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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.


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,

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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.”

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