Leveraging eReferral

Putting the puzzle pieces together to improve patient transitions

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Background

- Referrals received by fax, encrypted PDF and existing e-referral system based on subacute service and site specific
- Provincial referral (RMR) not consistently completed leaving key pieces of information missing.
- Communication of referral status and patient updates between referring & receiving sites not efficient or standard.
- Overall objective to develop a one stop source of referrals to bedded subacute care.

Project design & implementation

2023–2024

- TRC COVID Clinic and Physiatry clinics launched an eReferral in 2023.
- Detailed process mapping starting with Bruyère inpatient rehabilitation with high-volume referral sources - The Ottawa Hospital, Montfort Hospital, Queensway-Carleton Hospital.
- Training for 3 sites spring 2024.
- Selected a high-volume referral program - Geriatric Rehabilitation at Bruyère Health with The Ottawa Hospital as early adopters in April 2024.
- Added all inpatient Bruyère programs along with two additional referring sites over subsequent eight weeks.

Summer/Fall 2024

Process mapping for Hospice-Palliative Care referrals and The Rehabilitation Centre inpatient referrals

- Training summer/fall 2024
- Go Live October 2024

January 2025

St Joseph's Complex Continuing Care in Cornwall accepting inpatient referrals.

Flow of the eReferral

Referring professional submits eReferral

Bruyère Health Complex Continuing Care & Inpatient Rehabilitation	The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre Inpatient Rehabilitation	Central Referral & Triage for Hospice Palliative Care Bruyère Health & Hospice Care Ottawa	St. Joseph's Complex Continuing Care
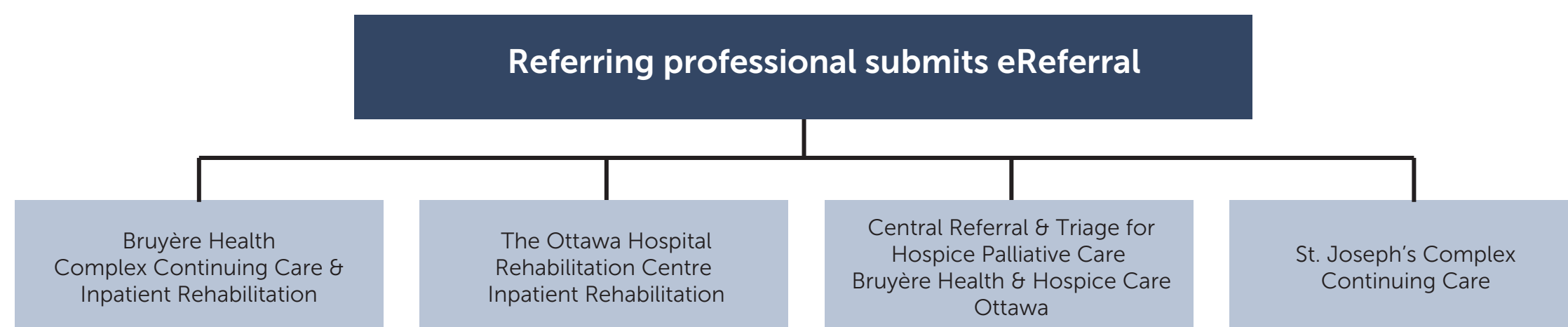
Benefits of implementing an eReferral

Secure, web-based eReferral platform	Funded by the Ministry of Health through the Digital Health Initiative	"Axe the Fax" – secure, legible, no lost referrals
Works on any browser. Well established product	Secure instant messaging between referrer & receiving site; avoids need of phone tag or emailing about referral status	Champlain Rehabilitation Advisory Committee has committed to using eReferral for all subacute bedded care.

Wins of the eReferral project

- Easy to setup accounts & training of front-line staff
- Phased in approach validated eReferral system worked as designed.
- Common referral form – RMR
- Similar functionality across sites – easy to problem solve, simplified user learning
- Buy-in from referral sources & onboarding was seamless

Challenges

- Non-integration with EMRs
- Designed for outpatient clinics – language not congruent with inpatient referrals or patient statuses
- Provincial RFP eReferral process ongoing
- Referral status not viewable from dashboard. Referral sources can only view a patient's acceptance status by opening each individual referral
- Reporting features not adequate

By the numbers

- TRC inpatient – 23 referrals received November 4, 2024 – March 31, 2025
- Bruyère Health inpatient – 2657 referrals received April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025
- Hospice Palliative Care – 727 referrals received October 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Future eReferral plans

- Expansion to remaining regional subacute bedded facilities (n=3) and outpatient clinics (TBD)
- Vision of EMR integration – referrals populated & submitted from the EMR