



# Priorities and opportunities for 2024

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**H**appy new year, everyone! I hope you were able to connect with friends and family to recharge over the holidays.

As we enter 2024 my top priority is addressing the crisis in family medicine. Late in summer 2023 the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) launched its Crisis in Family Medicine campaign.<sup>1</sup> With this important advocacy effort, we are demanding urgent action and investment in transformation for a health care system that is close to the breaking point. We have also encouraged the public, family doctors, and other health care providers to let elected officials know it is time to *stop waiting*—that they must take action immediately to solve the crisis in family medicine before it is too late.

The campaign also promotes solutions that the CFPC has devised to ease the crisis in family medicine, including those found in “A Prescription for Primary Care”<sup>2</sup> and in our family practice reform policy proposal package, “Transforming the Foundation of Canada’s Health Care System.”<sup>3</sup> The campaign has already reached more than 8 million people in Canada and has resulted in more than 2000 letters being sent to elected officials.

Some of the solutions found in the documents issued by the CFPC, and those on which I would like to see more movement, include investment in team-based care, which helps patients access high-quality care when and where they need it and helps family physicians achieve better work-life balance. These solutions also address appropriate remuneration for family physicians, including the use of different funding models, as well as improvements to infrastructure that family physicians need to be effective, such as information technology and data infrastructure.

Both patients and family doctors are better supported with team-based care. The CFPC continues to advocate for the Patient’s Medical Home vision,<sup>4</sup> where care is delivered by fully resourced collaborative teams with leadership from family physicians. As experts in family medicine, family physicians can elevate the work of other health care professionals.<sup>3</sup> Team-based care can also help reduce administrative burden—one of the greatest contributors to burnout—for family doctors. Simplifying and reducing paperwork, hiring additional team members to share administrative tasks, and introducing medical scribes would reduce the hours and energy family physicians spend on these tasks. This would allow family physicians to maximize the time they devote to direct patient care.

I also look forward to seeing solutions emerge from Team Primary Care projects.<sup>5</sup> Team Primary Care aims to accelerate transformative change in the way primary care practitioners train to work collaboratively. To do so, it has brought together more than 100 partners with more than 20 practitioner-specific initiatives and 20 team training projects under way.

Shortly before the end of 2023 I attended the Primary Care Crisis 2023 meeting in Toronto, Ont, where family medicine leaders from across Canada gathered to discuss the roots of the crisis and possible solutions.<sup>6</sup> Over the 2 days of that excellent meeting, I was reminded that we have innovative solutions but that we also need political leaders to understand the urgency of the situation and the importance of a strong primary care system to people, to communities, and to our country.

This year I look forward to connecting with you, exchanging ideas and perspectives, and bringing those conversations forward to governments and other key partners in the health care sector.

As always, I welcome you to reach out and to share your thoughts by emailing me at [mgreen@cfpc.ca](mailto:mgreen@cfpc.ca). 🍁

## References

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