

BC Diagnosis Codes Review Project: Overview

The BC Diagnosis Prioritization Code Review Project includes a comprehensive review of all BC Diagnosis Prioritization (Dx) Codes, across surgical specialties for adults and pediatrics, and updating codes as required. The process will involve revising existing code descriptions, diagnosis groups, and priority levels, expiring outdated codes, and creating new codes aligned with evidence-based best practice. A Steering Committee has been formed, co-led by the BC Ministry of Health, Doctors of BC and the PHSA Surgical Patient Registry (SPR), with representation from Health Authority Surgical Networks and BC Cancer, to lead this provincial work.

Each specialty-specific Dx Code set will undergo a review by a specialty working group with physician representation from each of the six BC Health Authorities. Following the review/update of each code set, a code leveling exercise will be conducted to ensure equitable and appropriate priority levels are assigned across all specialty code sets.

Project Timeline:

June 2024 to August 2026

Go-live: September 1, 2026

Objectives:

Analyze current utilization of Dx Codes and identify gaps

- Review utilization data of all current Dx Codes, 16 specialty sets, starting with Cardiac and Gynecology-Obstetrics.
- Address specific Dx Code requests received by the SPR and historical use of “Other” codes.

Compare the Dx Codes with best practice nationally

- Research (national jurisdictional scan and BC data analysis) and comparison of best practice and clinical benchmarks nationally.

Consult healthcare professionals, Health Authority administrators, Provincial Clinical Programs, and Ministry of Health

- Identify key partners to support the review process.
- Develop a Steering Committee to lead the provincial review process and recruit surgeons/specialists to support the specific code set reviews.
- Develop a standardized approach to guide the review of each specialty Dx Code set, including data and research analysis.
- Facilitate virtual meetings to deliberate on the Dx Codes and solicit feedback.
 - The scheduling, frequency, and duration of meetings will be determined by each specialty working group. Surgical Patient Registry (SPR) Clinical Lead will chair each meeting, guiding each Dx Code set review to ensure alignment with provincial coding standards and provincial/national best practice.
 - Working groups will consist of five specialists from two different health authorities (three minimum & ten maximum)
 - One or more Steering Committee members may be present for specialty working group meetings.
 - Additional key partners may also be present for meetings (e.g. Cardiac Services BC, BC Cancer, etc.)
 - Develop strategies for enhancing accuracy and efficiency in code assignment and documentation.

Make recommendations for improvements to the Dx Code system

- Following the review of the initial specialty Dx Code sets, a brief evaluation will take place to seek feedback on the process before proceeding with the remaining reviews.
 - Full project evaluation to occur post completion and implementation.
- Present revised Dx Codes to the Doctors of BC surgical section head/s and seek approval from a joint committee between Doctors of BC and Ministry of Health.

- The Steering Committee will develop a training and education plan based on surgeon feedback to support implementation of the revised code sets, and develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and utilization of the updated Dx Codes.

Project Scope:

The following items are considered in scope:

- Revisions to adult Dx Codes including GI Endoscopy, by specialty, including code description and priority level changes as appropriate.
- Development of Dx Codes for pediatrics to supplement the existing national Pediatric Canadian Access Targets (PCATS) code set, where gaps are identified.
- Implementation of revised adult Dx Codes and supplemental pediatric Dx Codes.
- Propose and implement provincial communication, education and training plans.

The following items are considered out of scope for this project:

- Revisions to the national Pediatric Canadian Access Targets for Surgery (PCATS) code set.
 - As part of the Dx Codes Review Project, Pediatric Dx Codes will be developed to supplement missing PCATS codes, as done by other provinces.
- Addition or removal of priority levels or updates to current priority level definitions within the Ministry of Health's reporting criteria.
- Emergent unscheduled provincial priority codes.
- SPR and Health Authority Procedure Codes.
- Ministry of Health Surgical and GI Endoscopy Waitlist Management Policies.
- Medical Services Plan billing and fee codes.
- Ministry of Health surgical reporting definition of surgery.
- Health Authority operations.