



**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

NLMA calls on Eastern Health to address vaccine inequity among physicians

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The NLMA is calling on Eastern Health to address the vaccine inequity among physicians in the province. Eastern Health has chosen to vaccinate the physicians inside their facilities, but unlike the other three regional health authorities, they overlooked doctors in community-based practices. Physicians outside the eastern region have been vaccinated or have been scheduled to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, including private community-based physicians; however, most community-based physicians within the Eastern Health region have not.

“Why is it that all RHAs have decided to vaccinate community-based physicians, except Eastern Health?” asked Dr. Lynette Powell, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association and family physician in Grand Falls-Windsor.

“This represents an inequity within the physician workforce that must be addressed. Community-based physicians in the eastern region deserve the same treatment as physicians in all other areas of the province.”

Physicians outside hospitals are on the front line of health care delivery and have continued to be throughout the pandemic. They see patients in their exam rooms, during home visits and they provide palliative care to those who are near the end of life. The health care system has relied on these doctors to provide continuity to patients when services were being shut down.

“Community-based physicians see patients who are often the most medically vulnerable as they require the most intense monitoring. This care is insured by MCP and is medically necessary. It cannot be put off. Other regional health authorities outside the eastern region have recognized that family physicians are indistinguishable from frontline health care providers in hospitals. There is a massive disconnect in the eastern region that needs to be resolved right away,” said Dr. Powell.

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