



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026



uOttawa

# Indigenous Affirmation

*Ni manàdjiyànànig Màmìwininì Anishinàbeg, ogog kà nàgadawàbandadjig iyo aki eko weshkad. Ako nongom ega wikàd kì mìgiwewàdj.*

*Ni manàdjiyànànig kakina Anishinàbeg ondaje kaye ogog kakina eniyagizidjig enigokamigàg Kanadàng eji ondàpinangig endàwàdjìn Odàwàng.*

*Ninisidawinawànànig kenawendamòdjig kije kikenindamàwin; weshkinìgidjig kaye kejeyàdizidjig.*

*Nigijeweninmànànig ogog kà nìgànì sòngideyedjig; weshkad, nongom; kaye àyànikàdj.*

Nous rendons hommage au peuple algonquin, gardien traditionnel de cette terre. Nous reconnaissons le lien sacré de longue date l'unissant à ce territoire qui demeure non cédé.

Nous rendons également hommage à tous les peuples autochtones qui habitent Ottawa, qu'ils soient de la région ou d'ailleurs au Canada.

Nous reconnaissons les gardiens des savoirs traditionnels, jeunes et âgés.

Nous honorons aussi leurs courageux dirigeants d'hier, d'aujourd'hui et de demain.

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their longstanding relationship with this territory, which remains unceded.

We pay respect to all Indigenous people in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home.

We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old.

And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, and future.

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# Advancing the discipline of family medicine – *Leading the change we want to see in the world*

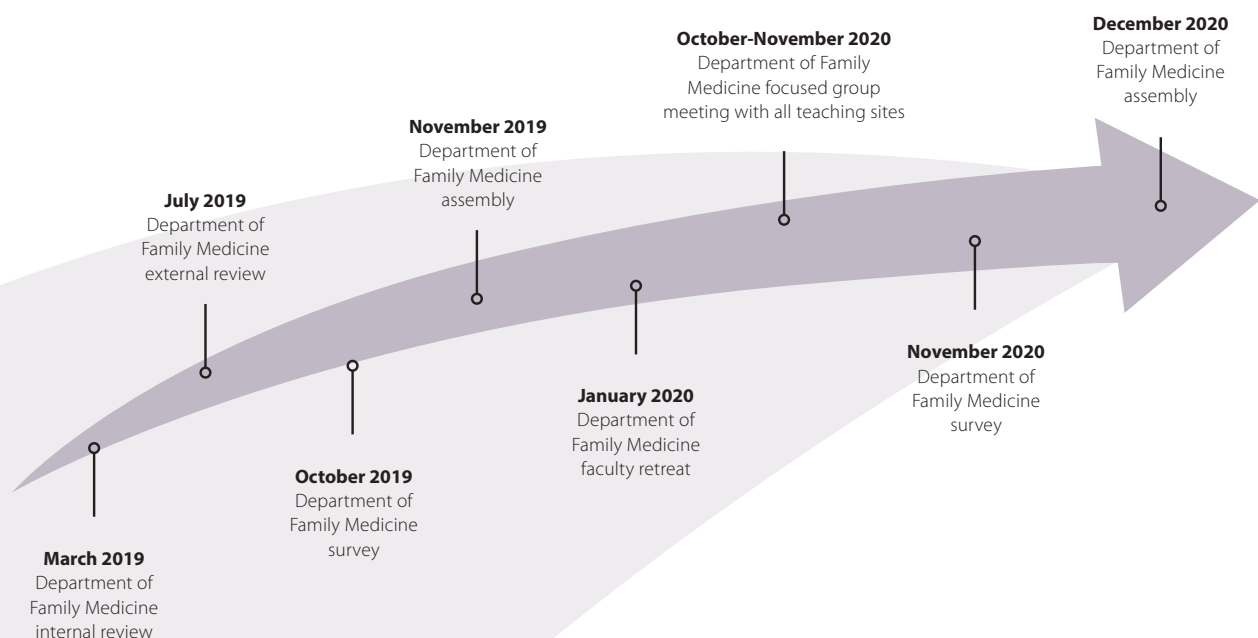
Our strategic plan for 2021-2026 is a robust blueprint and response to the changing dynamics of the discipline of family medicine and our broader society. As leaders in family medicine, we pledge to uphold the four pillars of our strategic plan, which together will support the Department in its mission for the years to come:

