

Two years of progress

Celebrating
the impact of the
LFP Payment Model

BC FAMILY
DOCTORS
Your Specialists in Primary Care.

March 2025



Contents

Summary	1
A crisis in family medicine	2
Journey to a new payment model	4
By the numbers	6
Impact	7
The last word	9
Building a better tomorrow	10

Summary

**Two years.
1,001 new family doctors.
Nearly 250,000 patients
connected to a
family physician.**

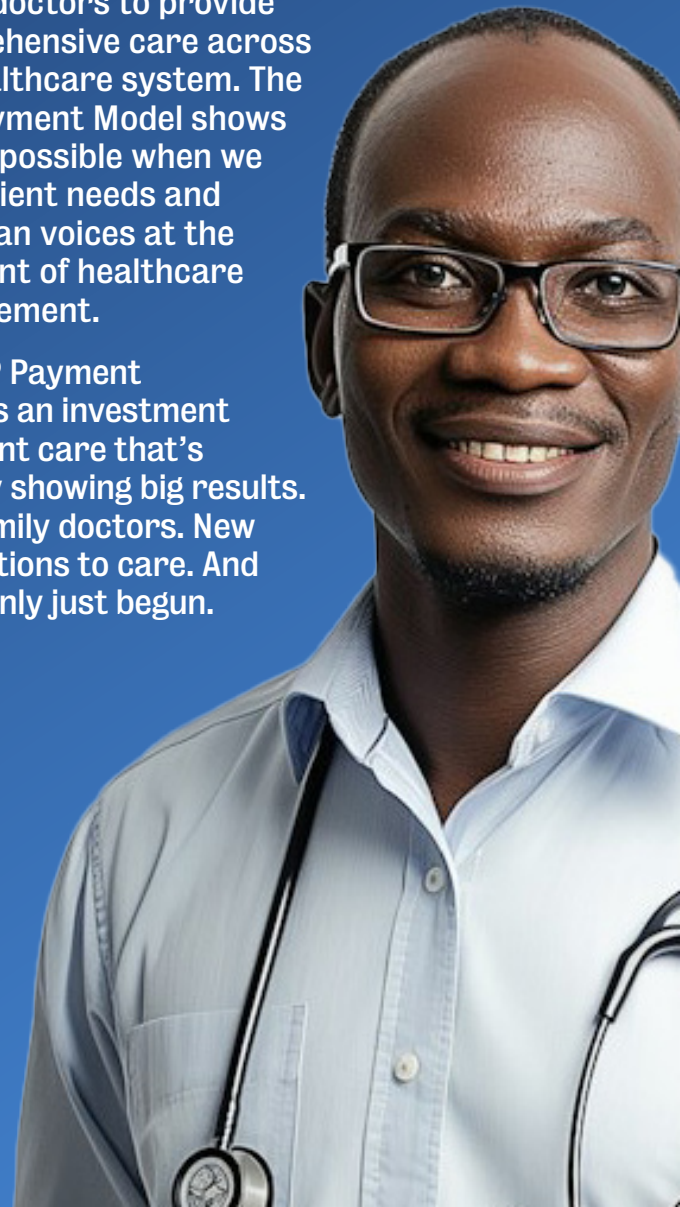
The Longitudinal Family Physician (LFP) Payment Model has had a transformative impact since it was launched on February 1, 2023. In only two years, more British Columbians have a family doctor and more doctors are practicing family medicine.

**It's a story of hope.
A story of what's possible
when government,
physician organizations,
family doctors and
patient advocates come
together to tackle a
primary care crisis
impacting every single
British Columbian,
from Fort St. James to
Invermere to Victoria.**

This is a bold solution to the crisis in family medicine which left almost 1 million British Columbians without a family doctor by 2022. This innovative compensation option for family doctors is improving access to care and allowing family doctors to focus on delivering comprehensive, relationship-based care.

Initially created to stabilize longitudinal family practice, the payment model expanded in 2024 to recognize the critical care provided by family doctors in hospitals and long-term care. This enables family doctors to provide comprehensive care across the healthcare system. The LFP Payment Model shows what's possible when we put patient needs and physician voices at the forefront of healthcare improvement.

