

Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care

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AUG 25 2016

Dr. Dave Webster
41 Ramsey Lake Road
Sudbury ON P3E 5J1

Dear Dr. Webster:

Thank you for your letters regarding Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scans. The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario, as well as the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, former Attorney General, also forwarded me your letter on the same issue. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to them.

The Ontario government has established an evidence-based process to the introduction of high-cost diagnostic imaging services and provides access to Ontario patients where evidence exists that PET scans contributes to improved patient management or outcomes.

Since 2010, the ministry has accepted a number of recommendations from the expert advisory body, Cancer Care Ontario's PET Steering Committee, to include new indications in its insured stream of funding where there is evidence that PET diagnostic services make a clinical difference. Two further indications are currently under consideration. In addition, Ontario continues to invest in further research that will provide the evidence necessary to support PET diagnostic service efficacy through Cancer Care Ontario led research studies with Ontario patients.

In Ontario, appropriateness is built into the front end of decisions about when PET diagnostic scans will be used as a tool for patients with specific medical indications based on evidence. PET is an imaging test where patient management is part of the criteria. In Ontario, PET diagnostic services must be:

- Effective (sensitive, specific, accurate)
- Have the potential to impact patient management
- Have benefits over other tests/imaging

We are proud of the fact that patient access is streamlined to established and emerging indications, while building evidence to inform funding decisions, all while maintaining clinically appropriate wait times for services.

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Dr. Webster

You, as a clinician, would understand that the benefits of exposure to radiation from a diagnostic intervention such as PET scans must be considered along with risks and limitations of the result of the scan. It is essential that the ministry also strives to achieve the correct balance.

You have very clearly given this matter a great deal of thought, and I appreciate your perspective on access to PET scans. I'd like to thank you for sharing your perspective and demonstrating your commitment to improving the delivery of health care in Ontario.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister

c: The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier
The Honourable Yasir Naqvi, Attorney General