

CANADIAN MEDICAL FORUM

FORUM MÉDICAL CANADIEN

A forum for consultation, relationship and consensus building, strategy development and joint action

Une tribune de consultation, de relation et de consensualisation, de réflexion stratégique et d'action concertée

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Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada • L'Association des facultés de médecine du Canada

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Canadian Federation of Medical Students • Fédération des étudiants et étudiantes en médecine du Canada

Canadian Medical Association • L'Association médicale canadienne

The Canadian Medical Protective Association • L'Association canadienne de protection médical

College of Family Physicians of Canada • Collège des médecins de famille du Canada

Fédération médicale étudiante du Québec

Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada • Fédération des ordres des médecins du Canada

Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada • L'Association des médecins autochtones du Canada

Medical Council of Canada • Conseil médical du Canada

Resident Doctors of Canada • Médecins résidents du Canada

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada • Collège royal des médecins et chirurgiens du Canada

Society of Rural Physicians of Canada • Société de la médecine rurale du Canada

Observers/Observateurs

HealthCareCAN • SoinsSantéCAN

July 2022

The Canadian Medical Forum (CMF) brings together leaders of Canada's major national medical organizations to discuss issues of priority to physicians, patients, and the Canadian healthcare system.

Today we are issuing an urgent call to action for health care system improvements in support of comprehensive primary health care.

There is a crisis in family medicine and in the delivery of comprehensive primary care which has left over 4.6M Canadians without a family doctor, and with many people unable to access timely care.

The evidence is clear that patients who have a family doctor have better health outcomes and live longer. The best health systems in the world are those that invest in primary care as the foundation of the health care system and include family doctors as key members of health care teams. (See Appendix A - Citations.)

The CMF calls on federal/provincial/territorial governments and health agencies to make urgent investments in comprehensive primary care and build on the recommendations described in the Health Human Resource Policy Recommendations: Summary (Briefing to the Committee on Health Workforce from CFPC, CMA and CNA). We urge governments to recognize that a multi-modal strategy is needed to establish comprehensive primary care as the bedrock of the healthcare system.

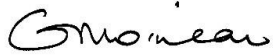
1. Support a multi-level government taskforce towards a comprehensive primary care human health resource strategy.
2. Support continuity and comprehensiveness of care close to home to decrease health care utilization, enhance adherence to preventive health measure, and increase satisfaction of patients and providers.
3. Invest in a data strategy to make better decisions about the number and distribution of health care providers in the community.
4. Develop a research strategy to engage communities in health improvement research and develop, scale, and spread successful family medicine education, research, and practice models.

Without investments in comprehensive primary health care, the health of Canadians will continue to suffer.

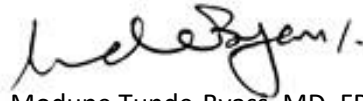
Yours sincerely,



Flordeliz Gigi Osler, BScMed, MD, FRCSC
Chair, Canadian Medical Forum
Encl.:



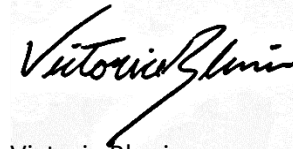
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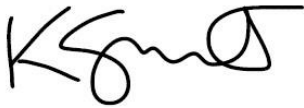
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Canadian Medical Forum
Call to Action for Comprehensive Primary Health Care

APPENDIX A

1. Evidence regarding the role of FPs/GPs in primary care:
 - A higher supply of general practitioners is correlated with **better health outcomes** including reduced mortality^[i], ^[ii] a higher Health Utility Index, better health after age 40, better health outcomes for individuals with a diagnosed chronic condition^[iii], and improved maternal and child health outcomes^[iv], ^[v], ^[vi].
2. There is also a significant background of information on benefits of continuity of care (that is usually associated with having a regular FP) spelled out in this document:

<https://www.cfpc.ca/CFPC/media/Resources/Health-Care-Delivery/Continuity-of-Care-one-pager-ENG-Final.pdf>

“The evidence is clear: increased supply of family physicians leads to a host of benefits, including reduced mortality and improved chronic condition outcomes. The continuity of care provided by family doctors is associated with lower risk of hospitalizations, emergency department use, and rehospitalization. The best health systems in the world are those that invest in primary care and include family doctors as members of the teams.”

^[i] <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953621002690> The impact of primary health care and specialist physician supply on amenable mortality in Mexico (2000–2015): Panel data analysis using system-Generalized Method of Moments; Zlatko Nikoloskia, Sarah Albala, Andres Madriz Monteroc, Elias Mossialos.

^[ii] Higher US Rural Mortality Rates Linked to Socioeconomic Status, Physician Shortages, and Lack of Health Insurance Gordon Gong, 2019.

^[iii] Piérard E. The effect of physician supply on health status: Canadian evidence. *Health Policy*. 2014; 118(1):56-65.

^[iv] <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-09220-4>, Association of primary care physician supply with maternal and child health in China: a national panel dataset, 2012–2017; Mengping Zhou, Luwen Zhang, Nan Hu & Li Kuang; BMC Public Health, Volume 20, Article number: 1093 (2020).

^[v] <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0217614> Primary care physicians and infant mortality: Evidence from Brazil. Letícia Xander Russo, Anthony Scott, Peter Sivey, Joilson Dias, 2019.

^[vi] The impact of primary care physician density on perinatal health: Evidence from a natural experiment. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/hec.4426>