

Patient referrals to date: **6,174**Average wait time: **12 days**Patients needing Imaging/Specialist: **400**

Inter-professional Spine Assessment and Education Clinics

Important Announcement About the ISAEC Newsletter

Dear Primary Care Providers,

Moving forward ISAEC is changing the frequency, format and delivery of its monthly newsletter. Effective January, only newly onboarded primary care providers (PCPs) will receive a monthly ISAEC Newsletter – first 12 months. After the one year period PCPs will be transitioned to periodically receiving updates and bulletins via email to communicate important information.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Managing Low Back Pain Patients in Rural Ontario



By Sheri Robertson, DC
APC – Thunder Bay
Questions?
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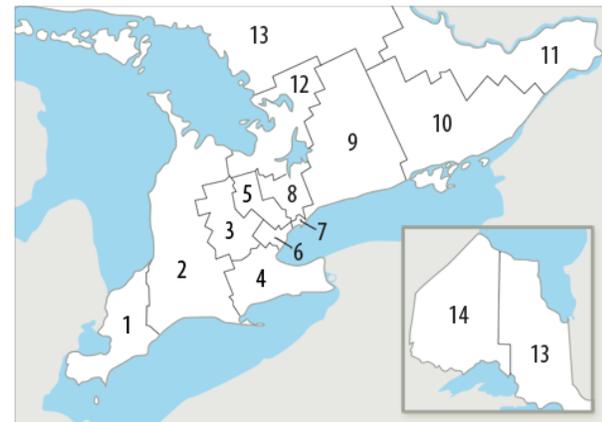
One of the main objectives of the ISAEC program is to provide patients with the right care, at the right time and with the right provider, while empowering them to better manage their low back pain (LBP) or low back related leg pain regardless of where they reside. In addition, ISAEC aims to decrease the utilization of lumbar spine Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) as well as unnecessary referrals to LBP-related specialists.

ISAEC is currently available in Toronto, Hamilton as well as Thunder Bay and will be expanding to other areas of Ontario in 2017/2018. ISAEC Thunder Bay was chosen as a pilot site for the ISAEC program due to the unique service delivery challenges of Northern Ontario. Thunder Bay is part of the North West Local Health Integration Network (NW LHIN) (#14 in the diaphragm below) which is one of the largest LHINs in the province in terms of geographical area and services some of the most remote areas of Ontario. As such, this leads to challenges in patients accessing care as many patients do not live near rehabilitation or medical professionals to help in the assessment and management of their lower back pain. To address

these challenges ISAEC has been piloting a number strategies: 1.) bringing care out to different regions of the NW LHIN (Practice Leader clinics in Fort Frances and Dryden) 2.) leveraging technology where possible (Ontario Telemedicine Network - OTN ISAEC appointments for patients in Marathon) and 3.) OTN ISAEC Chronicity Prevention Clinic appointments for patients deemed highest risk of developing chronic pain (OTN sessions include motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural therapy). Additionally, ISAEC provides patients with patient-centred online resources such as exercise videos to help support their personalized ISAEC self-management treatment plans which helps ensure patients are comfortable with performing the prescribed exercises safely and confidently in the comfort of their own homes.

Other online resources available at www.isaec.org include educational videos such as the Dr. Mike Evans' LBP video (<http://www.isaec.org/tips-for-your-low-back.html>) which reinforces the messaging and information patients received during their ISAEC assessment. This can be watched together with your patient or given to your patient as 'homework'.

With LBP affecting so many rural Ontarians, utilizing available technological supports and innovative patient-centred strategies helps ISAEC provide timely access to care regardless of where patients live. This, in turn, empowers patients to better manage their LBP through the self-management techniques and exercises provided to them with a goal of improved function, ultimately helping them get 'back' into life, regardless of where they live!



Thank you for your readership!