

Advocacy Toolkit for CAR Members

2025



Canadian Association of Radiologists
L'Association canadienne des radiologistes



The Value of Radiology in Canada

Radiology is the keyhole to medical treatment. Anyone who has a serious illness or accident passes through a radiology department to receive imaging to find out what is really going on with their health.

Waiting for imaging means waiting for treatment. But what if there are no technologists to operate the machines? What if there is insufficient equipment to perform scans? What if the patient does not have access to the right test the first time? We know that Canadians support investments from governments to ensure these questions do not need to be asked.

Canadian healthcare systems face challenges. Radiology is among the most affected. The future sustainability of radiology is uncertain due to pressures on health human resources (HHR) exacerbated by aging and obsolete equipment. It is time for the Federal government to act. Although Canada spends over 20% more per capita on healthcare than the OECD average, those dollars are allocated in a way that does not adequately serve Canadian patients and communities.



The Canadian Association of Radiologists (CAR)

Since 1937, the CAR has been the national voice for radiologists in Canada, dedicated to imagining excellence and advocating for the highest standard of patient care across the country. The CAR represents 3,000 radiologists who provide vital MI for millions of patients.

Key Advocacy Objectives

1

Spearhead a national effort to recruit and retain radiologists, medical radiation technologists, and sonographers as part of a national health human resource strategy.

2

Invest in a cost-neutral manner to evolve the medical device licensing process to include post-market surveillance through Health Artificial Intelligence Validation Network (HAIVN).

3

Support provinces to integrate Clinical Decision Support into their electronic medical record systems.

4

Guide a strategic investment of \$2 billion over three years for radiology equipment to improve access to modern medical imaging equipment.



[Advocacy Feedback Form](#)

The following are the key issues that the Association and our members across Canada will be advocating on during the election. You may pick and choose which you would like to advocate on based on your operations and priorities. The following issues are not in any order of importance. Please speak to the ones that matter the most to you.

1. Support Invest Aimed at Recruitment and Retention in Health Human Resources

Canada needs more technologists, radiologists, and sonographers now to reduce the perpetuated burnout that is felt across the health care sector. The national shortage of these healthcare workers makes it difficult for radiology departments and clinics to maintain service levels for patients, creating domino effects for the entire system.

Key Messages:

- In 2021, there was an 80% jump in medical radiation technologists (MRTs) reporting signs of burnout, meaning two-thirds (64%) of the workforce go to work feeling emotionally exhausted.
- In 2021, 56% of sonographers reported being overextended at work to the point of emotional exhaustion, compared to 42% in 2018.
- Burnout further reduces imaging capacity, with the impacts of inadequate levels of staffing felt by patients.
- In 2019, the Conference Board of Canada estimated that average wait times in 2022 would be 67 days for CT and 133 days for an MRI, far exceeding the acceptable 30-day standard.
- In 2023, the Canadian Institute for Health Information reported that the 90th percentile of patients are waiting an average 90 days for a CT and 160 days for an MRI.

Recommendations:

For radiologists to be able to provide top-level care for Canadians, the federal government must expand investments and support additional recruitment and retention of radiologists, medical radiation technologists, and sonographers.

- Polling revealed that 91% of Canadians support the government making financial investments specifically aimed at hiring and retaining more MRTs and sonographers.
- Immediate action is needed to address the 10% vacancy rate for these professions, along with a long-term strategy for health human resources recruitment and retention. We know training and integrating more technologists and sonographers into the system is essential to its future viability, but education alone will not be enough to address the immediate problems.
- Through Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), the federal government has funded the development of a national bridging program for MRTs. The Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) is currently on this through a contribution agreement from the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP). These programs are crucial to addressing the health human resource crisis.
- The federal government has demonstrated a commitment to collecting and aggregating better data about the human resource crises affecting the healthcare system, but should harness that to develop a national strategy to ensure the resilience and sustainability of the healthcare system.

By implementing these measures, the Canadian government will advance its job creation goals while fostering a skilled workforce in the radiology and healthcare field.

