a central access and intake program called Facilitated Access to Specialized Treatment (FAST) was implemented province-wide and is accepting orthopedic and urology referrals.

Since rolling out FAST, we've collected feedback to support ongoing process improvement. Here's all we're doing...

But first, GOOD NEWS – over 80% of FAST referrals are sent to a surgeons office for triage.

The remaining referrals are declined due to missing information.

To decrease the number of declined referrals FAST teams will:

- Ask referring providers for additional information as appropriate. This will allow referring providers to submit what is missing, rather than submit a new referral.
- Share relevant referral pathways back with referring providers.

Referral Pathways continue to be reviewed and simplified. Some lab and imaging might be removed to make it easier to submit a referral. The templates are being revised to improve usability through a human-centred design approach.

FAST FYIs:

- If a reason for referral falls outside the ones outlined in the referral pathway, a referral may be submitted under "Other." This helps to accommodate all patients and their needs.
- **Please ensure the correct FAST team fax number is being used before sending your referral.** This will ensure your referral is collected by the correct zonal team and is processed in a timely manner. Go [online](#) to view fax numbers.

FAST FACTS:

Our goal is to make the referral process as **simple as possible**, here's how:

- FAST will send patients to the next available provider.
- FAST will send referrals to surgeon office within 2 business days.
- FAST will collect data to support better understanding of patient wait-times.

FORMALIZING FAST:

To share more communication about the FAST program, we have:

- Created new communications tactics to increase awareness of the FAST program and changes to referral processes.
- Identified new ways to reach referring providers, including presentations, townhalls and social media.
- Reconnected with primary care leadership to tailor communication strategies in and for each zone.

Your feedback is vital to the success of this program. Please continue to send FAST feedback to ABFAST@ahs.ca or submit referral pathways feedback [online](#). **Thank you for working with us to reduce patient wait times for surgery.**