

Family Medicine Review

June 21, 2022

Welcome to the most recent issue of the *Family Medicine Review*. Brought to you by the Sections of Family Medicine and Rural Medicine, the *Review* offers an at-a-glance summary of information, resources and events for Alberta's family physicians. New issues will be shared monthly.

Priority Notes

- ❖ *Update on Income Equity Initiative and interim measure (see Compensation)*
- ❖ *Launch of Wave 4 of Connect Care (see Informatics)*
- ❖ *Refer patients to PatientsFirst.ca to share their stories (see Advocacy)*

Negotiations

- Discussions between the government and the AMA continue, with the interests-based approach to negotiations allowing for some progress. The [May 30 President's Letter](#) offered an update on the ongoing discussions and the physician interests any agreement must support.

Compensation

- The [June 17 President's Letter](#) updated members on the AMA Compensation Committee's (AMACC) work to create an interim approach to the Income Equity Initiative (IEI) using the best available information. This short [five-minute video](#) provides a helpful overview of IEI, the interim measure and the factors used to compute each section's equity measure.

Informatics

- The [May 26 President's Letter](#) discussed the launch of Wave 4 of [Connect Care](#), which took place on May 28 at sites in both the Edmonton and Calgary zones. You can find a list of the sites that will be impacted on the [Connect Care Implementation Timeline](#). These changes mean that family physicians who are listed as the Primary Care Provider will notice summative documents coming to their EMRs from Connect Care sites via eDelivery. A [recent communication](#) includes further details.

COVID-19

- All mandatory public health restrictions were lifted on June 14 as the Omicron BA.2 wave subsides and COVID-19 hospitalizations continue to decline. The province has begun preparing for the fall and winter respiratory virus season by maintaining surveillance and testing programs and preparing to expand acute care capacity for short-term surges.
- [Last week's COVID-19 update](#) reported that there were 719 people in hospital with COVID, with 19 patients in the ICU – the lowest number of patients in ICU since July 31, 2021. The province also reported another 24 deaths related to COVID, bringing the total lives lost to 4,591.

Advocacy

- The AMA's [Care Deficit Assessment Series \(CDAS\)](#) continues to explore the delays Albertans are experiencing in accessing care across the health care system. So far, the series has addressed

issues such as Pediatric Mental Health, Women's Health, Care of the Elderly, Emergency Departments and Dermatology. Several other issue papers are planned.

- The AMA has set up [PatientsFirst.ca](https://patientsfirst.ca) as a place where patients can share their own care deficit experiences. The next time you or your staff have to tell a patient that you aren't accepting patients or that they must wait for a service they need, please direct them to [PatientsFirst.ca](https://patientsfirst.ca) to tell their story.
- SFM and SRM leadership continue to meet with partners and policy makers to advocate on the key concerns that matter to family physicians. This includes issues such as practice survivability, compensation, physician supply and informatics.

Physician Supply

- Several communities across the province continued to experience acute care and ED bed closures including, most recently, the communities of [Cold Lake](#), [Lac La Biche](#) and [Swan Hills](#).
- The fourth session in the Canadian Medical Association's Health Summit Series focused on [facing the health workforce challenge](#), and led to [five key takeaways](#) that focus on solutions.

Governance

- Three exceptional physician-leaders have now accepted the invitation to sit as Members-at-Large on the SFM Executive until elections take place at the SFM AGM in September. The SFM Executive thanks Dr. Heidi Fell, Dr. Katherine Kasha and Dr. Van Thuy Nguyen for stepping into these roles.

Upcoming Events, Opportunities and Deadlines

Monkeypox in Alberta: What community physicians need to know

Noon – 1 p.m., June 29, 2022

- This webinar is designed to support physicians and their teams in caring for patients with Monkeypox by providing information on testing, vaccination and clinical management. All Alberta community physicians and clinic staff who are interested in learning more about Monkeypox are invited to join this session. To register for this webinar, please use the [Zoom registration link](#).
- Dr. Jasneet Parmar from the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Alberta and her team are inviting family physicians to participate in a survey to understand your educational needs on how to better partner in the care and support of family caregivers. The survey takes about five minutes to complete and can be found using this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5TGQVLX>.