

Dear Honourable Premier Wab Kinew,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the physicians that work in Portage la Prairie to formally express our concern with **not** having necessary imaging modalities included in our new hospital currently being built. Specifically, this letter is to request an MRI scanner.

As you know Portage District General Hospital serves the growing population of Portage la Prairie, as well Long Plains First Nation, Sandy Bay First Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, and Dakota Plains First Nation. We feel it is a glaring omission to not include an MRI scanner in our new hospital currently being built. Our patient population faces many health inequities, and we worry that not having the foresight to include an MRI scanner will only exacerbate these inequities, rewarding those communities that can afford private funding.

With the current model, patients must travel to Winnipeg, Dauphin, Selkirk, Brandon, or Boundary Trails to get these imaging studies, which is a significant barrier to access healthcare. When patients need to be transferred emergently or urgently to other hospitals for MRI scans, this puts a further burden on our already overworked and understaffed EMS colleagues, leaving patients waiting days or weeks for transfers. This leads to negative health outcomes and delays in patient diagnosis and treatment. Through the Portage Clinic there were over 1300 MRI studies done in the last year alone. This is a gross underestimate as it only captures patients with family physicians at our clinic, and as you are aware there are thousands of Manitobans without family physicians.

While we understand currently there are staffing issues in every aspect of healthcare (nurses, family physicians, EMS, diagnostic imaging technicians, health care aides to name a few), we feel that is not grounds to deny the community the advances in medical diagnostic imaging. Deciding to **not** fund and staff an MRI scanner in our community will negatively affect patient care in the future.

While our hospital is still under construction, **now** is the time to rectify this oversight. By having an MRI scanner, we can help cut MRI wait times, reduce barriers, improve access to medical care, and most importantly provide the best possible care to our patients.

Sincerely the Portage la Prairie Physicians,

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Dr. Michael Gousseau

Dr. Christopher Hunter

Dr. Trevor Aquin

Dr. Micheal Omichinski

Dr. Riley Workman

Dr. Ryan Boyd

Dr. Micheal Nichol

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Dr. Adam Warelis

Dr. Ricardo Quesada

Dr. Sunit Nagra

Dr. Michelle Nostedt

Dr. Adam Erickson

Dr. Tyler Nelson

Dr. Michael Leonhart

Dr. Sean Fainman

Dr. Zachary Penner

Dr. Bernard Thess

Dr. Edward Tan

Dr. Brett Finney

Dr. Jennifer St. Goddard

Dr. Micheal Gray

Dr. Alyssa Delaquis

Dr. Nathan Dow

Dr. Sheila Felsch

Dr. Kaitlin Fulmore

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Dr. David Kinnear

Dr. Anthony Lewis

Dr. Kenneth Parker

Dr. James Price

Dr. James Ross

Dr. Russel Price

Dr. Chris Proctor