

MyHealth Records



Provider Messaging & QA

Diagnostic Imaging (DI) Reports Online via My Personal Records

Update for March 20, 2023

Effective March 20, 2023, diagnostic imaging reports available in Netcare will be released immediately to Alberta Health's MyHealth Records (MHR), in the My Personal Records (MPR) application. This is part of Alberta Health's strategy to expand the information available within MHR. Patients can see these reports online as soon as they are available and may have questions. The reports will also be available immediately in MyAHS Connect. Albertans can get more information at MyHealth.Alberta.ca and by telephone at 1-844-401-4016.

What is MyHealth Records (MHR)?

MyHealth Records (MHR) is the single access point for Albertans' personal health information using their verified MyAlberta Digital ID username and password. Through this website, Albertans can access the following tools:

- My Personal Records (MPR),
- MyAHS Connect, and
- COVID-19 Children's Lookup Tool (for parents/guardians).

Who is eligible for MHR?

Any Albertan who is at least 14 years of age and has a valid Alberta Driver's License or an Alberta ID Card with an up-to-date address can set up an MHR account.

How does an Albertan get access to My Personal Records (MPR) and MyAHS Connect?

Once identity verified using MyAlberta Digital ID, an Albertan is able to independently set up an MPR account through the MHR website. For a MyAHS Connect account, access must be set up through contact with an AHS provider using Connect Care.

What is My Personal Records (MPR)?

My Personal Records is an online application that allows Albertans to access their key personal health information derived from Alberta's provincial electronic health record, Alberta Netcare. Information currently available includes immunizations, dispensed medications from pharmacies, and lab results. With this change, diagnostic imaging reports and cardiology reports that involve imaging will be available for access. MPR also allows users to track and manage their health and wellness data and to share their information electronically or to print reports. The province continues to expand the information available to Albertans in MPR.

What is MyAHS Connect?

Albertans who are patients of Alberta Health Services (AHS) and have visited an AHS facility that is using Connect Care can use MyAHS Connect to securely access their AHS Connect Care record. Connect Care is AHS' Clinical Information System that maintains the AHS record of care. Using MyAHS Connect, AHS patients are able to view their lab and diagnostic imaging results and interact with their Connect Care healthcare team. Parents or guardians of AHS patients under 18 years can see the minor patient's MyAHS Connect record via a proxy access after it is enabled by an appropriate AHS provider.

What is changing in MHR?

In March 2023, diagnostic imaging reports and cardiology reports that involve imaging that are available in Netcare, will be released without delay to Alberta Health's MyHealth Records (MHR), in the My Personal Records (MPR) application. Diagnostic imaging and cardiology reports, stored in Netcare, with a date earlier than March 20, 2023, will not be available in MHR.

What is changing in MyAHS Connect?

MyAHS Connect is aligning their diagnostic imaging reports and cardiology reports release strategy with MPR. As of March 20, 2023, the existing five-day delay in release to patients of diagnostic imaging and cardiology reports that involve imaging, will be removed. The five-day delay of the release of cardiology reports that do not involve imaging as well as endoscopy reports will continue.

Why is this change being made?

This change is being made to provide Albertans with more access to their health information, and as an additional safety net for patient care within the system. This change has been approved by the Health Information Executive Committee, which has representatives from Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, Alberta Medical Association, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, Alberta College of Pharmacy, Alberta College of Family Physicians, College of Registered Nurses of Alberta, and Primary Care.

How does this align with other organizations and jurisdictions and what have patient representatives said about this change?

Many organizations and jurisdictions release information to patients with no delay, while others release with some delay. Releasing lab results immediately has shown increases in patients' level of engagement and sense of empowerment regarding their own health (BC Excelleris Study, Impacts of direct patient access to laboratory results, 2015). While it is reasonable to expect that immediate release of some test results will cause patient anxiety, it is important to recognize that the waiting associated with an unknown result also causes anxiety, and that receiving high-stakes tests results during a visit does not give a patient time to prepare. Advice from patient advocates is that the pros of immediate test results release outweigh the cons. Patient advocacy within AHS for the patient portal have been strongly in favor of immediate result release and feedback to Alberta Health from patients has been to request immediate access to more information via MPR.

What has been the Alberta experience since the change was made to release lab and pathology results without delay?

Though many clinicians were concerned about the impacts of real-time release of laboratory and pathology reports on their workload and practice, experience since has shown that many of these concerns did not come to pass. A few patients may experience more anxiety and contact you related to this, but when studied, it has been shown that some patients who would have contacted their provider no longer require this contact.

What DI and cardiology reports will be displayed in MPR?

Reports for procedures completed in facilities that contribute results to Netcare and that are found in Netcare in the DI folder will be included in MPR. If the reports are not available in Netcare in the DI folder, they will not be displayed in MPR.

Will DI and cardiology reports be released retroactively?

DI and cardiology reports will be made available from March 20, 2023. If a new user signs up for MHR six months after March 20, 2023, that user will receive six months of historical reports. The maximum amount of history that will be available to a new user is 18 months, so if a new user joins 20 months after March 20, 2023, they will receive 18 months of history. Existing users will not have DI or cardiology reports added retroactively, but they will see reports moving forward.

What is the difference between MPR and MyAHS Connect with regard to viewing test results?

As of March 2023, both MPR and MyAHS Connect users will see nearly all DI reports and cardiology reports that involve imaging, immediately upon release. Patients who have access to both portals may choose to view their reports in either one.

