



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

**Province's first Family Practice Network launched in Central**

**For immediate release – June 27, 2018**

**Grand Falls-Windsor** – Today the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association (NLMA) and the provincial Family Practice Renewal Program (FPRP) launched the province's first Family Practice Network (FPN). The Shalloway Family Practice Network will bring together family physicians throughout Central Newfoundland to provide a coordinated physician voice in primary care planning at the regional level. Two additional Family Practice Networks are also in development in St. John's and the Western region, which will be launched later in 2018.

"The creation of Family Practice Networks will allow family doctors to organize in a way that they never have before," said Dr. Lynette Powell, family physician in Grand Falls-Windsor and member of the NLMA Board of Directors.

"Each FPN provides a structure that will allow family doctors to meet and identify service gaps, and address common health care issues in their communities. Our goal is to reposition family doctors as leaders within their regions and improve the delivery of family medicine to patients at the local level," she added.

The FPRP was established under the 2013-2017 Memorandum of Agreement between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association. It is co-governed by the NLMA, the provincial government and the four Regional Health Authorities. The program is now in the process of designing new initiatives that will lay the foundation for greater access for patients; better care for people with chronic disease; increased attachment between physicians and patients; and, improved physician recruitment and retention. One of the core initiatives of the program is the creation of physician-governed Family Practice Networks.

"While the provincial program provides support and general direction to Family Practice Networks, the local approach allows and encourages each Network to focus on the needs of its own physicians and their patients," said Ms. Glenda Nash, Program Director of the FPRP.

"Decision makers from each RHA will also work with Family Practice Networks as part of Collaborate Service Committees that will co-design programs to improve local primary health care," said Ms. Nash.

Physicians in Central, named their Family Practice Network after a Shalloway – a large boat that helps smaller fishing vessels ferry their catch to shore. The name is symbolic, in that the Shalloway Family Practice Network intends to bring together individual family physicians from across the region under one, united FPN.

"All communities in the Central region experience similar challenges with respect to community-based primary care," said Dr. Jared Butler, family physician in Grand Falls-Windsor and Chair of the Shalloway FPN.

"We intend to cultivate a culture of collaboration and coordination in order to address such issues as recruitment and retention, care for the elderly, and mental health needs of our youth. We also intend to enhance the relationship with Central Health by facilitating greater input into policy decisions."

There are close to 100 family physicians working in different practice settings in 17 communities throughout the Central region. Over the coming months, the Shalloway Family Practice Network will increase its recruitment efforts to bring more fee-for-service and salaried family doctors into the network.

“Many of us have stayed for the long haul because we love this region and we are committed to our patients in our communities. We believe that by working together we can help to create practice environments that will entice more physicians to choose to practice here to ensure that all patients in our region receive the care they need and deserve,” said Dr. Butler.

**Shalloway Family Practice Network Board Members include:**

- Chair – Dr. Jared Butler, Grand Falls-Windsor
- Vice Chair – Dr. Wayne Collins, Lewisporte
- Treasurer – Dr. Raie Lene Kirby, Botwood
- Dr. Carmel Casey, Gander
- Dr. Francois de Wet, Baie Verte
- Dr. Jody Woolfrey, Botwood
- Dr. Robert Butler, Grand Falls-Windsor
- Dr. Helen Bruce, Bishop's Falls

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