

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: The BC College of Family Physicians calls upon provincial leaders to improve equitable access to health care

(October 20, 2020, Vancouver, BC) Ahead of this week's provincial election, the British Columbia College of Family Physicians (BCCFP) is pleased to release the [2020 Provincial Election Primary Care Report Card](#).

This publication evaluates the policies of the larger provincial parties as they relate to health care. The parties are also judged against four key indicators of importance to family medicine. The four principal areas of health care that are assessed in the report card are:

- Every British Columbian has access to a well-supported family doctor
- Indigenous health and cultural safety
- Addressing the overdose crisis
- Pandemic readiness and response

The report card uses a five-point system to rate the parties' actions and positions related to each of the four indicators. The ratings are awarded based on the publicly available election platforms of the BC Green Party, BC Liberal Party and BC New Democratic Party.

The pandemic has further exposed inequities and gaps in the health care system that must be addressed by the next government

BCCFP's President, Dr. Jeanette Boyd, comments: "The pandemic has further exposed and expanded the inequities and challenges of our health care system. As the provincial voice for family medicine in British Columbia, the BCCFP expects the provincial government to have a stronger commitment to ensuring timely, equitable access to the highest quality of primary care for all British Columbians.

Research shows that family doctors provide a high level of continuity of care, which is associated with lower mortality rates, improved patient satisfaction, and fewer hospitalizations and emergency room visits. This results in lower overall costs to the health care system. But nearly 700,000 British Columbians do not have a family doctor. This must be addressed by the next government.

We expect those in power to address the social determinants of health, which account for fully 50% of all health outcomes in Canada. This includes acknowledging and addressing the health inequities experienced by Indigenous people, which are the result of systemic racism. The next government must be prepared from the very beginning to address the two pandemics that are urgently impacting British Columbians: COVID-19 and the ongoing opioid overdose crisis."

About the British College of Family Physicians

The British Columbia College of Family Physicians (BCCFP) is a not-for-profit organization that advocates for the future of family medicine. We are the professional home of family medicine in BC, providing leadership, support, advocacy and education for more than 6,000 members from across the province. The BCCFP celebrates the specialty of family medicine and family doctors for the excellence in patient care they provide. Our members include family physicians, family medicine residents, and medical students interested in pursuing a career in family medicine.

Position paper

Our position paper, ***Family Doctors Care: The Role and Value of Family Physicians in British Columbia***, summarizes our 2019 research findings. The report highlights the issue of access to family physicians and lets government know that family physicians feel undervalued in the current health care system.

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