The LFP Payment Model is an investment in patient care that's already showing big results. New family doctors. New connections to care. And we've only just begun.



A crisis in family medicine

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the cracks of an already fragile primary care system. Existing primary care issues were exacerbated by the pandemic – rising costs of running clinics, excessive paperwork and lack of publicly funded mental health care. In September 2020, BC Family Doctors released Re-imagining Family Medicine: Learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the precarious state of family medicine and calling for better substantial reforms.

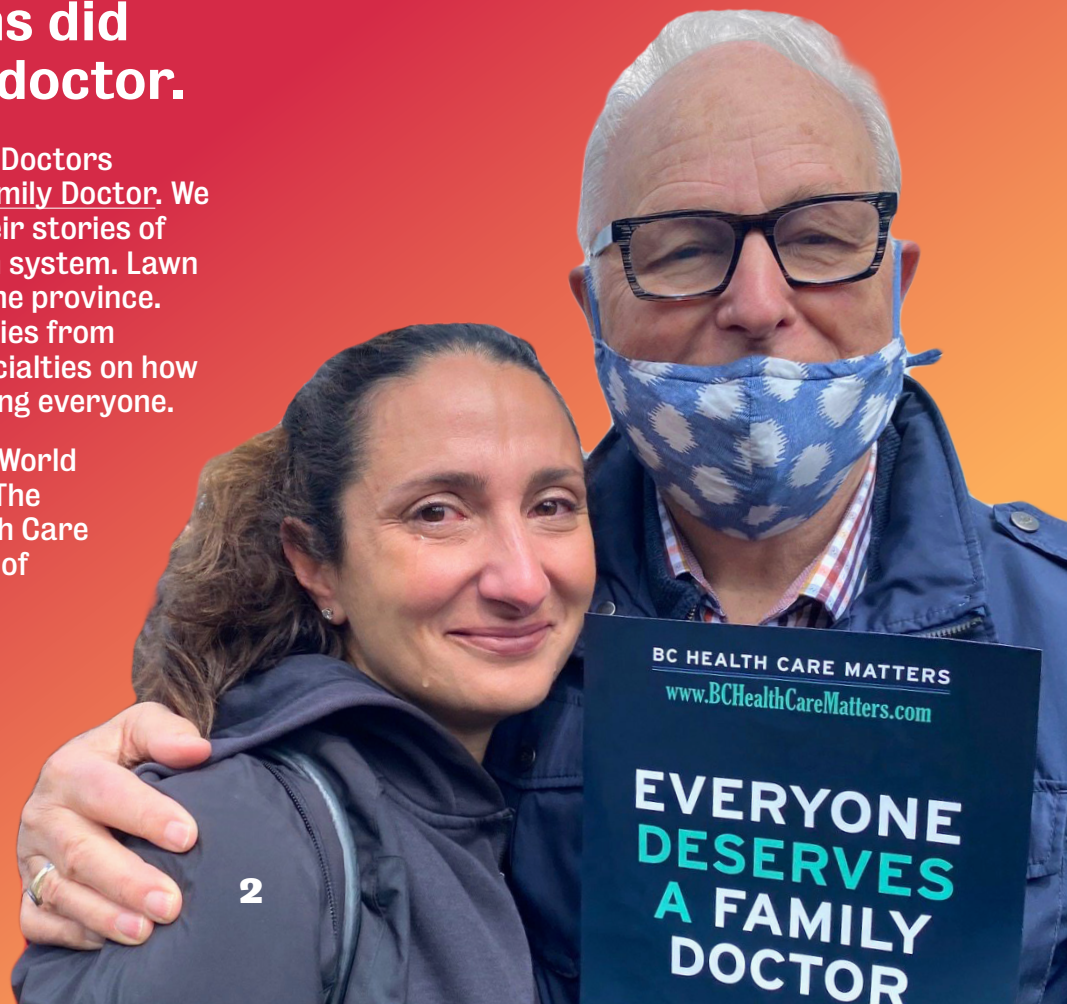
As the pandemic continued, the mental, physical and financial costs became too much. Family doctors began leaving their practices in droves.

By 2022, almost 1 million British Columbians did not have a family doctor.

