

## Celebrate family physicians as specialists

The World Health Organization identifies primary care as the foundation of an effective health care system<sup>1</sup>. Family physicians are the most highly trained professionals in primary care, with 11 years of education and training before entering practice<sup>2</sup>.

As well as specializing in relationship-based, comprehensive, longitudinal care, family physicians can be trained in a diverse spectrum of enhanced skills, including anesthesia, obstetrics, emergency medicine, palliative care and addictions medicine.

Family physicians practise in the community, in hospital, and in long-term care settings, providing care from the very beginning to the end of the life journey.

Join us in celebrating family physicians as diverse and highly trained specialists.

### **What is a family physician's specialty?**

Family physicians are specialists in delivering relationship-based, comprehensive, longitudinal care. Their practice is centred around the patient-doctor relationship, which extends across all ages, health conditions and settings. They apply a specialist skillset to manage a patient's journey from the preventative health stage, through to diagnosis, treatment, and resolution.

Certification in the College of Family Physicians (CCFP) means that a family physician has met and continues to meet the College of Family Physicians of Canada's high standards for medical education and training.

### **What about family physicians who do not work out of a family practice, such as those who work in hospitals or walk-ins?**

No matter the setting, family physicians are trained to provide relationship-based care that considers the whole person: their culture, financial status, past traumas, and other aspects that impact health.

Family physicians draw on their specialist skillset and knowledge base to deliver this high quality, comprehensive care in any practice setting.

### **Can other health care professionals practise family medicine?**

Family physicians are unique health care professionals who have completed accredited, evidence-based family medicine education and training. While effective primary care relies on interprofessional teams of many different health care providers, family physicians fill a unique central leadership role that cannot be replaced by other professions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/declaration-of-alma-ata>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tafp.org/Media/Default/Downloads/advocacy/scope-education.pdf>