



FAMILY PRACTICE RENEWAL PROGRAM

FPRP News

Condolences to the Blundell-Piercey Family

Our Committee, staff and FPN community offer our heartfelt condolences to the Blundell-Piercey family. Dr. Krista Blundell, Shalloway FPN member and family physician at Gander Medical Clinic, and her family were involved in a tragic motor vehicle accident on December 12. Sadly, Dr. Blundell's daughter passed away as a result of her injuries. We extend our deepest sympathies to the family, and to the communities in Central NL, as they deal with this unthinkable loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Family Practice Renewal Committee

Dr. Wendy Graham, (Co-Chair), NLMA
Dr. Steve Major, NLMA
Dr. Nicola Penney, NLMA
Ms. Colleen Stockley, DHCS (Co-Chair)
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Ms. Judy O'Keefe, Eastern Health
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Dr. Danielle O'Keefe, Family Medicine, MUN
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Mr. Robert Thompson, NLMA

FPRP Staff

Ms. Glenda Nash, Program Director
Mr. Ian Hodder, Senior Program Consultant
Ms. Paula Hanrahan, Senior Program Consultant
Ms. Emily Hynes, Program Coordinator, FPNs
Ms. Lindsay Barron, Program Coordinator, PIP
Ms. Jean Cook, Fund Manager
Ms. Dawn Mason, Administrative Assistant

If you have ideas or news for future newsletters, FPRP programs or events, or any questions or concerns, please reach out by email to: gnash@nlma.nl.ca

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Program Director's Message



Hello and welcome to FPRP's final newsletter for 2020!

As we come to the end of a difficult year, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your commitment to leadership and innovation in family practice, even in the midst of challenging times for you and your families. While adapting to new ways of caring for your patients, so many of you still found time to participate and take a leadership role in many of our program initiatives this past year.

Despite impacts of the pandemic, your engagement has allowed us to achieve significant milestones in 2020.

- This year, our Family Practice Networks (FPNs) have seen a growth of 60%, with a current membership of 378 physicians in four FPNs, with 34 family physicians in FPN leadership roles as Board Directors.
- Collaborative Services Committees (CSCs), important mechanisms in primary care reform, are now established within each FPN geographic area. Comprised of senior leadership from FPNs and Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), these Committees are making significant inroads in building collaborative relationships between family physicians and Health Authorities, to respond to primary health care needs of the community.
- MyQ was launched in June of this year. The MyQ program is a robust educational and support program, representing a comprehensive approach to building a culture of quality improvement in family practice.
- Frailty 1 and 2, clinical education programs focused on care of the older adult, with 260+ attendees across 5 offerings to date, have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants relating to increase of clinical knowledge, practical relevance to practice, and improving care of older adults.
- Expected to launch in the first half of 2021, FPRP is working on the development of an educational and support program for family physicians starting a new practice in Newfoundland and Labrador, moving from one practice to another within the province, or transitioning from active practice to retirement.
- The Virtual Care Training Program was offered in July with 81 registrants, including 45+ physicians. The program was designed for physicians and clinic staff to work together to implement new virtual care processes during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Fee Code Program has seen a 50% increase in members from this time last year, now at 249 fee-for-service family physician registrants. The COPD code is expected for release in early 2021, in coordination with our COPD group learning program offering.
- Various financial support programs were rolled out this year, to assist physicians in adoption of technology for better functionality in their clinics, including grants to support the adoption of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR), virtual care technology, and other functionality to improve clinic processes.
- Development work has begun on an FPN Innovation Fund. This fund will provide project grant funding for one-time innovative FPN initiatives, with expected rollout in the first half of 2021.

In 2021, the Family Practice Renewal Committee looks forward to developing a strategic plan for 2021-2023, to ensure our priorities reflect the evolving priorities of our family physician community and the needs of your patients.

Our Committee members and program staff commend you all for your unwavering displays of resilience this past year. We look forward to a new, and better, 2021. Our wish for you is a restful and happy holiday season for you and your families. See you in the new year!

