



give the [results] to radiologists. That way the money would have stayed there.”

The province doesn't appear keen on the concept. A spokesperson in the health department didn't think that type of arrangement is feasible, although the province has arranged with a Winnipeg-based clinic to help reduce waiting lists for bone-density testing.

“As the minister mentioned when he announced additional funding to reduce the wait for bone-density testing, this was the first of many announcements on waiting lists,” said Roger Matas.

Anticipation of shorter lists doesn't appear to be resolving frustrations about delays. “The minister has talked about improving diagnostic services, but we're not seeing any coming on stream rapidly enough,” White said.

Judging by the number of phone calls Sveningson has received from north of the border, Manitobans appear to agree with White's analysis. However, the centre only accepts physician referrals. If enough patients pressure their physicians for such a referral, the Grafton centre may stay in business for some time. Patients who go there will be paying from their own pocket. Although travel time isn't onerous, the cost may deter some visitors. A CT scan costs between (US)\$385 and \$425, while the bill for an MRI is between (US)\$400 and \$690. An ultrasound costs from (US)\$115 to \$300.

In the meantime, DMS Imaging in Grafton remains open for business. CT scans are available 4 days a week, ultrasounds twice a week and MRIs weekly. The company specializes in mobile diagnostic services, travelling to different rural communities in North Dakota every week. Its new fixed site in Grafton was created to assess Canadian demand, although it also serves local patients.

— © Jane Stewart

Mystery surrounds death of Canadian MD in US

More questions are being asked than answered following the mysterious shooting death of a former Manitoba doctor in his Oklahoma medical clinic. Police made no arrests following the June 24 death of Dr. Dale Johnson, 45, who worked in Pinawa, Man., for 13 years before moving to Midwest City, Okla., in 1992 to start a family practice. A 1976 graduate of the University of Manitoba, Johnson was accompanied to Oklahoma by his wife and teenaged daughter.

According to police, Beverly Johnson claims that 2 armed men stormed into her husband's clinic during the evening of June 24 and fatally shot him when he refused to give them prescription drugs. She told police she hid in an examining room and didn't see the suspects. She didn't come out until they had fled and her husband of 24 years was dead.

However, police investigators have doubts about the armed-robbery story and now consider Johnson's wife their prime suspect. They say she has refused requests to provide a written statement detailing what she witnessed. She responded by hiring a lawyer from the same law firm that defended Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh.

The investigation has stalled as police wait for a grand jury to subpoena Johnson and question her under oath. The grand jury is currently hearing an appeal concerning McVeigh's death sentence. Johnson's lawyer accuses the police of harassment and won't say if his client will speak to the grand jury or invoke her right to remain silent. “She is not a suspect,” said Robert Wyatt. “She is a victim in this crime and we are frustrated that police are treating her in a capacity other than a victim.”

Several revelations have caused police to consider Johnson a potential

suspect. Her husband had life insurance policies worth \$4 million that named his wife as lone beneficiary. As well, they allege that Dale Johnson owned 4 guns, and only 3 have been recovered. Coworkers said Johnson always carried a gun and it matches the description of the weapon that killed him. Police have been unable to find it.

Johnson claims that her husband had only 3 guns and she knows nothing of the missing weapon. Her husband's briefcase is also missing, and she told police her father discarded it while cleaning out her husband's van just days after the shooting. Coworkers said it was unusual for Johnson to be at the clinic, although she claims she was there to help her husband with his paperwork.

Another allegation involves 1 of Dale Johnson's former patients, who told police she broke off a 7-year affair with him in April. Peggy Tomsons, who now lives in Ottawa, said Johnson became suicidal after the breakup. She received an email message from him the day he died that said “I YES.” Neither Tomsons nor the police know what it meant. Beverly Johnson told police she knew nothing about an affair, although Tomsons and several of Johnson's close friends and coworkers claim it was common knowledge.

If Dale Johnson committed suicide, police wonder where the weapon went. “Things just don't add up,” said Detective Al Mason. — © Mike McIntyre, *Winnipeg Sun*

Prion discoverer receives Nobel Prize

The 15-year-old discovery of prions, the strange little proteins implicated in the development of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, has resulted in the Nobel Prize in medicine for an American physician. Prions, which are discussed in 4 articles in this issue of *CMAJ*, were discovered in 1982 by Dr. Stanley Prusiner, a professor of