

EVERY ONTARIAN DESERVES A FAMILY DOCTOR

1.3 million¹ Ontarians live without a family doctor.

This pandemic has highlighted the importance of Ontarians having access to high-quality and comprehensive health care—and that begins with access to a family doctor. But it has also created a backlog that is hindering Ontarians from getting the timely care they deserve.

Ontario's healthcare system was already feeling the impact of a family doctor shortage. This problem has become a crisis, with more doctors retiring and fewer medical school graduates entering this profession.

Every Ontarian needs a family doctor. The Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) is ready to work with the Ontario government to make this happen.

Family doctors are critical in keeping Ontario's families, patients, and communities healthy.

In many small towns especially, family doctors are the backbone: They run their own local practices, work in nearby hospitals and emergency rooms, and tend to those in long-term care homes.

Having a regular family doctor improves health outcomes, reduces mortality, decreases hospitalizations and reduces healthcare costs.

But the COVID-19 pandemic has left our physicians burnt out or overwhelmed with backlogs. Many family doctors are leaving the profession and fewer are entering it.

**While we know that this is a crisis—
there is hope, and there are solutions.**

1. Statistics Canada, *Health Fact Sheets on Primary Health Care Providers, 2019 (2020)*.



CALL TO ACTION

It's time for Ontario to commit to ensuring that every Ontarian has access to a family doctor. The government can do this through...

THE SOLUTIONS

1

Ensure Ontarians have a family doctor working alongside a team, so patients can get the help they need faster.

Research shows that patients with access to comprehensive team-based primary care, led by a family doctor, have better health outcomes, fewer visits to the hospital/emergency department/specialty care, and overall are more satisfied with their care.

The Ontario government needs to commit to ensuring every family doctor and their patients have access to a team

2

Improve the accessibility of care by increasing the time that family doctors can spend providing direct patient care.

Family doctors say they can spend up to 25% of their week on administrative work. This is time that could be spent providing direct patient care. Covid-related backlogs have piled on top of paperwork, and both are preventing Ontarians from getting appointments.

The Ontario government needs to commit to giving family doctors more time to spend on direct patient care.

3

Ensure every Ontarian has a family doctor by recruiting and retaining more family doctors within the province.

1.3 million Ontarians live without a doctor. And 1-in-5 family physicians plan on retiring within the next five years.

The Ontario government needs to commit to recruiting and retaining more family physicians.

For more information on our policy solutions, please visit
www.LifeWithoutADoctor.ca

About the Ontario College of Family Physicians

The OCFP represents over 15,000 family doctors who support Ontarians in both urban and rural communities in our province. Our members have direct insight into the unique healthcare needs of Ontario's varying populations. With their guidance, the OCFP has developed three overarching solutions for Ontario parties to implement post-election that will increase access to care for more Ontarians.