Glenda Nash, Program Director, FPRP

Family Practice Networks

Currently, our 378 FPN members represent approximately 64% of fee-for-service and 31% of salaried physicians. A priority for 2021 will be improving our engagement with salaried physicians across the province.

Our FPNs are working hard on priority areas and have made significant progress. Current FPN priorities include physician recruitment and retention, locum programs, physician health and wellness, physician to physician support networks, EMR and informatics, expansion of family physician training sites, continuing professional development, physician professional satisfaction, supports for new grads, and working collaboratively with the RHAs to improve access to health services.

If you have not already done so, please consider signing up as an FPN Member. Our goal is to achieve 100% registration so all family physicians have access to the multiple benefits of FPN membership, including:

- access to a support network of colleagues;
- improved communication and collaboration with your RHA on patient care issues;
- coordinated communication and collaboration with the NLMA;
- periodic access to practice support grants (such as the [EMR Grants](#) and [Health Myself](#) offers);
- a collective voice on issues;
- improved access to Continuing Medical Education (CME); and
- other opportunities to become directly involved with activities and projects to improve patient care.

Registration is voluntary, there is no membership fee, and your level of participation is completely up to you. We have recently made registration very easy with a simple online membership form that takes only a few moments to complete.

To find out more about each FPN, and/or to complete an application for membership, please visit the respective FPN pages on our website: [Long Range](#), [Shalloway](#), [Endeavor](#), and [RE-Boot](#). Each FPN also has its own newsletter, in which you will hear specific news relevant to your own network.

RE-Boot FPN welcomes Deborah Wearn



The FPRP is pleased to welcome Deborah Wearn as Executive Director for the RE-Boot FPN, covering Rural Eastern NL. Deborah has significant community leadership experience, most recently in her role as Executive Director for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) NL, leading the organization through a shift in mandate as a service delivery organization, working with many provincial stakeholders. Deborah's academic background includes a Master of Employment Relations (Memorial University of Newfoundland) and Bachelor of Applied Science, Hons Child Studies (University of Guelph). Beyond her leadership roles in the non-profit sector, Deborah has made volunteer contributions with the Community Fund Application Review Committee, United Way of NL, and as Director of the Community Foundation of NL Board of Directors. We look forward to working with Deborah in the months and years ahead!

Collaborative Services Committees

Collaborative Services Committees (CSCs) are now established within each FPN geographic area as important mechanisms in primary care reform. Comprised of senior leadership from FPNs and RHAs, these Committees are making significant inroads in building collaborative relationships between family physicians and Health Authorities, to respond to primary health care needs of the community. Current CSC priorities under discussion across the province include improvement of shared care opportunities, increased information sharing between RHAs and FPNs, improving care of older adults and long-term care patients, supporting mental health and addictions needs, pilot projects such as a minor procedures project, Opioid Hub and Spoke development, collaborative teams, aligning in-hospital services with outpatient needs, and reducing consultant referral wait times.

To learn more about the work of the CSC in your area, please stay tuned to communications from your local FPN.

Practice Improvement Program

MyQ

MyQ is a quality improvement program designed to help family physicians and their clinic teams make changes that have a significant impact in improving physician, staff, and patient experience. Based on best practices, FPRP has teamed up with local and national partners to offer family physicians a variety of quality improvement opportunities.

MyQ consists of a series of learning options including Self-Directed Learning, Facilitated Mini Programs, an intensive 12-month Group Expedition series, and the MyQ Physician Network, all designed to meet the varying needs of family physicians and clinic staff.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about and/or register for each of these options.

Frailty Series

“In the 43 years I have been a physician in this province, I have never known a CME event that has consistently produced such high attendance. This is really good utilization of primary health care funding” - Dr. Roger Butler, CCFP (COE), FCFP

The Frailty series continues to draw large numbers, with 260+ attendees across five offerings to date.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about past and planned offerings of the Frailty program.

