

Dear Members,

The recent announcement by the WRHA "Healing our Health System" has the potential to impact the hospital-based practice of many Family Physicians in Winnipeg.

While accepting that change is required and being eager to help our health care system become more efficient for Manitobans, MCFP is concerned that the role and value of Family Physicians in the proposed new acute care system has been undermined in the following ways:

- The ability of Family Physicians to provide continuity of care to their own acute patients in all community hospitals is in jeopardy.
- Family Physicians are being asked to contribute more to the support of the acute care system during the time of transition but may ultimately lose the capacity to perform similar functions in the revised system.
- Family Physicians will not have the same opportunity to engage in continuous care across the community/acute care continuum in equal capacity in all areas of the city.

Drs Buchel, Mihalchuk and myself were fortunate to have met with Health Minister Goertzen on April 18th to relay the concerns that have been expressed by members affected by the proposed changes. We felt heard. Minister Goertzen promised to bring our concerns back to senior leadership at the WRHA.

Our recommendations to the minister in that meeting, based upon concerns raised by our members, were as follows:

- 1) An immediate strategy to mitigate the impacts on engagement with Family Physicians to maintain and protect existing relationships between the WRHA, MHSAL and Family Physicians.
- 2) WRHA to reevaluate proposed roles for Family Physicians in the revised hospital system to ensure there are equal and meaningful opportunities in the acute care sector (in particular at community hospitals) for Family Physicians across Winnipeg.
- 3) Consideration to be given to the inclusion of 24/7 Urgent Care at all community sites which would facilitate consistency in models of care across community hospitals and ensure that Family Physicians who will support these hospitals during the transition have meaningful work there after the transition is completed.
- 4) Consideration to be given to the importance of understanding how changes to the acute care health system influence other related and integrated aspects of the larger health system (i.e. the community). One sector cannot be changed without studying and managing the impact on related sectors. Unintended consequences of proposed changes need to be minimized and/or prevented expeditiously when identified to reduce harm.

Manitoba College of Family Physicians has also requested a meeting with key decision makers at WRHA, and MHSAL next week. We are hoping for an open discussion on the proposed changes in the WRHA and the impact on Family Physicians. We would welcome and encourage the sharing of your concerns or feedback in advance of that meeting to inform our conversation. Please respond to this email with your comments and concerns.

We will keep you informed as this issue progresses.
Sincerely,



Deirdre O'Flaherty MB Bch Bao CCFP

President MCFP
mbpresident@mcfp.mb.ca

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