- **Promote the value of family medicine as a discipline** through the support of our learners, faculty, and staff
- **Provide excellence in education** by supporting interdepartmental collaboration and leveraging tools for a digital age
- **Foster research and innovation** by strengthening research capacity and creating a bilingual, multidisciplinary learning environment
- **Pursue a mandate of social accountability**, with a focus on improving health equity and access in our community and beyond

The Department of Family Medicine's strategic direction is aligned with the University of Ottawa's Transformation 2030 pillars and the Faculty of Medicine's current strategic plan with its overall mission of *Leading Innovation for a Healthier World*. As leaders in family medicine, we aim to take advantage of infrastructure investments at the University level, which will support our strategic goals for the next five years. We strive to have a common voice as we advance the delivery of evidence-based medical education, medical practice, and health services through research, scholarship, and teaching. With a strong social accountability foundation, engaged leadership, and a focus on building relationships both locally and globally, we will work together with our communities to build a healthier and sustainable future for everyone.

## Methods – Looking back as we move forward

The Department of Family Medicine engaged in a comprehensive consultative process beginning in the spring of 2019. We looked at our past achievements and collaborated with the members of our community to determine where we needed to focus our efforts to achieve a healthier future for everyone. Those community consultations included the following:



# Champlain LHIN

## Sub-Region Snapshot Easter Champlain



**201,975 people (15.7% of Champlain)**

### Eastern Champlain (EC)

### Champlain (CH)

<b>9%</b>	Identify as Indigenous	<b>3%</b>
<b>42%</b>	Speak French as their Mother Tongue	<b>19%</b>
<b>2%</b>	Mother Tongue Other Than French or English	<b>14%</b>
<b>20%</b>	Age 65 and Older	<b>17%</b>
<b>22%</b>	Age 19 and Younger	<b>23%</b>



## Healthy Behaviours

### Eastern Champlain (EC)

### Champlain (CH)

<b>74%</b>	Non-smoker	<b>81%</b>
<b>34%</b>	5+ fruits and vegetables	<b>37%</b>
<b>73%</b>	Within low risk drinking guidelines	<b>71%</b>
<b>54%</b>	Active during leisure time	<b>60%</b>
<b>81%</b>	Breastfeeding	<b>90%</b>



# Message from the Chair



As Chair of the Department of Family, I would like to thank everyone who contributed to developing our five-year strategic plan. This journey began in March of 2019 with an internal review, followed by several information-gathering sessions, visits to each of the sites, culminating in working groups at the Annual General Assembly and a survey at the close of 2020. A common message emerged throughout the engagement sessions: **“we are only as good as our people”**.

The past two years have been one of change and new challenges due to the global pandemic. I believe the groundwork that was done to prepare this strategic plan has already provided us with the framework to allow us to persevere in the years to come.

This document outlines the four main pillars, our roadmap, that will guide our actions and set the direction for the Department. Our plan is strategically aligned with the University’s Transformation 2030 plan and the Faculty of Medicine’s five-year strategic plan. We will continue to support the people who make this Department a great place to work and support our community – **YOU!**

This document will allow us to speak with a common voice, advance evidence-based medical education, support innovative research and scholarship, and prepare our residents for their future in family medicine.

So I invite you all to read the Strategic Plan and join us on our five-year journey.

**Dr. Clare Liddy**, Chair  
Department of Family Medicine

# Vision, mission and values

## **Vision**

As leaders in Family Medicine, we deliver excellent education, innovative research, and strong advocacy to support high-quality, sustainable primary care in both official languages.

## **Mission**

Through dedicated engagement and commitment, we advance the discipline of family medicine and prepare learners to excel as Family Physicians by:

- Providing learner-centered medical education, modeling quality patient-centered care, and responding to community needs
- Advancing the delivery of evidence-based medical education, medical practice, and health services through research, scholarship, and teaching
- Advocating locally, nationally, and internationally through academic, professional, and government organizations for comprehensive and accessible patient care

## **Values**

Compassion, diversity, inclusion, integrity, professionalism, respect, social accountability, sustainability, transparency, wellness

## Department of Family Medicine Strategic priorities

# The 4 pillars

### PILLAR 1 Our People

Our learners, faculty members, staff, and the patients they serve are the foundation of our Department. To deliver the best family medicine program, we commit to providing the support, tools, and resources required to promote faculty, staff, and learner well-being.