Setting Up a Family Medicine Practice

FPRP has partnered with Memorial University’s Office of Educational and Professional Development (OPED) for the development and implementation of a robust educational and support program for family physicians starting a new practice in the province, moving from one practice to another within the province, or transitioning from active practice to retirement. Now in the development phase, initial offerings are planned for the spring of 2021.

Click [here](#) for more information on Setting Up A Family Medicine Practice.

Upcoming Offerings

Suboxone Treatment of Addiction—Advanced Training Program

The FPRP will be offering a Suboxone Treatment of Addiction Advanced Training Program in January of 2021. This CME session will be held on Monday, January 25 and Wednesday, January 27, 2021, from 7 to 9:30 pm. Dr. Peter Barnes, Dr. Stephen Darcy and Dr. Bruce Hollett will offer an engaging learning session. Please click [here](#) for more details.

Palliative Care Group Learning Program

The topic of palliative care is a high need area for family physician education and supports, given the patient demographics in NL. Work has now begun on the development of an educational program for Palliative Care by a group of family physician leaders across the province. More information to come in 2021.

Financial Support Programs

This year, FPRP rolled out several initiatives to support family physicians in the adoption of enhanced technology to improve functionality within their clinics.

EMR Grants

The EMR Subscription Grant provides one “free” year subscription to FPN Med Access users, while the EMR Installation Grant provides one-time funding to offset costs of implementing EMR (Note: To access the Installation Grant, family physicians must be the physicians who originally implemented the EMR in the practice.). To avail of this offer, the deadline to enroll with eDOCSNL or sign an Expression of Interest Form is **December 31, 2020**. Please click [here](#) for more information.

Health Myself and Telus Virtual Visit

A combined FPRP/TELUS offer of 18 months free subscription including setup fees was rolled out in July to FPN members using Med Access. Subscriptions covered the Health Myself Patient Portal and TELUS EMR Virtual Visit. Please note the deadline for sign-up is Dec 31, 2020. Click [here](#) for more information on this offer.

Upcoming Initiatives for 2021 Rollout

FPRP continues to work on development of financial support programs for rollout in 2021; these include:

- A Technology Fund, providing fee-for-service FPN family physicians with a set dollar allocation to apply towards enhancing EMR and broader technology functionality in the family practice setting.
- A one-year subscription for Up to Date, an evidence-based clinical decision support tool.
- An application-based equipment subsidy program for family physicians to access equipment subsidies.
- A Continuing Professional Development Fund for priority issues as identified by the FPNs and the CSCs.

Fee Code Program

Telephone Code 521

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual cap on the FPRP Telephone Code (Code 521) was temporarily lifted, effective March 18, 2020. This change was made in response to the quickly evolving pandemic situation as a temporary mechanism to allow fee-for-service family physicians to bill for telephone visits without a restriction on maximum annual units. The annual maximum of 225 units for Code 521 was reinstated, effective **October 15, 2020**. As communicated, billings during the unrestricted period (March 18, 2020 to October 14, 2020) are not counted towards the annual maximum. Given that the new billing year came into effect during this period, all fee-for-service physicians registered in the FPRP Fee Code Program are eligible to bill the full 225 units from October 15, 2020 to March 31, 2021 (end of 2020/21 billing year).

The reinstatement of the cap comes partly as a result of the recent announcement extending the availability of the Pandemic Virtual Care Assessment (PVCA) code for family physicians beyond October 1, 2020, a temporary fee for virtual care provided to physicians during the coronavirus pandemic, which can be billed for assessments delivered by telephone or video conferencing (see [MCP Newsletter 20-12](#)). The decision to reinstate the 521 cap also reflects the temporary nature of the lifting of this restriction as a rapid response to the COVID situation.

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Fee Code Program (cont'd)

COPD Code

A new FPRP billing code for enhanced care of patients with COPD has been delayed due to the pandemic. The new code will be launched in Winter 2021, in coordination with a new group learn program on Comprehensive Management of COPD for the Family Physician, led by Drs. Roxanne Cooper and Gokul Vidyasankar. Please stay tuned for more details in the new year.

