

# Family Medicine Review

March 22, 2022

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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

- ❖ *Update from Spring RF* (see Negotiations)
- ❖ *Paxlovid™ coming to primary care* (see COVID-19)
- ❖ *Enhancement to Netcare* (see Informatics)
- ❖ *Webinar on negotiations* (see Upcoming Events)

## Negotiations

- The [March 18 President's Letter](#) offered an update on the items discussed at the Spring RF, including information on negotiations, the Physician Compensation Strategy and Income Equity.
- The [March 2 President's Letter](#) expressed concerns regarding a letter from AHS providing notice that on July 1, 2022, it will implement a framework *"for assessing and recovering physician overhead costs that will be a consistent approach for AHS physician overhead across all zones, and in all facilities; urban, regional and rural. Note: Timelines are subject to pandemic response."*

## Compensation

- The March 11 AMA Representative Forum addressed many important issues, including progress on the Income Equity Initiative (IEI) and Physician Compensation Strategy. The [March 18 President's Letter](#) recaps some of the information that was shared at RF.
- 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

- An important enhancement to Netcare will occur in April, with the primary provider from the Central Patient Attachment Registry displaying in a patient's content banner in Alberta Netcare Portal. This will be a key enabler for continuity of care for Albertans. For family physicians participating in CPAR now, their March panels upload to the registry will be displayed in April in Netcare. To learn more, see [FAQ for CPAR Participants](#) or [FAQ for Netcare Users](#).

## COVID-19

- AHS released information on the referral process for patients with severe and sustained COVID-19 symptoms following a confirmed COVID-19 infection. [Read the full memo](#).
- In mid-February, [Alberta physicians were asked to delay non-urgent blood testing](#) due to a shortage of testing vials caused by international supply chain issues. Last week, a [bulletin](#) was issued indicating that the global shortage of medical-grade plastics is expected to constrain supplies for the foreseeable future. The memo also noted that although it was requesting physicians continue to limit non-essential lab testing, there are no restrictions to lab collections.

- Over the next few weeks, prescribing Paxlovid™ to eligible Alberta COVID-19 patients at high risk of severe outcomes will begin transitioning to primary care providers. Information, tools, and resources are in development and will be shared in the coming weeks. Please email [phc@ahs.ca](mailto:phc@ahs.ca) with questions.

### 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.

### Physician Supply

- Several communities across the province continued to experience acute care and ED bed closures including, most recently, the communities of [McLennan](#), [Barrhead](#), and [Wabasca](#).
- The Section of Rural Medicine is now accepting [applications for the 2022 Tarrant Scholarship](#). Applications are due by June 1.
- Alberta Health Services is moving its physician career site to a new website and platform on March 31. The recruitment site's web address will change from [www.doctorjobsalberta.com](http://www.doctorjobsalberta.com) and visitors will be redirected to the new recruitment platform once it launches.

### Governance

- The Spring 2022 Representative Forum meeting is being held in two parts:
  - Part 1: A one-day virtual meeting was held on Friday, March 11 (*completed – see Negotiations*)
  - Part 2: A two-day in-person meeting to be held May 13 & 14 in Calgary

### Upcoming Events and Deadlines

- **The Section of Family Medicine, Section of Rural Medicine and Specialty Care Alliance** will co-host a webinar to update members on negotiations. **Please save the date: evening of Tuesday, April 5.** The event will be recorded for the member-only website. Watch for more details soon.
- **The Section of Family Medicine** is currently accepting nominations for the **SFM Outstanding Service Award**, a one-time recognition award bestowed for outstanding contributions in support of SFM's bylaw purposes. Nominations are to be submitted in writing to Dr. Craig Hodgson, President, Section of Family Medicine, by active/voting members of the SFM, accompanied by a detailed letter of support, outlining why the candidate should be considered. **The deadline for this year's nominations for the SFM Outstanding Service Award is Wednesday, April 13, 2022.** Please submit your nominations by email to [sfmpres@albertadoctors.org](mailto:sfmpres@albertadoctors.org).
- **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.](#)