### PILLAR 2 Education

The Department is committed to supporting learners as they develop the skills needed to provide Canadians with comprehensive primary care. Our faculty must deliver evidence-based education adapted to the changing landscape of the society we serve.







## PILLAR 3

### Research & Innovation

Supporting research is a core part of the Department's mission. We are building research expertise, continuously seeking out funding, maximizing existing infrastructure, and partnerships to advance research in primary care for all Canadians.

## PILLAR 4

### Social Accountability

Social accountability will remain a guiding principle in our learning environment and a critical component for training our future doctors and improving the health care of our population. We will promote an atmosphere of social accountability through all Departmental initiatives focusing on improving health equity in our community and beyond.



# Promote the value of family medicine as a discipline

Our learners, faculty members, staff, and the patients they serve are the foundation of our Department. To deliver the best family medicine program, we commit to providing the support, tools, and resources required to promote faculty, staff, and learner well-being. We want to provide everything **“Our People”** need to ensure a healthy social culture of inclusion, growth, and professionalism. The focus is on creating a healthy work environment and work-life balance to prevent burnout. We commit to promoting a team-based approach, improving collaboration across the Department, and emphasizing valuing and recognizing the contributions of all **“Our People.”** We want an engaged team that looks forward to getting up every day to be their best and work at the Department.

### GOALS

- Support wellness among **“Our People”**
- Recognize achievement throughout the Department
- Foster a transparent, open, inclusive culture
- Encourage personal and professional growth
- Provide opportunities to socialize
- Encourage feedback



# Strategies to Achieve Goals

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## **Recognize Achievement throughout the Department**

Recognizing individual contributions is important to support excellence and build a sense of community among **"Our People."** Such recognition helps people feel like they are making a difference and supports a sense of belonging. People's motivation to work hard and see the Department succeed increases when they know their contributions are being seen and valued, and acknowledged.

The Department is developing an Enhanced Recognition Program to ensure excellence is recognized in collaboration with existing Faculty of Medicine award programs. The program will create new awards, overseen by an awards committee to identify and celebrate the educational work of **"Our People."** In addition, the Department will strive to ensure continuous engagement and recognition throughout the year through both formal and informal feedback, from the "Well Done!" in a meeting to official award ceremonies.

## **Foster a Transparent, Open, Inclusive Culture**

We strive to create a culture of transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability that allows people from all backgrounds to feel welcome. Knowing that the Department is open to change and accepting of all people brings strength and new, fresh ideas.

Through our diversity, we will grow and find the best in everyone. We will empower **"Our People"** to be accountable for themselves, their lives, and their work. Empowerment and accountability provide our people with control, and with control comes buy-in, inclusion, and a sense of community. We will engage in diverse hiring practices to ensure that our team at the DFM is reflective of the country as a whole.

## **Support Wellness among "Our People"**

We want to foster an environment where **"Our People"** can flourish and be their best selves in the coming years. Being your best self requires holism, an awareness of one's mental, physical, and spiritual selves, with all three kept in balance. This requires taking ownership of one's health and happiness. To succeed, **"Our People"** need to be self-aware and understand what causes changes to their behaviour and how to deal with them.

To this end, we will equip **"Our People"** with the tools they need to ensure a holistic balance. For example, we will increase the visibility of the Wellness Program services available from the University by advertising in common areas and engaging through email outreach. We will provide training to **"Our People"** on reaching a holistic equilibrium and supporting holism among friends, family, and co-workers. Sessions will apply to a broad range of individual needs, helping those seeking equilibrium obtain it and those already there to maintain or improve it.

**"Wellness is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"**

**– The World Health Organization**

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## Encourage Personal and Professional Growth

Growth is an essential part of a healthy and balanced work environment. It's also a smart long-term investment. Allowing **"Our People"** to develop new skills and adopt new and more advanced roles over time builds commitment to the Department, improves employee retention, and makes for a more successful team. As such, we will furnish **"Our People"** with opportunities for growth on a regular basis.

