

MORE ONTARIO DOCTORS PRACTICING FAMILY HEALTH CARE IN TEAMS

McGuinty Government Transforming Access To Family Health Care

NEWS

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As a result of the number of Ontario doctors practicing in group settings such as Family Health Teams, Ontario families are experiencing improved access to family health care.

The number of doctors practicing family health care in group payment models has skyrocketed by 181 per cent in the past four years. Over 6,600 primary health care physicians participated in a team model in 2007-2008, up from 2,370 doctors in 2003-2004. The finding is significant because team-based delivery of health care is expected to play a major role in the future of family health care.

Findings released earlier today from The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) also indicate the number of full-time primary care physicians practicing in a team setting is on the rise. Further, the survey concludes that the vast majority of younger physicians are practicing in a group setting.

The survey indicates that 10 per cent of doctors are accepting new patients, though the CPSO admits that this number is probably "somewhat lower than the actual percentage." In 2007-2008, 82.3 per cent of primary care physicians who worked in group models signed up 265,482 new patients, according to new Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care statistics. On average, these doctors signed up 49 new patients each in 2007-2008.

Today's CPSO release is another positive example of how the McGuinty Government is transforming the way the province delivers health care to patients in Ontario. Through innovative team-based initiatives, the government is delivering on its commitment to increase access to family health care and to reduce emergency room wait times.

QUOTE

"These results show that our government's plan for health care is working," said George Smitherman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "Nearly seven million more Ontarians are receiving care from doctors in a team setting."

QUICK FACTS

- More doctors than ever before were issued medical licenses last year – up 11 per cent over the previous high in 2006
- The number of independent practice certificates issued to International Medical Graduates (IMG) was 275, the highest in more than 20 years, and marked the seventh straight year of increased issuance of these certificates to IMGs.

- Within the younger full-time primary care physician group (aged 34 and younger) the vast majority, 87.2 per cent, practice in a clinical group
- Physicians working in group settings are more likely to take new patients.

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