As the crisis deepened, BC Family Doctors launched Everyone Deserves a Family Doctor. We urged family physicians to tell their stories of trying to provide care in a broken system. Lawn signs started appearing across the province. Soon the media was rife with stories from patients and physicians of all specialties on how the primary care crisis was hurting everyone.

Organizing efforts culminated on World Family Doctor Day, May 19, 2022. The patient advocacy group, BC Health Care Matters, held a rally on the steps of

the legislature. Inside, the BC College of Family Physicians gathered more than 50 family physicians, including physician leaders from BC Family Doctors and Doctors of BC, for its Day at the Legislature. These advocacy efforts, along with a Doctors of BC meeting with the Health Minister and Premier, resulted in a commitment to immediately and collaboratively develop a new payment model for longitudinal family doctors. Within a week, BC Family Doctors and Doctors of BC met with senior Ministry of Health officials to start work on a brand-new way to pay family physicians. It was to be the spark that created the LFP Payment Model.



Having a family doctor is priceless

“For ten years, I didn’t have a family doctor. I saw a doctor at a local walk-in clinic. I’d either have to wait in line to see the doctor that day or book an appointment, but the soonest appointments would often be months away. A lot of the time, I chose to wait out health issues I’d normally have gone to a doctor for. I’d think “I’m okay, I’m not dying and whatever my ailment is, it’s either going to pass or I’m going to need to see a doctor later on if it gets worse.”

I recently got a new family doctor, and it’s made a world of difference. On my first visit, my family doctor diagnosed me with high blood pressure and now I’m on the medication I need to manage it. At 62, it’s a relief knowing I have someone I can get in to see in two or three days, not two or three months, to manage my health conditions. I have a relationship with a doctor I trust. That’s priceless.”

RICKY OVERDIECK IS A PATIENT LIVING IN SURREY, B.C.

LFP kept my clinic doors open

“Two years ago, I thought about hanging a sign on my clinic saying, “closed for good.” After more than 20 years in family medicine, I was at my breaking point. Today, I’m happy to report that not only is my clinic still open, but I’ve also recruited two new doctors to ensure my patients are taken care of when I’m away. So, what changed? B.C.’s new family doctor payment model – it’s kept me in the game.

Under the old fee-for-service family doctor payment model, I was drowning. Stressed and underpaid, with a lot of unpaid work adding to my burden, I didn’t have time to care for my patients the way they deserved. With the new payment model, I have time to spend with my patients and do proactive chart reviews, reminding patients about upcoming screenings before they come in. I can also bill for indirect patient care activities, like talking to families or teachers and school counselors, people with key information to help my patient.

Primary care in B.C. is a lot like a forest recovering from wildfire. The burning has stopped but it will take years for new growth to emerge. The LFP Payment Model is just the beginning, and it’s a step in the right direction.”

DR. TAHMEENA ALI IS A SURREY FAMILY DOCTOR AND PAST-PRESIDENT OF BC FAMILY DOCTORS.



Journey

to a new payment model

It happened at lightning speed. Never before in B.C. had government, family physicians, and physician organizations come together to do such a large-scale initiative in such a short span of time.

MAY 2022

Rally at the Legislature;
Meeting with the Premier
and Minister of Health

MARCH 2022

Everyone Deserves
a Family Doctor
campaign

JUNE 2022 – JANUARY 2023

LFP Payment Model
created with the
Ministry of Health

FEBRUARY 2023

LFP begins

JUNE 2024

LFP begins in hospitals
and long-term care

The commitment and engagement of all groups allowed collaborative, nimble problem-solving, leading to a bold solution in just nine months. The pace was driven by the urgency to address a collapsing primary care system. The result was a payment model that values the time and complexity of providing comprehensive, relationship-based care.

From conception to launch, BC Family Doctors, Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health leveraged our collective skills, relationships and knowledge. Government invested in primary care to ensure patients had access to the right care at the right time.

Since its launch on February 1, 2023, the LFP Payment Model has seen hundreds of improvements driven by physician input from across the province. In 2024, the payment model expanded to four new areas of care: long-term care, palliative care, hospital care and maternity care.

There is still much more work to do. We know improvements are needed to make the LFP Payment Model more inclusive and equitable across B.C.'s diverse communities. We know more is needed to reduce administrative burdens, provide physicians with basic employment standards, and improve care in rural communities. BC Family Doctors is committed to working with government and other partners to address systemic issues so that all patients and family doctors can thrive.



