



The Honorable Uzoma Asagwara
Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care
302 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 0V8

By email only to: Catherine.Kingsley@gov.mb.ca; minhsltc@manitoba.ca

October 10, 2025

Dear Minister Asagwara,

Re: Proposed Changes to the MRI Program at Red River College Polytechnic

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the proposed changes to the Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) program at Red River College Polytechnic (RRC). I appreciate the opportunity to respond and share my perspective on this important change.

Recently, I have had the opportunity to meet with faculty from the MRI program at RRC to better understand the nature of the proposed changes and their potential impact on future graduates. These conversations have provided valuable insight into the rationale behind the revisions, as well as the opportunities and challenges involved in transitioning to a new program model.

I have long advocated for enhancements to the MRI program at RRC that would allow for the full utilization of available training seats. Manitoba has an ongoing need for skilled MRI technologists, and optimizing training capacity is a necessary step toward addressing current and future workforce shortages. In this regard, I am pleased to see progress being made.

I am encouraged by the decision to transition the program toward a first-discipline model, while maintaining flexibility for course-based registration that would allow current MRTs to obtain a credential in MRI without having to retake previously completed education content. The implementation of an MRI first-discipline program has been successfully implemented in other jurisdictions across Canada with careful consideration of program content, appropriate candidate selection criteria and curriculum that aligns with the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologist (CAMRT) competency profile. It is critical that the educational content and support are adapted accordingly. Candidates entering directly into the MRI program will no longer have prior clinical exposure or foundational experience in patient care, communication and healthcare system immersion that would have been

gained in programs such as Radiography. The curriculum must be carefully designed to bridge this gap and ensure graduates are adequately prepared for the full scope of responsibilities in the clinical environment.

The proposed change may help reduce barriers to entry and has the potential to redirect some of the significant applicant interest currently concentrated in the highly oversubscribed Radiography and Ultrasound programs at Red River College Polyethnic. This, combined with a revised competitive entry process, is a meaningful way to help more Manitobans pursue careers in diagnostic imaging while assisting in identifying suitable program candidates.

That said, I would like to raise a concern regarding the potential long-term implications of aligning the MRI program's length with other MRT disciplines. The current salary scale for MRI technologists is higher than for other medical imaging disciplines, a distinction that was historically justified by the advanced safety responsibilities inherent to MRI practice, as well as the additional educational commitments. As program lengths across disciplines converge, there may be questions about salary equity. This could, over time, impact interest in Radiography and other imaging programs, particularly if compensation does not reflect comparable levels of training or responsibility.

Additionally, employers must be aware of the distinction in the new training model and that graduates of the first-discipline MRI program will only have the competency and certification to practice in the MRI environment – which signifies a significant change to the current model.

Thank you again for reaching out and providing an opportunity for feedback. I am optimistic that the proposed program changes will support the development of a more robust and sustainable MRI workforce in Manitoba. I welcome continued dialogue on this topic and remain committed to supporting improvements in medical imaging education and workforce planning.

Sincerely,



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