

How government can #FastTrackCare

Nearly 180,000 Canadians have been waiting in pain for important orthopaedic surgeries since having an appointment with a specialist in 2021.ⁱ Waiting for these surgeries is debilitating, forcing patients to live in pain, and impacting their quality of life, productivity, and the economy.

Many orthopaedic procedures could have patients out of the hospital as soon as the same day. But the healthcare system needs an injection of funds to get it done. The first step is for the federal government to act now and deliver the full funds promised to shrink the wait-times that are keeping people waiting in pain.

From there, provincial governments must prioritize investing in innovative technologies and techniques so patients waiting for orthopaedic surgeries can get the help they need faster and make room for those who are next in line.

Investing in orthopaedics will reduce strain on the healthcare system at a time when it needs it most, bring wait times down to recommended levels and improve the quality of life of hundreds of thousands of Canadians.

Investing in orthopaedic surgeries will help get Canadians back to living their lives, faster.

The pandemic has made a bad situation worseⁱⁱ — halting or reducing orthopaedic surgeries, expanding the backlog, and pushing wait times even higher. In 2018, 54% of orthopaedic surgeons reported not having a job at the time of certification, up almost 20% from the year before and up 34% from 2011.ⁱⁱⁱ This is the highest of any medical specialty.

To get Canadians out of pain and back to living their lives, the federal government needs to **deliver the full \$6 billion that was promised in September 2021.**

With these promised funds, **provincial governments** can then:

- 1. Increase the number of orthopaedic surgeries that can be performed each year.**
- 2. Invest in new technologies and techniques that get patients in and out of the hospital faster and reduce pressure on the system.**

This approach would reduce the financial burden of orthopaedics on the healthcare system and have the biggest impact on increasing capacity by lowering demand for beds, getting Canadians healthy and allowing them to get back to their daily lives.

ⁱ <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/waiting-your-turn-2021.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.cihi.ca/en/wait-times-for-priority-procedures-in-canada>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/health-policy/employment-study-e>

