



Official Opposition Leader John Rustad  
Delivered via email [John.Rustad.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:John.Rustad.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

October 29, 2024

Dear MLA Rustad,

We congratulate you on leading the Official Opposition of British Columbia. As the Official Opposition, your caucus plays a vital role in supporting improvements to our primary care system to ensure all British Columbians have access to the healthcare they need.

BC Family Doctors is the political and economic voice of family doctors in B.C. As a non-partisan, member-based organization, we represent and advocate for the more than 6000 family doctors in B.C. We work closely with the Ministry of Health, Doctors of BC, and other stakeholders on key policy initiatives, such as the Longitudinal Family Physician Payment Model.

Family medicine is at a crossroads in B.C. Significant strides have been made, yet the primary healthcare crisis still looms large, with an estimated 700,000 British Columbians in need of a family doctor. Transforming primary care in BC requires all of us to work together across political party lines and healthcare stakeholder groups. We hope your caucus is committed to collaborating with all stakeholders to find solutions to our primary care crisis.

During the election, your party promised to *invest in healthcare to put patients first*. Realizing that promise requires ensuring that family doctors have the support and resources they need to deliver care. This means recognizing that the conditions of work for a family doctor are the conditions of care for patients. When family doctors are well supported, patients get the care they need.

We ask you to advocate for the following three critical needs to improve primary care, which meet your promise of making “smart, evidence-based changes to dramatically improve the quality of care” for British Columbians:

**1. Streamlining healthcare administration**

Family doctors are facing unsustainable workloads due to outsized administrative burdens like filling out government forms. We ask you to fulfill your election promise to *reduce the administrative burden on our hardworking doctors so they can spend more time with patients*. We call on you to support legislation to eliminate sick notes, along with removing responsibility for Special Authority forms from family doctors. We also ask that you push for a coordinated,

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provincial approach to adopting and funding electronic medical records (EMRs) to enable the sharing of patient information across the healthcare system.

**2. Investing in team-based care**

Expanding access to integrated, team-based care is essential to delivering high-quality care for all British Columbians. We're asking you to help realize your election promise of *helping British Columbians get a family doctor* by calling for the funding and support of team-based care in family medicine clinics, enabling better patient access to care through the addition of nurses, pharmacists, social workers and other allied health professionals.

**3. Addressing gaps in rural health care**

B.C.'s rural and remote communities face unique challenges in accessing primary care. Like your constituents, we too want to *stop the ER closures*. Family doctors act as the key healthcare providers in rural ERs and there are too few of them to meet the need. We ask that your MLAs vote for increased funding for rural family doctors and rural healthcare infrastructure to ensure no British Columbian is left behind.

We look forward to working with your caucus and all stakeholders to create a healthcare system that supports both patients and family doctors. Together, we can build a stronger, more sustainable primary care system for everyone in B.C.

Sincerely,



Dr. Maryam Zeineddin  
President, BC Family Doctors