We will continue to deliver innovative faculty development sessions to support people in all of the vital roles across our Department, including teachers, scholars, leaders, administrators, and physicians, and ensure opportunities to collaborate within and outside the Department. As part of a proudly bilingual University, we will support francophone teaching and advocate for a bilingual environment. In addition, we will create more junior leadership positions to help develop essential skills among newer faculty members and deliver a mentorship program pairing new and established faculty members to provide guidance with promotions, career progression, and leadership development. We will promote from within where possible and encourage **"Our People"** to seek promotion, giving **"Our People"** the opportunity to grow into new roles that suit their burgeoning talents. Our goal will be that 50% of all employees eligible for promotion apply.

## Provide Opportunities to Socialize

Be it a backyard barbeque in July or a Beavertail on the Rideau Canal in February, social events are a key way to foster inclusiveness, collaboration, communication, and fun! We will encourage **"Our People"** to build new social circles and nourish existing ones through training and professional development events, continuing education, and mentorship opportunities. We will also hold several social events throughout the year in the form of retreats, outdoor BBQ events, and maybe slaying the competition in a Dragon Boat race.

## Encourage Feedback

Everyone needs to feel that their work is valued, and regular feedback is a meaningful way to achieve this. Regular, consistent feedback allows us to celebrate **"Our People"** when they succeed and identify when someone may be struggling, and find ways to help. The Department will continue to perform annual reviews, in which **"Our People"** can discuss their performance and set goals for the coming year. However, feedback is more than a once-a-year meeting. It should be regular and supportive, from formal accolades to a casual "good work!" at the end of a meeting. We will work to create a culture of feedback where people know how they're doing and feel comfortable asking for guidance where needed. Finally, we will develop new awards to recognize the range of talents among **"Our People,"** renew our commitment to employee retention and provide funding for professional development activities.



# Provide excellence in education

The Department is committed to supporting learners as they develop the skills needed to provide Canadians with comprehensive primary care. Our faculty must deliver evidence-based education adapted to the changing landscape of the society we serve. In addition, we must ensure our curriculum covers topics of social accountability and addresses cultural sensitivities, allowing learners to provide informed, respectful care to all patients. Additionally, as the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us, we must also be adaptable in the way we educate our learners, as they must be in the way they ultimately provide care. Ensuring a swift and seamless transition between in-person and online learning is vital to a successful curriculum going forward.

### GOALS

- Leverage digital innovation to deliver innovative teaching strategies
- Develop curricula for a digital age
- Encourage collaboration and establish a common message
- Address topics and context of equity, diversity, and inclusion in our teachings
- Evolve our curriculum to be responsive to the needs of the populations we care for

# Strategies to Achieve Goals

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## **Leverage Digital Innovation to Deliver Innovative Teaching Strategies**

We will continue to enrich the learner experience with innovative technological opportunities. For example, we have already started exploring the gamification of curricula to make certain topics fun and enjoyable for our new learners and will continue to develop these strategies without taking away from the current teaching methods. These new tools will supplement our learners' teachings today, using engaging psychosocial elements to help our learners retain information and increase their knowledge base.

## **Encourage Collaboration and Establish a Common Message**

Improving teaching and content delivery requires delivering a standard message in both official languages to all learners. A consistent message is best achieved when teachers are delivering from a common set of teachings. The Department will work to create a virtual library of teaching resources, including support for remediation and learner support. In addition, we will ensure a consistent, up-to-date, and transparent pedagogy by centralizing the curriculum in a learning management system and assigning ownership of topics to subject matter experts to maintain. Additionally, we will aim to increase collaboration and cross-learning between undergrad and postgrad levels and the English and French streams to reinforce a common Family Medicine message.

## **Develop Curricula for a Digital Age**

The pace of education and daily life is increasing, an aging population is putting growing strain on the healthcare system, and the resources are not keeping pace. Therefore, future professionals will need to learn faster and work smarter, not harder. These challenges demand a modern curriculum to teach learners to serve their population using the latest tools. In addition, the Department will prioritize hybrid-learning opportunities with online and in-person components and stay abreast of the latest tools and strategies to ensure learners emerge with the skills needed to provide digital care, and teach patients who may be less familiar with online solutions. Additionally, we will invest in integrated scheduling and evaluation software to improve resident rotations and placements while providing our educators with the latest technological tools to deliver a state-of-the-art curriculum in both official languages.



