

# President's Letter

September 18, 2023



Gerard Farrell, MD

## Administrative Burden Survey Results; NLMA seeking Expressions of Interest for Administrative Burden Committee

Dear Colleagues:

In April, the NLMA asked members to participate in a survey on administrative burden, which is regularly identified as a common challenge among physicians during our consultations. The NLMA would like to extend a sincere thanks to all those who took part in the survey. Your feedback was essential for demonstrating the impact administrative burden has on physicians and their practices.

The NLMA commissioned Narrative Research to survey members to quantify the level of administrative burden and establish an inventory of types of administrative burden. The findings reveal that, **on average, physicians are spending a day and a half per week (10.8 hours) on administrative tasks.** Furthermore, respondents indicated that, on average, one-half of the time they are spending on administrative tasks is inefficient. Completion of medical forms, duplication of reports in the electronic medical record (EMR) and preparing doctor notes were the top three contributors of administrative inefficiency.

**On average, physicians spend 42 per cent of their time on administrative tasks outside of clinic time,** either in the evenings or on weekends. This is having a negative impact on aspects of physician health and well-being, job satisfaction, and productivity. Two-thirds of physicians identified increased burnout as one of the top three consequences of administration inefficiency, and close to six in ten reported it is negatively impacting their work/life balance.

Survey respondents estimate that more than one-third of inefficient administrative tasks could be streamlined through better processes or technology, while one-third could be completed by another role or individual. Respondents felt that just under one-third of these tasks could be eliminated altogether without any negative impact.

The NLMA recognizes that reducing administrative burden is an important factor in addressing persistent recruitment and retention challenges. By addressing this growing burden on physicians, we can begin to improve workplace satisfaction, reduce stress, and improve patient access.

The NLMA and the Department of Health and Community Services have agreed to establish a committee to guide, design and oversee the implementation of initiatives to reduce physician administrative inefficiencies. It will initially focus on NLPDP special authorization forms and EMR duplication. The NLMA has also proposed that the Department hire a full-time project coordinator to assist the committee in achieving its mandate.

### EOI: Physician Administrative Burden Committee

The Physician Administrative Burden Committee will be comprised of both family physicians and consultants, along with representatives from the Department of Health and Community Services, Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, the Family Practice Networks, and eDOCSNL.

NLMA is inviting **consultants** to submit expressions of interest to represent the NLMA on the joint Committee (the committee already has family medicine representation from the FPNs' Less Paperwork Working Group).

**Please provide your Expression of Interest and your CV via this [form](#) by September 30, 2023.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gerard Farrell".

Gerard Farrell  
President

The logo for the Newfoundland &amp; Labrador Medical Association, featuring a stylized, cursive "NLMA" in black.

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