

Family Medicine Review

February 28, 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 twice a month.

Priority Notes

- ❖ *Lifting of remaining public health measures (see COVID-19)*
- ❖ *Blood tube shortage (see COVID-19)*
- ❖ *2022 Virtual Family Medicine Summit (see Upcoming Events)*

Negotiations

- The [February 25 Presidents Letter](#) discussed thoughts around the recently released provincial budget, including the need for significant health human resources strategy. The letter also updated members on the status of discussions as the AMA and government begin moving into interest-based negotiations.

Compensation

- The [February 16 President's Letter](#) noted that the enhanced virtual care codes announced on December 30, 2021 can now be billed. It included a link to a [bulletin](#) informing physicians that effective February 15, 2022, all eligible claims for enhanced virtual care codes can now be submitted.
- On Thursday, February 24 the [Government of Alberta released Budget 2022-23](#), which directed additional funds to health care with a focus on addressing capacity issues.

Informatics

- If you haven't already, please review the [Connect Care Identifiers and Launch Sequencing Update](#).

COVID-19

- Premier Jason Kenney announced that the [province will end almost all COVID-19 public health protections on Tuesday, March 1](#), including most mask mandates.
- Last week, [Alberta physicians were asked to delay non-urgent blood testing](#) due to a shortage of testing vials caused by international supply chain issues.
- Primary care providers will soon be able to prescribe Paxlovid to Alberta COVID-19 patients. Both [Paxlovid](#) and [Sotrovimab](#) were authorized by Health Canada for early treatment of COVID in January of this year. Watch for more information.

Advocacy

- 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.
- The [February 25 President's Letter](#) spoke about the work being done by the Joint Physician Advocacy Committee. JPAC is working to collect stories and information from different parts of the profession and identify ideas for resolution, innovation, and solutions.

Physician Supply

- Several communities across the province continued to experience acute care and ED bed closures, including most recently the communities of [Milk River](#), [Beaverlodge](#), and [Cold Lake](#).

Governance

- Family physician leadership have several upcoming meetings, including the SFM Executive Meeting on March 3 and the Family Medicine Meeting on March 7.
- The Spring 2022 Representative Forum meeting will be held in two parts:
 - Part 1: A one-day virtual meeting to be held Friday, March 11
 - Part 2: A two-day in-person meeting to be held May 13-14 in Calgary

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

- **2022 Virtual Family Medicine Summit – Register Today!**

March 4-6, 2022

www.familymedicinesummit.ca

The ACFP's annual Family Medicine Summit conference will be fully virtual again this year but will offer even more learning and networking options. To register, visit:

<https://web.cvent.com/event/fc91e2f2-b5ad-47e7-8821-691d6e32449e/regProcessStep1>

- **AMA Achievement Awards nominations due April 30**

The AMA is seeking nominations for its highest awards: the [Medal for Distinguished Service](#) (awarded to a physician[s]) and the [Medal of Honour](#) (awarded to a non-physician[s]). The awards will be presented at the AMA's fall 2022 annual general meeting. [Learn more and nominate.](#)

Best regards,

Dr. Craig Hodgson

President

Section of Family Medicine

Dr. Samantha Myhr

President

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