

**December 12, 2014**

To whom it may concern:

I have prepared the following opinion-editorial about A GP for Me in Prince George. We appreciate any questions and/or interest you may have on this topic.

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Physician Lead, President of the Board of Directors  
Prince George Division of Family Practice  
Prince George, BC

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## **The Prince George Division of Family Practice announces that citizens of Prince George who want a Family Doctor are now able to find one**

At the close of 2014, the Prince George Division of Family Practice (PGDoFP) is very proud to announce that we have had continuous availability, or openings, for patients in at least one family doctor's office and/or Primary Care clinic for the last 12 months.

Prince George was one of three BC communities that stepped up to prototype the A GP for Me initiative announced by the Government of BC and Doctors of BC in 2010. The initiative aims to improve access to Primary Care and help more British Columbians who want a family doctor to find one.

Based on data available to us, we have been able to track our progress of matching every citizen who wants one to a family physician. We know confidently that 80,000 Prince George citizens are now attached to a family physician. We also know from census data that approximately 7 to 10% (or upwards to 9,000 people) of the population are not looking for a family doctor.

This achievement is a result of continuous quality improvement work undertaken to increase capacity in Primary Care in Prince George. Our dedicated family physician members, Northern Health partners and the community have been working together in a comprehensive and strategic way to address challenges from a whole-system approach. As well as the strategies of working on recruitment and retention of family doctors, we have focused on supporting existing family practices to find places in their work flow where they can improve efficiency and find some additional capacity.

The delicate ratio of family physicians to patients will be difficult to sustain without additional support from other health care team members and prevention and wellness initiatives in the community. We continue to look for strategies and solutions for residents in Prince George.

We know that in every community there are a number of people who have complex health needs requiring a team of care providers along with their family doctor. Our data shows us that many of the people with those health needs were among the 15,000 estimated to not have a family doctor in Prince George in 2007. As a result of these unmet needs, in partnership with Northern Health we built the Blue Pine Clinic (BPC), which opened in July 2012. The BPC provides a Primary Care Home to some of the most vulnerable patients in our community. The BPC is also able to provide Primary Care to any patients who do not yet have a family physician. If it is determined the BPC is not the most appropriate place for them, we work to connect the patient to a Family Doctor in the community.

The PGDoFP is working closely with Northern Health as they develop Primary Care teams to work with all doctors and their patients to address complex care needs. The teams include mental health clinicians, social workers, and other health care professionals. By moving to team-based care we are adding a variety of expertise that will result in better coordinated and holistic care for patients.

As we continue to make progress in all of our strategic areas — especially in team-based care/integrated health services and the provision of a range of services in a planned and coordinated way — we hope we will see more satisfied patients and physicians, less hospitalization and better health outcomes for our patients.

For specific information on “who is taking patients in Prince George” call 250-565-2237.

### **About A GP for Me**

A GP for Me is a joint initiative of the Government of BC and Doctors of BC aimed at strengthening the health care system by supporting the relationship between patients and family doctors. Research shows continuous doctor-patient relationships lead to the best health outcomes for patients. [www.AGPforMe.ca](http://www.AGPforMe.ca)

### **About the Divisions of Family Practice**

The [Divisions of Family Practice](http://www.divisionsbc.ca) initiative is funded by a joint committee of the BC Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC. Throughout BC there are 34 divisions of family practice encompassing over 220 communities that work collaboratively with partners to enhance local patient care and improve professional satisfaction for physicians. [www.divisionsbc.ca](http://www.divisionsbc.ca)

### **For more information:**

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