

FAQs for Patients about Opting In to SMS Notifications

1. What is the Central Waitlist Management (CWM) Project?

The 2025 CWM Project is an initiative aimed at optimizing MRI imaging resources and surgical capacities across hospitals in Northwestern Ontario. It includes the implementation of SMS and email functionalities to enhance patient communication, satisfaction, and system-wide appointment confirmations.

2. What are the benefits of opting in for SMS notifications?

Opting in for SMS notifications will improve communication, reduce no shows, and provide timely information sharing and coordination across regional services.

3. How will the SMS notifications work?

Starting in Fall 2025, five hospitals in Northwestern Ontario will send appointment reminders and confirmations via SMS or email to patients aged 16 and over who opt-in. No personal health information (PHI) or sensitive details will be shared through these messages.

Starting with the following hospitals:

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre,
Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre,
Dryden Regional Health Centre,
Riverside Health Care,
Lake of the Woods District Hospital

4. How can I opt-in to receive SMS notifications?

Opt-in consent will be completed via an electronic form, which your local hospital will process. To opt-in, you must provide your health card number, legal name, date of birth, and contact information (mobile phone number and email address). Consent for participation will also be recorded through this form.

5. Can I unsubscribe of receiving SMS notifications?

Yes, you can unsubscribe or withdraw your consent at any time without affecting your care. You can do this by visiting the provided link or your local hospital's website.

6. What information will be required from me to opt-in?

You will need to provide your health card number, legal name, date of birth, and contact information (mobile phone number and/or email address).

7. Will personal health information be shared through SMS notifications?

No, personal health information (PHI) or any sensitive or confidential details will not be shared through SMS notifications.

8. Who is responsible for obtaining patient consents?

The responsibility for obtaining patient consents lies with the healthcare providers at the respective hospitals.

9. If I consent to one facility, am I consenting to all facilities?

Yes, consenting to one facility means consenting to **all** hospitals in Northwestern ON.

- Atikokan General Hospital
- Dryden Regional Health Centre
- Geraldton District Hospital
- Lake of the Woods District Hospital
- Manitouwadge General Hospital
- Nipigon District Memorial Hospital
- Red Lake Marget Cochenour Hospital
- Riverside Health Care
- Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre
- The McCausland Hospital
- Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences
- Wilson Memorial General Hospital

10. What should I do if I have questions about the SMS notifications?

You can contact your local hospital or visit the provided link for more information and assistance.

11. When will the consent be presented to the patients?

The consent will be presented to patients starting in Summer 2025 as part of the phased initiative.

12. What if the data from the opt-in can't be accurately matched to a medical record?

Health records departments will follow a matching criteria to ensure accurate data entry. If the data cannot be matched, no action will be taken.

14. What if I have an existing Medical Record Number (MRN) for a different hospital?

If you have an existing MRN for a different hospital, the health records department will handle the data entry accordingly.