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### **Address Topics and Context of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Our Teachings**

The past year has witnessed a global reckoning over issues of racism and other forms of discrimination. As stewards of the next generation of health professionals, we must encourage learners to participate in and lead these much-needed changes towards a more just and inclusive society. We will work with experts to update our curricula to address racism, unconscious bias, and cultural sensitivities.

### **Evolve our Curriculum to Address the Needs of the Populations We Care For**

As the Baby Boomer Generation ages, healthcare providers face new challenges in furnishing their care. Innovation is needed to care for the needs of this population, including the better provisioning of homecare to reduce the risk of exposure to pathogens at clinics and hospitals and a greater focus on palliative services to make their final moments as comfortable as possible. In addition, we will explore strategies to improve homecare delivery for patients, leveraging technology through virtual appointments and other tools while also offering more support for home visits and in-home care.



# Foster research and innovation

Supporting research is a core part of the Department's mission. We are building research expertise, continuously seeking out funding, maximizing existing infrastructure, and partnerships to advance research in primary care for all Canadians. Key areas of focus include 1) Improvement to Health Systems and Delivery of Primary Health Care, 2) Medical Education, and 3) Global Health and Social Accountability. In addition, we have aligned our research commitment to that of CIHR's Strategic Plan (2021-2031), the Faculty of Medicine Strategic Plan, and the University of Ottawa Strategic Plan.

### GOALS

- Strengthen health research capacity throughout the Department
- Promote family medicine as a research discipline
- Support bilingualism in all our research activities
- Encourage multidisciplinary learning

# Strategies to Achieve Goals

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## **Strengthen Health Research Capacity throughout the Department**

The Department is home to many impressive programs of research, including equitable access to care, care for vulnerable populations; virtual care; predictive analytics; and educational technologies, to name a few. We intend to build on this solid foundation in the coming years and continue developing the knowledge and tools necessary to lead family medicine. We will establish a research support unit with project coordination and data management expertise for non-funded research and projects that do not yet have operational support. In addition, we will coordinate access to essential research tools for large research projects, including communication, document management, and data hosting. Furthermore, we will support community-based scholarly and research activities focused on primary health care through the OPEN network.

## **Promote Family Medicine as a Research Discipline**

Family medicine has long been wrongly perceived as a discipline less focused on research than other specialties. We will combat this misperception by encouraging learners to pursue research interests and providing ample opportunities to support them in these endeavours. To provide opportunities for interested learners, we will leverage the Departmental mentorship program's research stream to help recruits join established research programs. We will also encourage long-term career building for learners interested in becoming researchers and clinician-investigators by creating sustainable support programs aligned with these career paths (CSP PGY3, Junior Research Chair, Tier I, Tier II Research Chair).

## **Support bilingualism in all our research activities**

Bilingualism is a key component of the Department's identity and a vital way to ensure care that reflects the needs of the local population. The Ottawa region is home to a significant Francophone minority, and encouraging new French-speaking physicians, helps ensure that this population can receive care in their mother tongue. In addition, we will provide representation of both official languages across Department activities, including workshops, grand rounds, recruitment, mentoring, and awards.

## **Encourage Multidisciplinary Learning**

A successful practitioner of family medicine requires a broad skillset. We value allowing learners to study and collaborate across disciplines and generate skills and ideas outside of their primary stream of focus. In recognition of the collaborative roles played by family medicine and public health in advancing community care, we will explore the integration of these two disciplines with guidance from the [\*Practical Playbook\*](#), a resource for helping public health and primary care work together to improve population health.

We will also encourage learners to seek opportunities to collaborate outside their discipline and develop advanced interdisciplinary degrees through partnerships with other departments, such as the School of Epidemiology and Public Health, the Department of Innovation in Medical Education, and the Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services. Additionally, we will create strategies to further explore research with the Department through an MSc in Family Medicine and encourage international collaboration through partnerships with other institutions (e.g., University of Dundee, Edinburgh University, University of Alberta).



