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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

### **New strategy unveiled to recruit and retain more graduates in family medicine**

VANCOUVER – Resident medical graduates and graduating nurse practitioners will be offered positions in the new primary care networks, announced Adrian Dix, Minister of Health.

“To address the gap in primary care, we are recruiting 200 nurse practitioners and 200 family doctors, including new graduates and residents of family medicine,” Dix said. “Through implementing team-based practices, we’re making sure new doctors are supported to focus on diagnostic medicine and developing strong relationships with their patients, and receive a good salary while they are also paying down their student debt. This kind of support can encourage more residents educated and trained in B.C. to stay and serve in the province’s primary-care system.”

Through the provincial health authorities, the Province will offer graduating medical residents and nurse practitioners the opportunity to start their careers within primary-care networks in team-based practices on alternative payment arrangements, instead of the traditional fee-for-service payment plan. This means new doctors can benefit from the experience and knowledge of other health-care professionals, receive a steady level of compensation to offset any student debt they may have, and access benefits.

As part of addressing some of the factors underlying the current gap in primary care, this model answers the need for change articulated by resident doctors. A recent survey conducted by the Society of General Practitioners of BC found a majority of resident doctor respondents felt that changes are required in how primary care is delivered in British Columbia, including that an alternative physician-payment model could promote the delivery of comprehensive patient care.

The survey also found that work-life balance, including being part of a group practice or team-based care, access to vacation and parental leave, and the ability to reduce debt, were all considered important factors that would influence decisions to practise family medicine.

“Resident physicians have completed medical school and hold educational licences to deliver medical services, under the supervision of fully licensed practising physicians, and use their resident placements to gain valuable experience to determine their areas of expertise,” said Dr. David Kim, president, Resident Doctors of BC. “Having comprehensive support to experience family medicine within a team can mean greater success for new physicians, such as myself, as well as meeting the needs of primary care patients in British Columbia.”

A new outreach team is being established to begin the work of recruiting for the 200 recently announced positions for doctors, and 200 positions for nurse practitioners that are part of the Province’s plan to increase access to primary care for all British Columbians. Outreach will

commence this summer to current general practitioner and nurse practitioner graduates, and will provide personal support from the initial stages of expressing interest and through the first year of practice.

By supporting more doctors and nurse practitioners to join primary-care networks and team-based practices, more families will have access to a greater number of primary-care providers for their day-to-day health needs. This approach also addresses shortages faced with the growing number of doctors retiring, allowing for a gradual transition of patients and avoiding the loss of access to primary care for patients.

This supports the B.C. government's recently announced primary health-care strategy, which focuses on delivering faster and improved access to team-based health care for British Columbians in all parts of the province.

**Quick Facts:**

- In 2018, 170 family physicians will complete residency from the University of British Columbia.
- British Columbia has more than 1,300 medical residents providing care to patients in urban and rural communities throughout the province.

**Learn More:**

To learn more about the Province's Primary Care Strategy, visit:  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0034-001010>

To learn more about the Society of General Practitioners of BC survey, visit:  
<https://sgp.bc.ca/sgp-survey-of-family-medicine-residents/>

To learn more about the Province's strategy to increase the number of nurse practitioners, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018HLTH0034-000995>

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