

# Patient's Common Questions about Pool Referrals

## **Q - Is the pooled referral option right for me?**

While some patients will want to wait to see a specific specialist, others simply want to get healthy as soon as possible. Pooling referrals now offers patients the ability to receive the next available appointment with a qualified specialist within a specific group. This can also reduce your wait time to treatment. The important thing to remember is that you now have a choice and that your health care provider is there to help with this decision.

## **Q - If I select the pooling option, how will I know if I'm being referred to the right specialist?**

Specialty groups that pool their referrals do so because they are confident in the skills and abilities of their colleagues. These surgeons have made a decision to work as a team to efficiently provide their patients with high quality care. They will ensure you are seeing the appropriate specialist for your treatment.

## **Q - I trust the opinion of my family physician. Do pooled referrals eliminate their valuable input?**

You are encouraged to speak to your family health care provider about your referral options. Involving your health care provider will ensure your decision not only reflects your interests but also includes their input and advice. Make a list of your questions and concerns and discuss them with your health care provider.

One of the benefits of referring health care providers is that they don't have to keep track of each specialist's sub-specialty interests, know about every new specialist in the community or determine whether a specialist has moved or retired. Pooled referrals ensure your referral consistently reaches the right specialist with the shortest wait time. It's a terrific resource for all family health care providers.

## **Q - I had a specialist I particularly liked for my right knee replacement. Can I go back to that specialist when it's time to replace my left knee?**

Yes, the intent of pooled referrals is to increase patient choice. You can be referred to the specialist of your choice. Pooled referrals was developed to improve access to specialists and to ensure patients are seen by the appropriate specialist. When making a referral, your family doctor can recommend the next available specialist or the specialist you've seen in the past, but you could be in for a longer wait depending on the specialist you select. It's your choice.

## **Q - I'm planning a vacation. With pooled referrals, will I get bumped to the bottom of the list?**

No, you'll be referred to the specialist with the next available opening. At that time, you can schedule your procedure for a date that doesn't conflict with your other plans.