## PILLAR 4: Social Accountability

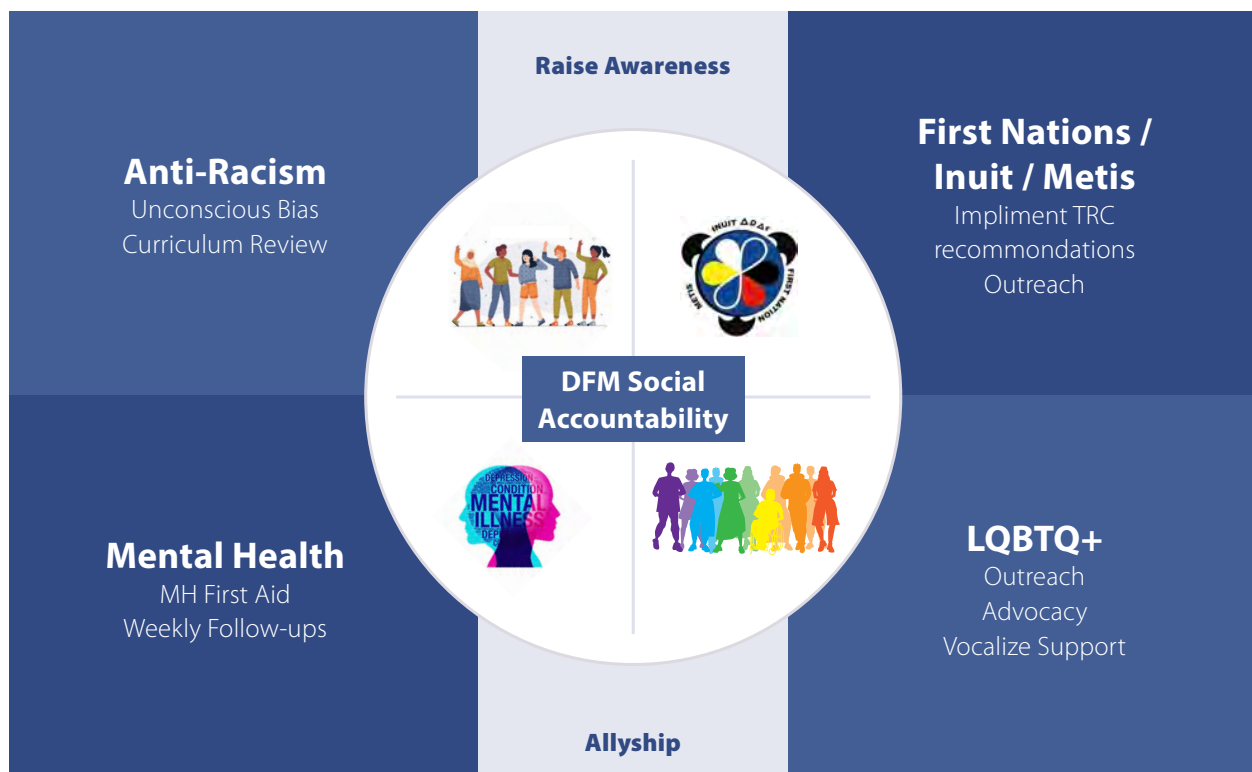
# Pursue a Mandate of Social Accountability

Social accountability will remain a guiding principle in our learning environment and a critical component for training our future doctors and improving the health care of our population. We will promote an atmosphere of social accountability through all Departmental initiatives focusing on improving health equity in our community and beyond. In addition, we will develop strategies to improve community health access and support unattached primary care patients by working with community partners.

