
Speak Out for Family Medicine

BC FAMILY
DOCTORS
Your Specialists in Primary Care.



**EVERYONE DESERVES
A FAMILY DOCTOR**

FAMILY MEDICINE IS IN CRISIS.

**Almost 900,000 British Columbians do not have a family doctor.
And that number is growing every day.**

Family doctors are retiring, closing their practices, or reducing their hours – and many more are considering doing so. Many newer-to-practice family doctors are choosing not to do longitudinal family medicine. Doctors across the province are telling us that they cannot provide the care that British Columbians need and deserve within the current primary care system.

The work of a family doctor has changed dramatically, but the supports for family medicine clinics have not. BC Family Doctors believes it's time to address the supports and reforms necessary to ensure the sustainability of family medicine.

Let's create a new reality for patients and physicians because **Everyone Deserves a Family Doctor.**



KEY MESSAGES

We are asking family doctors to join their voices together to speak to the crisis in family medicine and the value of having a family doctor. Share your stories and your worries for your patients. Let people know what it's like to be a family doctor in BC.

This document provides you with **three key messages** you can use to express your concerns and communicate solutions for the future of family medicine. These messages align with BC Family Doctors' priorities for the current Physician Master Agreement (PMA) negotiations and our other family physician advocacy work.

Key Message #1

Increase supports to address the rising costs of operating family medicine clinics.

THE ISSUES

- Family medicine clinics are critical healthcare infrastructure that have become more complex and costly to operate over the past decades.
- Funding for family medicine clinics comes from the fees paid to family doctors, but these fees have not kept pace with the costs of clinic operations, including staff salaries, lease costs, equipment, and supplies.
- This is different than with other essential workers. We don't expect teachers to pay for the leasing and funding of schools, staff salaries, and purchase of equipment and supplies required to operate schools.

SOLUTIONS

- Resource and support family medicine clinics for the critical health infrastructure that they provide to our healthcare system.
- Create centralized supports for infrastructure requirements, such as giving family physician clinics access to health authority supply chains, storage of medical records after practice closure, and help desk/IT support for patients and clinics.



Key Message #2

Modernize and create equity in physician compensation.

THE ISSUES

- Outdated and inequitable payment models are being used to fund family medicine clinics and pay for family doctor services.
- There are significant pay disparities among BC doctors, including a pay gap between specialties and a gender pay gap that results in women physicians being paid less than their male counterparts.
- The fees and fee rules of the fee-for-service payment model in BC do not reflect modern medical practice or support patient-centered care. They undervalue care for women's health, mental health and substance use concerns, and preventive health.
- Alternate payment models for family doctors need improvements to better reflect the reality of practicing as a family physician.

SOLUTIONS

- Modernize the fee-for-service payment model to ensure primary care services reflect 21st century care delivery.
- Expand and improve alternate payment models for family doctors to better reflect longitudinal, comprehensive patient care and address real-world infrastructure costs.
- Address pay equity issues by providing fair and equitable compensation for family doctors.



Key Message #3

Address systemic factors impacting physician workload and health.



THE ISSUES

- The pandemic and resulting backlog in our primary care system have resulted in unprecedented levels of burnout in family doctors, adding to already high levels of strain.
- Doctors are spending hours every day doing paperwork that takes them away from patient care.
- The increased workload, longer workdays, and the need to work around the system have created unrealistic demands on family doctors' time - and decreased the number of doctors who want to do this work.

SOLUTIONS

- Reduce the administrative/paperwork burdens on physicians and compensate for administrative work that cannot be eliminated.
- Integrate the use of virtual care and in-person care to help physicians manage the demands of their professional lives and enhance access to care for patients.
- Create healthy working conditions for family doctors, including paid sick leave and parental leave, locum coverage, and reasonable working hours.

Supporting materials

- [*BC Family Doctors: The Physician Medical Home*](#)
- [*BC Family Doctors: The Future of Virtual Care*](#)
- [*BC College of Family Physicians: The Unique Value of Family Physicians*](#)
- [*Doctors of BC Policy Statement: Physician Burdens*](#)

TAKE ACTION



We know you are overwhelmed with professional and personal demands. BC Family Doctors is grateful for any actions you can take to advocate on behalf of family doctors.

Action 1: Write a letter to the editor

Write a letter to the editor of your local community newspaper or other media outlet. Tell your story about being a family physician. Let them know what your concerns are for your patients and their access to primary care in the future.

- Use our letter to the editor template found [here](#).
- Write your own letter to the editor expressing your concerns.

Action 2: Share on Social Media

Social media is a great tool to get the word out that **Everyone Deserves a Family Doctor**. Find recommended social media posts and campaign graphics on our [website](#).

- Share our recommended social media posts or write your own.
- Use the **#EveryoneDeservesAFamilyDoctor** hashtag and tag us on social media when posting.
- Use the campaign graphics when sharing your thoughts on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook.

JOIN THE MY FAMILY DOCTOR CARES CAMPAIGN



BC COLLEGE OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
The home of family medicine

The BC College of Family Physicians (BCCFP) *My Family Doctor Cares* education and advocacy campaign is bringing attention to the critical state of family medicine in BC. The campaign is raising awareness of the ongoing erosion of comprehensive, longitudinal family medicine, and the impact it is having on the almost one million British Columbians who do not have a family doctor.

My Family Doctor Cares incorporates media relations, TV advertising, social media, government communications and member support.

- A Day at the Legislature is being planned on May 19 (BC Family Doctor Day) to share information with MLAs on the important role that family physicians play in health care delivery and the critical state of family medicine in BC.
- BCCFP is sending an Advocacy Toolkit to its members to enlist their support in educating their local MLAs and others about the crisis in family medicine.
- The public can learn more and send a letter of concern to their MLA via the myfamilydoctorcares.ca website.

For more information, or to help share the *My Family Doctor Cares* message, visit:
<https://bccfp.bc.ca/advocacy/my-family-doctor-cares-campaign/>

ABOUT BC FAMILY DOCTORS

BC Family Doctors advocates for the economic and professional well-being of family doctors in BC.

Our purpose is to build an environment where family doctors thrive.

We believe family doctors are the essential foundation of a high-functioning healthcare system. Caring for family doctors is needed for healthy patients and healthy communities.

Family doctors have a unique skill set and expertise that cannot be replaced. We live and breathe primary care – in fact, we specialize in it.

The expertise, opinion and input of family doctors are crucial for the successful transformation of primary care in BC.

Read more about us on our [website](https://www.bcfamilydocs.ca).

 [@bcfamilydocs](https://www.instagram.com/bcfamilydocs)  [@BCFamilyDoctors](https://twitter.com/BCFamilyDoctors)

