

Thank you for attending the "Be in the Know with DRO" webinar on August 14, 2026. Please see a summary of key questions asked during the session.

Theme 1 — Program stability, restart & scope

Given the program's year-long pause, can you clarify the restart scope (including any changes for authority providers, specialists, or primary care) and whether there is a long-term commitment from the BC government to support Digital Referrals & Orders to provide stability and avoid future pauses or reductions in scope?

We recognize the pause was longer than many clinics expected, and we appreciate the patience of sites eager to move forward. That time was used to apply lessons learned from earlier deployments, strengthen governance, and refine our approach to support a phased, sustainable provincial rollout. Based on where things stand today, there is no indication the program will pause again. Since the restart, our scope has broadened rather than narrowed: health authorities are now included alongside community primary care and specialist clinics, working toward a full referrals-and-orders ecosystem that can eventually replace fax across the system. This program remains a provincial priority, endorsed by the Ministry of Health and delivered through BC Shared Health Services.

Theme 2 — Rollout timeline & regional sequencing

Can you provide the deployment timeline for Digital Referrals & Orders, including the expected availability in Vancouver, the planned rollout for Vancouver Island, and any estimated start dates for other geographies?

DRO is rolling out across the province in a phased approach, for both community and specialist clinics and health authorities. Vancouver Island community clinics were selected for the first wave because of a relatively high existing rate of Ocean-EMR integration on the Island, and because a contained geography makes it easier to build strong local referral networks and apply early lessons before expanding further. Community clinics in the Lower Mainland and Fraser, followed by Interior and Northern Health, will be onboarded in waves over the following months. We prioritize onboarding clinics that already refer to each other around the same time, so referral networks can go live together, and everyone sees value sooner — this also reduces the need to manage both fax and Ocean at once. Intake forms are accepted at any time; if we haven't yet reached your region, we'll be in touch as your onboarding window approaches, with full guidance and support. Health authority planning is underway with more details available on the DRO website [here](#).

BC Shared Health Services acknowledges the territories of First Nations around BC and is grateful to carry out our work on these lands. We acknowledge the rights, interests, priorities and concerns of all Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit – respecting and acknowledging their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws and governments.

When and how are sites assessed to identify their referral and communication networks? Are sites able to assist with gathering this information in advance?

Referral partners are typically identified during the planning and onboarding phase of implementation. This process helps ensure the eReferral network reflects existing referral relationships and supports current workflows from day one.

Sites are encouraged to provide input on their key referral partners, referral patterns, and any important local considerations. This collaboration helps create a more complete and accurate network, reduces implementation effort later on, and supports a smoother transition for providers and staff. The implementation team will work with sites to validate and refine this information as needed throughout onboarding.

Theme 3 — Adoption across specialties & specialist participation

What is the approach for engaging specialists and encouraging adoption of DRO? Will the program be available across all specialties and services?

Multiple specialty groups — including Pediatrics, Hematology, Gastroenterology, and Orthopedics — have already adopted digital referrals, with additional specialties in progress or planned. As the provincial standard for referrals, consults, and orders, the program is designed to include all specialties over time, including those with more specialized or non-traditional referral needs. Specialists are engaged directly as part of each region's onboarding wave, with support and training provided throughout. We recognize that adopting any new digital tool takes time, and we're committed to demonstrating the value — faster referral turnaround, real-time status tracking, and reduced reliance on fax — to support adoption across every specialty.

Will OceanMD be available for all specialties, including services like podiatry that don't technically require a referral, but where GPs may still choose to send one?

The Ocean Platform is available for use by any specialty, with no technical pathway limitations.

Where do the labs and holtor reads or ecgs come in?

Lab/ECG reports can be added as attachments to an eReferral. If the recipient clinic's EMR is integrated with Ocean, attachments that are sent with an eReferral are automatically imported into the patient's chart in the EMR once the eReferral is accepted. Attachments can also be added at any point to an eReferral's lifecycle as referring providers can send attachments using the Messaging section within the eReferral.

Theme 4 — EMR integration & technical connectivity

How does Ocean integrate with existing EMRs, including non-integrated vendors, and which EMRs are currently supported?

Ocean integrates directly with your EMR to avoid double entry between systems — currently supported EMRs include Accuro, Med Access, Oscar PRO, and cloud-based MOIS, with new integrations underway for Juno, Plexia, and Profile, and early planning in progress for Cerner and Meditech. Where integration isn't yet available, clinics can use the Ocean Web Portal in the meantime and transition once their EMR is supported. Ocean is designed to work alongside your EMR, not replace it — the platform focuses on referrals, orders, and consults, while your EMR remains your system of record. We're aware of specific integration details, such as how messages currently appear as separate documents in Accuro and are reviewing an enhancement to improve that experience.

Theme 5 — Workflow benefits for referrals

How does DRO support provider-to-provider communication and referral workflows, including messaging between referring providers and specialists, sharing consult notes and diagnostic results?

Ocean is built to keep both sides of a referral connected — sending providers get real-time status updates, and secure messaging lets sending and receiving clinics stay in touch as a case moves forward. Referral forms are developed collaboratively through Specialty Working Groups, made up of both sending and receiving clinicians and office staff, so the process reflects how referrals are used day to day. Consult and diagnostic results will continue to be sent through existing processes.

Theme 6 — Patient communication & notifications

How do patients access information through Ocean?

Patients don't need to create an Ocean account to stay informed. With their consent, they can receive automatic updates about the status of their referral directly by email or text through Ocean's Patient Engagement tools — no separate login required.

How does Digital Referrals & Orders support patients with diverse language, communication, and cultural needs, including access to Provincial Language Services (PLS)?

The digital referrals and requisitions available through the DRO library include a patient information section, which aims to create awareness of communication needs and to support specialist offices

with information needed to communicate with the patient and conduct the appointment. The decisions on how to use that information remain at the discretion of the provider.

Theme 7 — Funding, compensation & onboarding support

Will there be any costs for my clinic to implement Digital Referrals & Orders, and is compensation available for onboarding and training?

There is no cost to your clinic. The B.C. government is funding the Digital Referrals and Orders program as a priority to reduce physician workload and improve patient care, so licensing fees for Ocean eReferrals are fully covered — your clinic can access the platform at no charge. Doctors of BC members and their clinic staff can also receive compensation for their time spent onboarding and training