Our approach will be multi-dimensional, responsive, and committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

### GOALS

- Improve care for Indigenous communities
- Engage la Francophonie
- Increase outreach to rural, remote, and underserved communities
- Support patients unattached to primary care
- Foster an environment of anti-racism
- Pursue a global approach to family medicine



# Strategies to Achieve Goals

## Improve Care for Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities continue to face poorer health outcomes and reduced access to care. The Truth and Reconciliation Committee released a Call to Action to redress the inequities faced by Canada's Indigenous communities. Among the 94 items are seven that pertain specifically to healthcare and which have informed our efforts to improve Indigenous care:

1. Acknowledge that the current state of Indigenous health in Canada directly results from previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and recognize and implement Indigenous people's healthcare rights as identified in international law, constitutional law, and the Treaties.
2. Establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends.
3. Recognize, respect, and address the distinct health needs of the Métis, Inuit, and off-reserve Indigenous peoples.
4. Provide sustainable funding for existing and new Indigenous healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools and ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority.
5. Recognize the value of Indigenous healing practices and use them to treat Indigenous patients in collaboration with Indigenous healers and Elders, where requested by Indigenous patients.
6. Increase the number of Indigenous professionals working in the healthcare field, ensure the retention of Indigenous healthcare providers in Indigenous communities, and provide cultural competency training for all healthcare professionals.
7. Require all students and encourage all faculty members to take a course dealing with Indigenous health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices.

The Department will aim to meet each of the above goals, through changes to curricula (e.g., teaching the distinct health needs of Indigenous communities and the history of healthcare inequity faced by these groups, inclusion of Indigenous healing practices and resources, cultural competency training), and greater outreach (e.g., increasing the number of Indigenous students through community outreach). In addition, in areas with no direct control, such as funding Indigenous health centres, the Department will leverage its resources and partnerships to advocate for support at the regional, provincial, and national levels.

## Engage La Francophonie

Ontario's Francophone communities face their own challenges in accessing care, particularly when seeking medical services in their first language. We will work with the Department of Francophone Affairs to Advance Francophonie medical education by continuing to provide learning, teaching, and research opportunities in French. This will include taking a deep dive into the needs and unique requirements of the Francophone stream, seeking additional funding to support the differences in curriculum delivery, and growing the program by 25% in the next five years.

## Increase Outreach to Rural and Underserved Communities

Working with our existing community partners, we will endeavor to improve access to primary care with a focus on rural, remote, and underserved communities. We will advocate for creating a Rural Centre of Excellence, highlighting the challenges facing rural and remote communities and how best to address them. In addition, we will identify the unique circumstances of community and rural medicine, examine the economic sustainability model of remote clinics, and explore how technology can be leveraged to increase access to underserved areas.

### **Support Patients Unattached to Primary Care**

Approximately 7% of adults in Ontario do not have a dedicated PCP. These individuals, called “unattached patients,” face many challenges in accessing the healthcare system. As the first point of contact and gateway to most specialty services, PCPs are vital in ensuring that patients get the care they need. PCPs are also the providers that patients have known the longest and the ones they trust most. All of these factors mean that unattached patients face several disadvantages.

To help rectify this issue in our region and beyond, the Department will commit to exploring ways to reach unattached patients and improve their access to care. Activities will include investigating existing services across Canada geared towards reaching unattached patients and seeking strategies to modify existing applications, such as the Champlain BASE™ eConsult service, to support this underserved group.

### **Foster an Environment of Anti-Racism through Multi-Culturalism**

The Department will take the lead in addressing racial injustices and advocating for all people's equal treatment. We will champion this initiative through the development of an anti-racism curriculum for Family Medicine residents. This process will include a review of the current curriculum to identify gaps or areas that require revision and updating learning modules to reflect our more diverse society. We will also encourage diversity in our faculty and support faculty development programs for individuals from underrepresented populations. Additionally, we will collaborate with local groups on raising awareness of the struggles racialized and Indigenous communities face, and help raise their voice until they are heard, and concrete actions exemplify real change.

### **Pursue a Global Approach to Family Medicine**

The Department will continue to develop its global footprint by establishing competent family care physicians in communities of need. We will continue to work closely with our partners seeking to advance equity of care for underserved groups in Canada and beyond its borders. Working with our partners,


Ottawa Public Health, the Canadian Red Cross, and the Besrour Centre, the Department seeks to improve health outcomes in developing countries by increasing access to high-quality primary care. Additionally, we will build on our existing partnerships with hospitals across the Champlain region, including TOH, Bruyère, Montfort, Winchester, Pembroke, Hawkesbury, Arnprior, and Cornwall, and work with them to advance primary care for all patients.





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