

# Family Medicine Review

October 12, 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 monthly.

## Priority Notes

- ❖ *New AMA President takes office (see Governance)*
- ❖ *New Pfizer bivalent vaccine approved by Health Canada (see COVID-19)*
- ❖ *RF update (see Governance)*
- ❖ *AGMs and learning opportunities (see Upcoming Events, Opportunities and Deadlines)*

## Provincial Politics

- The results of the United Conservative Party (UCP) Leadership Race were announced on October 6 and [Danielle Smith was named as the leader of the UCP](#). The official swearing-in took place on Tuesday, October 11 and Premier Smith gave her [first news conference that same day](#).

## Negotiations

- The [September 9 President's Letter](#) informed members that they would be voting on a Potential Agreement Package with government. Voting opened at 6 a.m. Tuesday, September 13 and closed Wednesday, September 28 at 4 p.m. During the ratification period, the AMA hosted three virtual members-only town halls, a number of section-specific town halls and operated discussion boards for members to share their comments and ask questions.
- Both SFM and SRM hosted town halls for their members. The recording for the SFM town hall is available [here](#) (member log-in required).
- The [September 28 President's Letter](#) advised that members ratified the agreement with a "Yes" vote from 70.2% of responding physicians. Voter turnout was 45.8%. A joint news conference with government was held the following day.

## Governance

- Fall RF was held in Calgary on September 23 and 24 and was the first in-person Fall RF since 2019. Held during the ratification period, it included extensive discussion around income equity and the Potential Ratification Package. It also explored important issues and concerns, with sessions on physician health, access to abortion and addressing social inequity in vulnerable patient populations. The panel session entitled Culture First, which was led by Dr. Samantha Myhr, SRM President, and included Dr. Scott McLeod, Registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and Dr. Alika Lafontaine, President of the Canadian Medical Association, explored the need to inspire a culture shift towards prioritizing doctors and operationalizing our values to provide better care for our patients.
- SFM held elections for various positions. The following were elected or acclaimed:
  - SFM President-Elect: Dr. Jon Hilner
  - SFM Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. Emmanuel Gye
  - SFM Executive Members-at-Large: Dr. Heidi Fell, Dr. Katherine Kasha, Dr. Van Nguyen
  - SFM Nominating Committee Member-at-Large: Dr. Patricia Verones
- Dr. Rithesh Ram was acclaimed to the position of President-Elect for SRM Executive.
- On October 3, Dr. Fredrykka Rinaldi became the AMA's 113<sup>th</sup> President during the 2022 AMA

AGM. Dr. Vesta Michelle Warren immediately assumed the role of Past President.

## COVID-19

- COVID hospitalizations rose dramatically at the end of September, [with an increase of 137 people in hospital compared to the previous week.](#)
- Due to a technical problem, [updated COVID data was unavailable on Wednesday, October 5 in advance of the Thanksgiving long weekend.](#)
- On Friday, [Health Canada announced that the new bivalent Pfizer vaccine was approved for use.](#) The Pfizer bivalent vaccine targets the most common subvariants that are currently circulating.
- The Government of Alberta recently shared a [vaccine update](#) which emphasizes the importance of keeping up to date with COVID-19 vaccine doses over the fall and winter months.

## Advocacy and Engagement

- The province's new [Modernizing Alberta's Primary Health Care System \(MAPS\)](#) initiative offers an opportunity to address the crisis in primary care. MAPS was officially announced on Friday, September 23 – during the first day of the Fall 2022 Representative Forum – and aims to identify urgently needed short and long-term improvements to the province's health care system. It will be made up of three advisory panels that include local primary health care leaders, including members of both SFM and SRM, as well as national, international, and Indigenous health experts.
- The AMA's [Care Deficit Assessment Series \(CDAS\)](#) is exploring 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, Dermatology, and the Drug Poisoning Crisis. Several other issue papers are planned.
- SFM and SRM leadership continue to meet with partners and policymakers 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 [Elk Point](#), [Consort](#) and [Sylvan Lake](#). Obstetrical services in [Westlock](#) will be paused until October 31.
- Dr. Alike Lafontaine, an anesthesiologist in Grande Prairie, Alberta, and the new President of the Canadian Medical Association, discussed the importance of a plan to increase the number of doctors and other health care professionals across the country [in a recent CBC article.](#)

## Upcoming Events, Opportunities and Deadlines

- **Section of Rural Medicine – Annual General Meeting**  
To be held virtually.

**Date:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

***Only active members of the section are eligible to vote on section business matters.***  
*Mark your calendars and watch your inbox for more information.*

- **Practical Evidence for Informed Practice 2022**  
Registration for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual PEIP 2022 is now open!

The conference is being held as a hybrid event on October 21 & 22 and will be in-person in Edmonton as well as by a live webcast.

Please plan to attend for entertaining, evidence-based reviews of clinically relevant primary care topics. Ideal for family physicians, nurses, pharmacists, Family Medicine residents and health care students. Free from industry support.

For additional information, please view the [PEIP Newsletter](#) and [PEIP Toolkit](#).

To register for PEIP 2022, please go to [www.peipconference.ca](http://www.peipconference.ca).

- **15<sup>th</sup> Annual Day in Dermatology for Family Physicians**

This program is designed for family practitioners, addressing common dermatologic conditions encountered in practice. The learning sessions will provide ample opportunity for participants to interact with the dermatology facilitators.

**Date:** October 22, 2022

**Time:** 7:15 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Location:** Red & White Club  
1833 Crowchild Trail NW  
Calgary, Alberta

**Cost:** physician \$150; residents and medical students \$35

For more information and registration, please visit the [event website](#).

**CME accreditation:** This one-credit-per-hour Group Learning program has been certified by the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Alberta Chapter for up to 4.00 Mainpro+ credits.

Best regards,

Dr. Craig Hodgson  
President  
Section of Family Medicine

Dr. Samantha Myhr  
President  
Section of Rural Medicine