For MPR:

- Endoscopy and non-imaging cardiology reports are not available in MPR at this time.
- DI reports that are available in Netcare from March 20, 2023 and going forward, will be made available in MPR. Reports prior to March 20, 2023 will not be available.
- MPR users have to check within MPR to see if new reports are available.

For MyAHS Connect:

- Endoscopy and non-imaging cardiology reports are available to AHS patients after a five-day delay.
- DI and cardiology reports visible in MyAHS Connect include legacy data from source systems in alignment with the Connect Care conversion strategy. If the DI and cardiology report is viewable in Connect Care, it is viewable in MyAHS Connect.
- MyAHS Connect users can receive notification when new reports are present.
- MyAHS Connect allows the patient's AHS care team to comment on their DI reports within MyAHS Connect where Connect Care is being used to document patient care.

How will making DI and cardiology reports available via MPR affect providers?

After the changes, patients will have immediate access to more of their own information. Most studies of direct results release to patients show minimal change to workload for providers. However, providers may notice some changes in their patterns of work. For example, they may receive fewer calls from some types of patients, but more calls from others. Alberta Health will raise awareness and educate Albertans on MyHealth Records registration, technical support and whom to contact for interpretation of their results and health records.

How will my patients be informed about this change?

Patients will be informed about the release of diagnostic imaging reports through the following measures effective March 20, 2023:

- The new features tool in MPR will inform users that diagnostic imaging reports are available through the new Diagnostic Imaging Reports tool;
- Updates to the MHR website (alberta.ca/mhr) will indicate diagnostic imaging reports are available as a MPR feature;
- Updates to the MHR Help Centre (myhealth.alberta.ca/help/KB/) in the Results, Reports and Readings section will include detailed information on the Diagnostic Imaging Reports
- Updated MHR postcards will become available for public distribution. Contact myhealthrecords@gov.ab.ca to request copies of the MyHealth Records postcard for your clinic. Make sure your request includes a complete mailing address (including postal code), a contact number (including area code), and the number of postcards you need.
 - This information is also found in the Promotional Materials section in the new For Healthcare Providers section of the MHR Help Centre.

Do I need to change how I talk to patients about DI or cardiology procedures before I order them?

Yes, you may need to consider giving patients more information about the implications of different results when initially ordering a procedure. A small investment of time up front discussing expected results may save you and your clinic staff future work. For example, you may wish to let a patient know that occasionally the radiologist preparing the report may mention incidental findings or suggest further testing. You may wish to let the patient know that they may see the results before you do, the expected wait until the results return, and the expected length of time that you may need to evaluate the meaning of the test with other members of the care team before you will be ready to interpret it for the patient, if applicable. If a patient feels that knowing results in advance of an appointment with their health care provider will worry them, they may choose to not view the results in advance of their follow up appointment.

What if a patient is asking me about test results that I did not order?

The ordering provider has the responsibility for reviewing results and addressing them with the patient. Unless specific arrangements have been made with another provider, responsibility for follow up resides with the ordering provider. Providers will have to use their discretion when answering questions about tests they did not order. If it is in their scope of practice and they are certain what the interpretation of the result is, they may choose to communicate this to the patient. If there is any doubt about the meaning of the results, or if the provider is uncomfortable discussing these results with the patient, then the patient should be directed back to the ordering provider for additional information or interpretation.

Will DI and cardiology reports be available to providers as quickly as they are to patients?

Physicians and other providers will continue to have access to results information through their usual channels. In some cases, patients may have access to their results before the provider receives them, particularly if the provider relies on paper or fax delivery. Through information visible on the MPR website and via the MHR Support Line (1-844-401-4016), patients will be advised that providers may not have access to results on the same schedule they themselves do.

Patients will be informed that providers may not see results until their next clinical day and that consultation between care providers may be required to support the interpretation of results, before they are able to have an informed discussion with their patients. For some results, 811 may be able to assist patients with health information, but more complex results will require discussion between patients and care providers. Providers should make clinic operating hours available, for example on an answering machine or a public website. All results available to patients through MHR will also be available on Alberta Netcare for providers to review, should the need arise.

Will providers be alerted if their patients sign up for MyHealth Records?

Not at this time. Currently, when Albertans sign up for MyHealth records, user consent is not obtained for MyHealth Records to share this information with providers. Providers who use Connect Care can see an icon that shows if a patient has MyAHS Connect.

What additional supports are available to providers and patients?

Alberta has created the MyHealth.Alberta.ca web site, a trusted source of health information. Clicking on a link in a test result in MPR will bring up a clinical abstract about that test from MyHealth.Alberta. MyAHS Connect also has some direct links into the MyHealth.Alberta.ca site, or patients can search it themselves.

Albertans can contact MyHealth Records/My Personal Records support at 1-844-401-4016 or via email myhealthrecords@gov.ab.ca. If calling, Albertans can choose from the menu options to connect to:

- The support team for technical assistance between 8:15am – 4:30pm (MT) Monday - Friday (not including national and provincial holidays); or
- Health Link - 811 available at all times 24 hours, 7 days per week to talk with health professionals about any health-related inquiries including test results.

Callers who reach a technical team agent asking health related questions will be advised to call 811.

Where can I learn more about MHR?

Visit alberta.ca/myhealthrecords to learn more about MHR.