

April 4, 2020 Press Release: Nanaimo's Family Physicians – It's Business as Unusual

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During the Covid-19 pandemic, Nanaimo's Family Physicians continue to see patients, although in a slightly different way than you are used to. To minimize the risk of spreading the virus, physicians ask that their patients call clinics for an appointment as you've always done, and you'll be given an appointment time. Physicians begin with a telephone (or video) call with you to discuss your concerns. If the physician feels you need a physical exam, arrangements will be made for this.

Your mental health and well-being are as important as your physical health. You may have an ongoing mental health concern or be experiencing increased feelings of stress with the impact of the Covid-19 virus. This is natural and there are interventions to help. Your family physician values your relationship and wants you to know it's important to maintain contact with them for support and treatment. If you are struggling or have concerns, please phone your family doctor and book a telephone appointment. The Nanaimo Division of Family Practice is also launching a series of online Cognitive Behavioural Training Skills classes with a family physician who has specialized training in this area. These classes are available through referral from your physician and begin this month.

For those without a family physician or nurse practitioner, Nanaimo walk-in medical clinics and the Urgent and Primary Care Centre are also open with their phone numbers posted online for patients to call first. Patients who have previously accessed a walk-in clinic can continue to access those. Virtual appointments will take place with you and a doctor and if needed, a follow up office visit will be booked. Links to the walk-in clinics and mental health resources are included below:

Nanaimo Walk-in Clinics

- <https://medicalartscentre.com>
- <https://wallaceclinic.ca>
- <http://caledonianclinic.ca>

Mental Health Resources

- **Local counselling** Call Brooks Landing 250.739.5710
- **24/7 Vancouver Island Crisis Line:** 250.754.4447

On behalf of Nanaimo's primary care community, we want you to know our physicians and nurse practitioners are here for you.

Sincerely,

Roger Walmsley, MD
Board Chair
Nanaimo Division of Family Practice
www.divisionsbc.ca/nanaimo
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