



Building a foundation for stronger primary care

In 2014, the Central Interior Rural Division of Family Practice began to work on A GP for Me, a provincial initiative of the Government of BC and Doctors of BC, as part of our commitment to improve primary care in our communities so people can maintain the best possible health.

We learned about pressures on the local health care system, which range from transportation and other barriers for vulnerable patients and First Nations residents, to high rates of disease in the region, to a limited supply of doctors. Working with Interior Health, First Nations Health Authority and First Nations Communities, Provincial Health Services Authority and local health services, we started work to address some of these challenges.

Two years later, we are already seeing positive results for patients. Moving forward, we plan to build on the improvements we started; continue to strengthen the foundation we have laid for stronger primary care; and explore more efficient and sustainable models of care, including team-based care, that can increase the capacity of the primary care system for patients.

OUR PROGRESS: April, 2014 to March, 2016

BETTER ACCESS TO CARE for residents of rural and First Nations' communities

TELEHEALTH

Doctors have been providing follow-up care to remote and First Nations' communities by holding video appointments with patients in their homes or nearby health centres.

Progress to date: So far, 7 doctors set up at 4 sites across the region improving access for approximately 1200 people. Patients have responded positively to using the technology at home.

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING

Doctors and their staff are learning about health care needs from the point of view of First Nations' residents, so they can provide the most appropriate care.

Progress to date: 15 Medical Office Assistants and 4 physicians have been trained.

"This course changed the way I view Indigenous cultures and what they have experienced." – MOA

MORE CONTINUOUS CARE for patients

ENHANCED PHYSICIAN COVERAGE

A focused locum program is underway that will give local doctors flexibility to take time out of their clinic and ensure patients are not faced with a closed office when their doctor is away. This is critical to keep current doctors in the community and to attract new ones to work here.

Progress to date: 3 locum doctors have been placed, impacting 3, 600 patients. We continue to reach out to final year students, residents, new graduates and GPs with incentives for locum positions.

ATTRACTING NEW DOCTORS

We are working with Interior Health and Health Match BC to promote our region to new doctors. Five new videos highlight our attractive lifestyles and a finance tool for medical students and residents reinforces the region's reasonable cost of living and subsidy benefits.

The A GP for Me project resulted in a strong, creative and unique retention program and the CIRD is considered one of the leaders in the province in this area.

Progress to date: We started our recruitment campaign in 2016. The videos have had 4300+ views and have generated follow up inquiries. See: <https://goo.gl/FxYc7l>

MORE TIME FOR PATIENTS + improved care quality

PRACTICE EFFICIENCIES AND SUPPORT

Training was provided to GPs and their medical office staff to increase best use of their electronic medical records. This will result in ongoing improvements in doctor's offices.

Progress to date: Most local clinics have held Electronic Medical Records (EMR) training.

"Because of simple things that came out of EMR training, I'm booking 2 more patients a day." – GP

FETCH (For Everything That is Community Health)

A new online directory of services called FETCH () helps doctors, their staff and the public more easily link with clinic and community services for health-related needs.

Progress to date: The FETCH directory has 500+ listings, attracting about 80 users a week. See: cariboochilcotin.fetchbc.ca

100% of Medical Office Assistants surveyed say the comprehensiveness of FETCH resources is excellent or good.