2. Support Investments in AI and HAIVN

Key Messages:

- Artificial intelligence (AI) has incredible potential to transform the economy, improve the way we work, and enhance our way of life.
- Polling reveals that 72% of Canadians would support the use of AI in radiology providing that images are also being analyzed by a human being and over two in three Canadians think it should be a high priority to set rules and regulations for the use of AI in radiology in order to protect the safety of Canadians.
- An investment into the regulation of AI in medical devices is necessary to protect patients, health care providers and to help support efficiencies for the health care system.
- A national strategy for post-market reviews is necessary to ensure the safety and efficacy of AI-driven products. Providers and their patients deserve an effective regulatory process now. This is an opportunity to embed this effort as part of Health Canada's existing medical devices review process.
- The CAR has developed a framework, the Health Artificial Intelligence Validation Network (HAIVN), to review and monitor AI-driven solutions through post-market evaluation.
 - HAIVN goes beyond safety, by assessing the benefits, detriments, risks, and opportunities of working with a particular technology.
 - HAIVN has the support of a number of other national specialty societies and health workforce associations, who are aligned with the vision and mission of the Network and appreciate the necessity of harnessing AI for good while mitigating its potential harms and drawbacks.
- HAIVN incorporates a review panel of experts to act as external advisors to Health Canada's existing medical devices review process. Other organizations including the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association support the HAIVN process. HAIVN would provide ongoing clinical monitoring of the solution to provide confidence to Canadians while ensuring that vendors receive all appropriate information to enhance their products.

HAIVN



3. Take a Leading Role in Clinical Decision Support Systems

Key Messages:

- There is a large influx of patients in Canadian radiology departments/clinics, adding to the existing waitlist for medical imaging. To help ensure Canadians get the right test at the right time, we encourage the federal government to take a leadership position in the implementation of Clinical Decision Support systems.
- Clinical Decision Support systems can ensure that the most effective and cost-efficient test is ordered and helps to prioritize those who need the most urgent access to medical imaging.
- Through the implementation of Clinical Decision Support systems, the referring health professionals will have access to the latest Canadian imaging guidelines, helping to ensure that every patient receives the right test at the right time.

4. Invest in New Radiology Equipment Across the Country to Meet the Needs of Patients

Key messages:

- In 2023, one-third of radiology equipment needed to be replaced because it failed to meet the needs of patients and providers. In 2025, this percentage is higher, especially in smaller institutions with reduced budgets.
- Currently, 151 new CT machines and 91 new MRI machines are required to modernize Canada's stock of medical imaging equipment, at a cost of \$469 million.
- While the Government of Canada is providing new funding for healthcare as part of the 2024 Working Together bilateral health agreements, more funding needs to be directed towards addressing these critical infrastructure gaps in provinces and territories.

- We urge the federal government to work with the provinces to provide targeted, allocated funding outside of the bilateral healthcare agreements to close the gap in investment in equipment to service communities across Canada.
- Investing in radiology is necessary to safeguard patient health and prevent further losses to the Canadian economy.

5. Direct Funding and Investments to Reduce Wait Times Across Canada and Ensure Timely Care for Patients

Key messages:

- Excessive wait times for CT and MRI diagnostics cost the economy \$3.54 billion in 2017. That number has grown.
- Approximately 5% of patients, or 380,000 people a year (1 in 20), are forced to exit the workforce temporarily while they wait longer than the recommended maximum wait time.
- Having workers off the job while waiting for diagnostics hurts the ability of firms to produce goods and services. This, in turn, hurts GDP, reducing government revenues by \$430 million a year.
- The cost of excessive wait times will likely increase. Growth in demand for CT and MRI services is expected to outpace the growth in supply over the long term.



Meeting Pointers

1. Share Your Story

Local candidates want to understand the impact of your work in the community. Highlight your contributions and any challenges your clinic, hospital, or institution and the community are facing.

2. Be Authentic

These discussions and business tours are opportunities to educate candidates about the radiology sector and the support it needs. Keep the conversation natural and informative.

3. Remain Respectful & Open-Minded

Address candidates professionally and avoid making assumptions based on their party affiliation. Approach the conversation as a community member looking for solutions to important issues.

4. Make the Most of Your Time

Most politicians will only have 15-30 minutes, so keep your points clear and concise to maximize the discussion.

5. Start with Gratitude

Begin by thanking the candidate for taking time out of their busy schedule to meet and discuss the challenges facing radiology.

6. Introduce Yourself & Your Team

Share your name, title, and organization, emphasizing its role in the community. Introduce the candidate to your staff to help them engage with as many people as possible.

7. State Your Purpose

Clearly explain the goal of the meeting and reference key messages to keep the discussion focused.

8. Encourage Questions

Allow time for the candidate to ask their own questions and engage in meaningful dialogue.

9. Make a Direct Ask

Request concrete action, whether within their party or in government if elected. Example: *"Will your party commit to supporting the future radiology workforce?"*

10. End with Thanks & Next Steps

Wrap up by expressing appreciation for their time and letting them know they can reach out to you or the CAR with any follow-up questions.

11. Provide Feedback

Complete a feedback form for each meeting to document key takeaways.

12. Stay Flexible

Last-minute changes are common in busy campaign schedules. Be prepared for shifts in timing or location.

13. Capture the Moment

Ask for a photo with the candidate. Many use social media, and sharing the visit benefits both their outreach and yours.