LFP by the numbers



~250,000

people connected to a family doctor or nurse practitioner in 2024



1,001

new family doctors

4390

longitudinal family doctors



21,000

billing questions answered



100+

payment model improvements



Impact

For the first time in a generation, we have hundreds of new family doctors choosing to provide longitudinal care. In a recent survey of University of British Columbia medical residents, 84 per cent said the new payment model has influenced their decision to pursue a career in family practice. Practicing family doctors have told us this new payment model is keeping them in primary care. They feel heard and valued as the foundation of the healthcare system.

The number of patients getting connected to a primary care provider is growing. Across B.C., patients are receiving the care that they need and deserve.

We're not stopping there.

BC Family Doctors is sharing what we learned with physicians across Canada. We're presenting from coast to coast, spreading the word about how paying physicians differently can have a big impact on primary care. Following B.C.'s success, other provinces like Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia,

New Brunswick, and PEI have created new payment models for family doctors. Across the country, provincial health systems are looking to B.C. as a leader in primary care.

In just two years, the LFP Payment Model has delivered new family doctors, new patient attachments, and hope for a better tomorrow.



My journey back to practice

“When I started in family medicine, I thrived on building relationships and getting to know my patients over time, caring for everyone in the family from “cradle to grave.” But as much as I loved it, the financial strain of traditional family practice was overwhelming. Most of my earnings went to overhead costs, and I was left with little to show for my hard work. I made the difficult decision to leave family medicine and move to hospital work.

The LFP Payment Model was a turning point for me. It allowed me to return to family practice without the constant stress and financial strain. The change didn't just impact my professional life; it improved my quality of life. The constant background stress of running a traditional practice was gone. I could now build my schedule to meet my patients' needs without feeling like I was compromising my financial stability or personal well-being.

I hope we can continue to build on the LFP model, ensuring that every patient has access to the care they need and that every family doctor can provide that care in a sustainable, fulfilling way.”

**DR. SHELLY ECKLAND JETZER
IS A FAMILY DOCTOR
PRACTICING IN LADNER**

Losing & finding a family doctor

“My family doctor retired at the height of COVID-19. She'd been our family's doctor for more than 25 years. It felt like losing a family member because she knew us so well. For years, my spouse and I tried everything to find a new family physician. Got on every list, asked everyone we knew, and got nowhere. We felt adrift. Walk-in clinic doctors didn't know us like our old family doctor. It made it harder to manage our health issues.

This summer, a new clinic opened up in our city and we got a new doctor. I can't tell you the relief that comes with knowing there is someone you can see regularly, who knows you and your health needs.”

**STUART POYNTZ
LIVES IN VANCOUVER, B.C.**



The last word

“The LFP Payment Model proves that transformative change is possible. Patients want a family doctor they trust and can see regularly, someone who truly understands their health journey. This model empowers family doctors, like me, to build those deep connections and prioritize quality care for our patients. We became family doctors so that we could care for our patients from cradle to grave. Our patients’ health and well-being have always been our top priority, and with the LFP Payment Model, both my fellow family doctors and I are valued, ensuring more British Columbians benefit from the comprehensive and relationship-based care that benefits all.”

**DR. MARYAM ZEINEDDIN,
PRESIDENT, BC FAMILY DOCTORS**

“Family doctors are at the forefront of primary care. A strong primary care system where family doctors are well supported helps to ensure patients get the care they need. The LFP Payment Model is a vital step in attracting doctors to BC and keeping them in family medicine which helps to attract more patients. LFP allows family doctors to focus on what they do best, providing comprehensive, relationship-based care.

**DR. CHARLENE LUI
PRESIDENT, DOCTORS OF BC**



Building a better tomorrow

The LFP Payment Model has set a foundation for the future of primary care. But there is more to do. We need to continue to work together to rebuild our shattered health care system. We need to put new thinking and effort into building back a better system that recognizes the needs of patients and physicians. LFP is an example of how we can challenge our ways of thinking and doing, challenge the status quo and ultimately, challenge ourselves to do better.

BC Family Doctors is ready for that challenge, and we invite you to join us on this journey.

