



Provincial RIS and PACS Project

Frequently Asked Questions

What is RIS?

The Radiology Information System (RIS) is a system that enables electronic scheduling, storage and organization of diagnostic imaging (DI) patient information, as well as overall DI workflow and workload data. The RIS is used in DI areas only.

What is PACS?

The Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) is a computerized system that will store digital diagnostic images, reducing the need for film and facilitating timely province-wide access to patient images and reports. The PACS is used in DI areas, as well as other clinical areas of the hospital for timely access to patient images.

What is the project vision?

The vision of this project is to improve the quality of patient care and the effectiveness and efficiency of health-care providers by using an integrated province-wide digital diagnostic imaging solution.

The systems will enable health-care providers to access electronic diagnostic images and reports from locations throughout Manitoba, resulting in improved access to health care and contributing to improved health and well-being for Manitobans.

Why is Manitoba's diagnostic imaging system in need of this new technology?

Today's diagnostic imaging environment is mostly manual and uses film, which is costly to manage, is sometimes misfiled and is transported manually to radiologists for interpretation. The current film-based system contributes to longer turn around times, unnecessary duplicate tests and increased patient transfers. RIS and PACS will transform diagnostic imaging service delivery, replacing limited and obsolete digital tools with current, common and proven technology. This will create a provincially integrated and digitally networked diagnostic imaging community. Although there are already pockets of RIS and/or PACS in some Manitoba facilities, because the systems do not connect and cannot easily share information, we have not seen the full benefits of the systems. Many areas of health care are moving toward environments of increased electronic capacity and the diagnostic imaging discipline is no different in its desire to be current and to provide the best service possible to patients.

Manitoba Health



Diagnostic Services of Manitoba



Winnipeg Regional Health Authority



Brandon Regional Health Authority



Manitoba eHealth

RIS and PACS are necessary building blocks to support the provincial and federal electronic health record initiatives.

What are the benefits of the project?

RIS and PACS will contribute to a healthy future for Manitobans. Patients will benefit from improved access to DI services, particularly in rural and northern communities, and faster turn around times for DI results. This contributes to improved diagnosis and treatment. RIS and PACS will use DI resources more efficiently by improving workflow and scheduling processes, which will increase productivity and reduce duplicate testing. RIS and PACS will help improve information management, eliminate misfiled film and reduce the costs associated with film management. In addition, a more technologically-advanced work environment will support the recruitment and retention of DI professionals in our province.

Who is contributing to the project?

The Provincial RIS and PACS Project is a joint initiative of Manitoba Health, Brandon Regional Health Authority (Brandon RHA), Diagnostic Services of Manitoba (DSM), Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) and Manitoba eHealth. Canada Health Infoway is a funding partner of the project in support of a pan-Canadian electronic health record.

What is the scope of the project?

The scope of the Provincial RIS and PACS Project includes diagnostic imaging within the DI programs of WRHA, Brandon RHA and DSM in over 50 sites throughout the province. The project will leverage existing RIS and/or PACS systems in WRHA and Brandon RHA to implement a provincial solution by:

- Installing RIS and PACS in the remaining sites in the WRHA
- Installing RIS and PACS throughout the remainder of the province
- Building a consolidated provincial repository of digital diagnostic images and reports

Remote locations with low service levels and aging equipment are not in-scope for the project. Interfaces to federally funded facilities and private practice community offices, such as doctor's offices, radiology clinics, chiropractors and dentists are also out-of-scope. The public health sector and regional health authorities of Manitoba have no control over the business decisions made by private clinics and cannot direct their expenditures.

How will the Provincial RIS and PACS deployment affect health-care providers in Manitoba?

Deployment of RIS and PACS will involve many areas of health care beyond diagnostic imaging. In order to process and review digital diagnostic images, installation or upgrade of general review workstations and clinical diagnostic workstations will occur. Clinical diagnostic workstations will include:

- Three mega pixel diagnostic workstations for radiologists who read film
- Two mega pixel diagnostic workstations for radiologists who read CT, MRI, ultrasound and nuclear medicine images
- High-end clinical viewing stations for use in the ER, OR and by specialists who read film before a radiologist
- Orthopedic stations for specialists that need true size images for measurement and template purposes
- QC workstations for technologists working with CT scanners who need the ability to slice whole body images

This project will affect many diagnostic imaging technologies, such as computed radiography (X-ray), ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography (CT). Deployment of the solution will affect radiologists; diagnostic imaging managers, practitioners and support staff; and medical/clinical staff, including image requestors such as physicians, nurses and allied health professionals. The project team will work with all levels of health care providers to provide the necessary information, communication and training.

How will the project accomplish deployment?

The project team alone cannot implement a project of this scope. Participation of site resources is essential to the successful deployment of RIS and PACS. The project approach builds on a collaborative model, meaning that project team resources and site resources will have a shared responsibility throughout all phases of the deployment. The project team will help sites through the transition period and work to provide the necessary communication support and training to enable sites to become operational with the new RIS and PACS technology. Many health care providers will play an important role in the deployment and ongoing sustainability of the Provincial RIS and PACS solution. Through their participation, they have a unique opportunity to contribute to the future of diagnostic imaging service delivery and improved quality of care for Manitobans.

What is the timeline for the provincial roll out of RIS and PACS?

The project anticipates that provincial deployment of RIS and PACS will be completed by end of calendar year 2010.

Each deployment encompasses six distinct steps:

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- Facility preparation
 - Equipment preparation
 - Workflow and business impacts analysis
 - Configuration
 - Testing and training
 - System go-live and post-implementation support

For more information:

Visit http://www.manitoba-ehealth.ca/ehr_RISPACS.html

Or contact the Manitoba eHealth Service Desk at (204) 940-8500 or toll free 1-866-999-9698

