



WHERE WE STAND

ALBERTA COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS



ADVANCING
EXCELLENCE



CREATING
COMMUNITY



INFLUENCING
POLICY



INSPIRING
TRUST



ALBERTA COLLEGE *of*
FAMILY PHYSICIANS



About the Alberta College of Family Physicians

Advancing Health for Patients, Families and Communities in Alberta

The Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP) is the provincial Chapter for the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) and was established more than 65 years ago. The ACFP is a member-based, not-for-profit organization representing more than 5,200 family physicians, family medicine residents, and medical students across Alberta.

The ACFP's vision of advancing health for patients, families, and communities in Alberta is achieved by supporting our members through continuing medical education and professional development, advocacy, leadership, and research that enables them to provide

adaptive, high quality health care for their patients and their communities.

The ACFP acts with integrity, respect, and inclusiveness upholding the principles and social responsibility of family medicine. The ACFP represents caring family physician leaders, who ensure comprehensive and integrated care, and value excellence in health care inspired by personal interactions and trusting relationships in the communities they serve. The ACFP seeks to be inclusive and reflective of its members' views and needs, building awareness of the value of family medicine through communication, engagement, and collaboration.



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Our Principles

The Patient's Medical Home

The ACFP is committed to the implementation of the Patient's Medical Home (PMH) model of care¹ and supports Alberta Primary Care Networks (PCNs) as the most effective mechanism to support them. The PCN infrastructure provides Albertans with patient-centred care through a medical home environment, realizing optimal health outcomes. The CFPC's New Vision for Canada: Family Practice- The PMH's 2019 pillars are the principles that direct our resources and focus.

To that end, the ACFP will advocate for investment in primary care and the importance of patients establishing longitudinal relationships with family physicians who

they know and trust. Access to a primary care workforce provides comprehensive patient care, improves patient outcomes, decreases health care utilization, and decreases health care costs.² Family physicians provide the overwhelming majority (~70% in Alberta) of all health care visits in Alberta and Canada.³ Family physicians see more patients with multiple co-morbidities than specialists⁴ and perform as well as specialists in managing common diseases such as diabetes, depression, and cardiovascular disease in the elderly.^{5,6,7}

The ACFP:

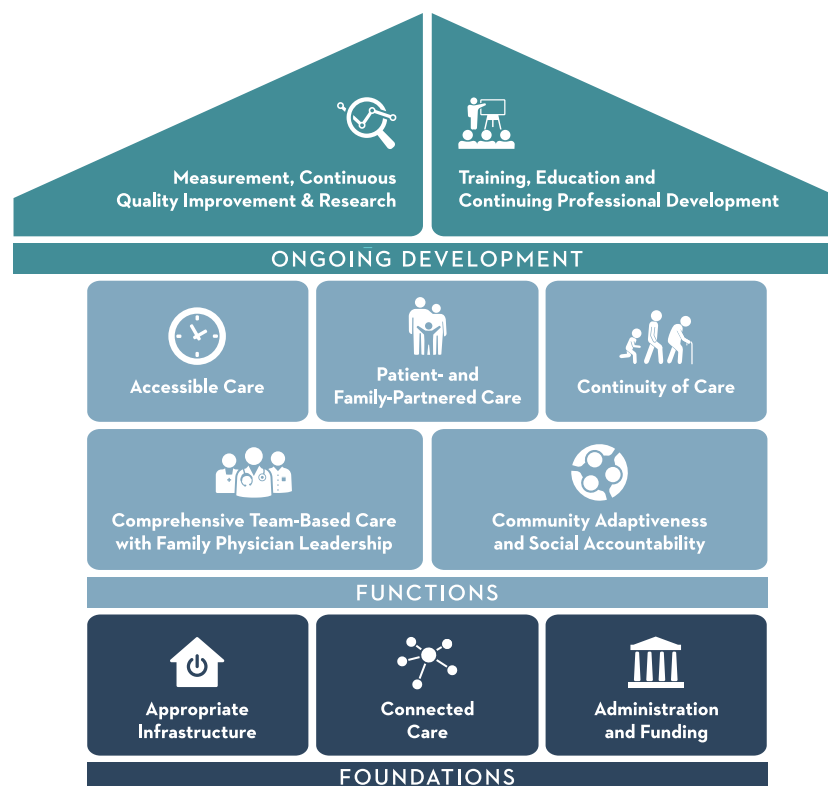
- Supports the integration of new family physicians into Alberta's primary health care system where the PMH is the ultimate goal.
- Encourages recent graduates and new family physicians to set up practices in Alberta and join PCNs and practices that are leading innovation and transformation of practices to a PMH.
- Seeks to identify the actions and supports required to promote and facilitate strong succession planning between existing practices and family physicians and new to practice family physicians.⁸
- The ACFP will use its expertise and excellence in advocacy and CPD to support the following areas identified as priority:

- » **Panel and Continuity of Care** – Patients who have a regular family physician report using emergency services less than half the time as those without a physician (4.3% versus 9.6%) and being admitted to hospital less than half the time (1.7% versus 4%). The ACFP supports its members to establish, manage, and monitor their patient panels⁹. Family physicians will respond to the needs of their patient population and adapt their practices and professional competencies based on evolving and emerging needs and innovations (e.g. virtual care to improve access and continuity)
- » **Sustaining Engaged Leadership and Team Based Care** – PMH practices are enabled by high functioning interdisciplinary teams. Efficiency and capacity of the health care system is improved and increased when all members of the primary care team work together. The ACFP advocates for and provides programs, education, and support for its members to establish, sustain, lead, and develop teams that will advance excellence in the PMH
- » **Implementation of the PMH** - Alberta will continue to require the development of innovative, collaborative policy, programs, and infrastructure that support the implementation of the PMH. As a unique

voice for family physicians in Alberta, the ACFP will advocate for policy and resources to ensure the pillars of the PMH are enabled. As an accreditation body for continuing professional development activities in Alberta, the ACFP designs sessions and coaches its members in acquiring credits for activities that advance the functions and ongoing development of the PMH including measurement, continuous quality improvement, and research initiatives

- » **Patient and Community Engagement** – Family practice is the herald of patient-centered care. Family physicians remain the leaders in building trusting relationships with their patients and for implementing successful engagement with their communities. As a result, family physicians are responsive and adapt to the needs of their patients and communities, while informing the evolution of patient engagement. The ACFP supports patient engagement in patient care planning, system decision making, in practice quality improvement and evaluation, and in developing management strategies that respect patient choices, capacity, and environments¹⁰. The ACFP will promote patient engagement to increase cultural understanding and to guarantee endeavors are aligned with community needs.¹¹

Patient’s Medical Home





Applied Leadership and Collaboration

The ACFP leads and participates in collaborative, practical, evidence-based initiatives with stakeholders to advance excellence in family medicine and the health care system.

The experiences of many jurisdictions in the Western world have proven that primary care transformation is the foundation for achieving optimal health outcomes, and system improvements in quality, safety, patient service, and efficiency/cost containment¹². The rapid evolution of primary health care in Alberta and the accelerated expansion in the number of family physicians and general practitioners has created a unique situation characterized by insufficient engagement of family physicians and their clinics in the reform of health care.

As such, the ACFP:

- Supports the need for a healthier Alberta by leading family physicians in advocating for and activating better health care innovations, strategies, and outcomes for patients and communities through the transformation of primary care in Alberta.
- Ensures the family physician voice is present in the discussions and decisions affecting system design, public policy, and program delivery related to the health of their patients and communities and within the province.

¹College of Family Physicians of Canada. A new vision for Canada: Family Practice—The Patient’s Medical Home 2019. Mississauga, ON: College of Family Physicians of Canada; 2019.

²Kolber M, Korownyk C, Allan GM, Evidence Pertaining to a Healthy Primary Workforce, PEER March 2020

³Stewart, M, Ryan B. Ecology of Health Care in Canada. *Can Fam Phys* 2015; 61(5): 449-53

⁴Starfield B, Lemke KW, Bernhardt T et al. Comorbidity: implications for the importance of primary care in ‘case’ management. *Ann Fam Med* 2003;1(1):8-14.

⁵Wisniewski SR, Rush AJ, Nierenberg AA et al. Can Phase III Trial Results of Antidepressant Medications Be Generalized to Clinical Practice? *Am J Psychiatry* 2009; 166: 599–607

⁶Strandberg TE, Pitkala KH, Berglind S et al. Multifactorial intervention to prevent recurrent cardiovascular events in patients 75 years or older: *Am Heart J* 2006; 152:585-292

⁷Harris S, Yale J-F, Dempsey E. Can family physicians help patients initiate basal insulin therapy successfully? *Can Fam Phys* 2008; 54:550-8

⁸Grumbach K, Bainbridge E, Bodenheimer T. Facilitating Improvement in Primary Care: The Promise of Practice Coaching. Issue Brief- The Commonwealth Fund. June 2012.



Achieving Excellence Through Assessment, Education, Research, and Evidence

The ACFP supports and inspires self-directed, continuing medical education and professional development (CME/PD), quality improvement, and research for family physicians in order for them to adapt to changes in medical evidence, patient, and community needs. The ACFP is an active contributor to our members' evolution toward achieving the goals of health care reform and employs its unique tools, expertise, and leadership in CME/PD, capacity building, and community-based research. In order to successfully achieve this, the ACFP:

- Believes that decisions made in the transformation of primary care and the health care system must be both patient-centred and grounded in the

best available evidence and decisions regarding a patient's care must be made between the patient, their family, the family doctor, and team.

- Insists that research questions are developed in community-based practices and are vital to the improvement of family medicine and for the creation of better health care strategies and outcomes for patients and communities.
- Empowers family physicians and primary care organizations to measure, evaluate, and initiate research needed to ensure evidence-based decisions for change are made.

⁹Fung CS, Wong CK, Fong DY et al. Having a family doctor was associated with lower utilization of hospital-based health services. *BMC Health Serv Res* 2015;15:42.

¹⁰The Patient-Centered Medical Home: Strategies to Put Patients at the Center of Primary Care. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (Pub No. AHRQ 11-0029). February 2011.

¹¹Citizen Engagement Handbook. Canadian Institutes of Health Research. January 2006.

¹²Alberta's Primary Health Care Strategy. Primary Health Care Strategy Working Group. Government of Alberta, January 2014.