Please note the combined annual billing value for all three FPRP fee codes (Shared Care, Telephone and COPD) will be \$13,250. If you are not already registered in the Fee Code Program, please click [here](#).

Physician Survey

We are inviting anyone who has not already done so to complete our survey about your experiences with the **Family Practice Renewal Program** (FPRP). The survey is being conducted by FPRP in collaboration with the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information. Information gathered will assist in evaluating and improving FPRP and its associated programs, and will inform the strategic planning process. You can access the survey by clicking [here](#).

Family Practice Renewal Committee

Departing Members

This year, our Management Committee said goodbye to two key members: Dr. Annette McCarthy (Family Physician, Bay Bulls, NLMA Physician Representative) and Ms. Colleen Simms (Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Community Services).

As a committee member since day one, Dr. McCarthy has made tremendous contributions to our success, from our beginning in 2016, to our continued progress this past year. As the new FPN Board Chair for the Endeavor Family Practice Network, we look forward to her leadership and continued critical role in FPRP growth.

As FPRC Co-Chair since 2019, Ms. Simms has been committed to FPRP's continued evolution and growth, yielding significant progress to the practice of family medicine in Newfoundland and Labrador, and indeed to primary care renewal generally. We wish Colleen the very best in her retirement.

We sincerely appreciate the hard work and continued commitment of our members to the values and mission of family practice renewal in NL.

New Members

We were pleased to welcome several new members to FPRC in 2020. The addition of new members representing the NL College of Family Physicians, Memorial University's Discipline of Family Medicine, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information indicates the critical importance of partnerships with our key system stakeholders. We look forward to having the perspective of all our new members at the FPRC table, informing our evolving priorities and future growth. We extend a warm welcome to:

Dr. Nicola Penney, Family Physician, Corner Brook, NLMA Representative

Ms. Colleen Stockley, Assistant Deputy Minister, Dept. of Health and Community Services, Co-Chair

Ms. Lisa Curran, Director, Medical Services, Dept. of Health and Community Services

Dr. Danielle O'Keefe, Chair, Discipline of Family Medicine, MUN

Dr. Nicole Stockley, Director of External Engagement, NL College of Family Physicians

Ms. Gillian Sweeney, Vice-President, Clinical Information Programs & Change Leadership, NLCHI

Welcome to New Program Staff



Emily Hynes, Program Coordinator, FPNs

FPRP is pleased to welcome Emily Hynes as Program Coordinator, FPNs. Emily is a Registered Social Worker and comes to us from the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development. Emily's education & frontline experiences and her collaborative skills are a good match for the work and "road ahead" for FPRP and FPNs. Her main responsibilities include supporting Family Practice Networks (FPNs) and Collaborative Services Committees (CSCs) from the central FPRP office. Emily joined us in March, just as the pandemic touched NL. Although a unique time to be taking on a new role, Emily is focused on "catching up" on many previously identified needs from across all FPNs. Welcome to Emily!



Lindsay Barron, Program Coordinator, PIP

FPRP would also like to welcome Lindsay Barron to the team! Lindsay started with FPRP in October of this year in the role of Program Coordinator, Practice Improvement. Lindsay is a Registered Social Worker and her knowledge of the primary health care environment, as well as her extensive experience in program planning, development and implementation will make her an important addition to FPRP. Lindsay is responsible for coordinating and providing support for all Practice Improvement Program (PIP) initiatives, including providing logistical support for PIP events, and acting as liaison with Family Practice Networks relating to PIP offerings. She is also responsible for conducting research, analysis and data support for the PIP, as well as supporting other FPRP initiatives and program areas as required. Welcome to Lindsay!



FAMILY PRACTICE RENEWAL PROGRAM

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable holiday season
and the best of health and happiness in 2021!

Happy Holidays!

The FPRP Team