

National medical organizations come together to examine how virtual care can improve access and quality

Task force on virtual care to also assess feasibility of national licensure in Canada

Ottawa, ON – March 18, 2019 – The Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (Royal College) and the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) are launching a task force to examine virtual care technology and how it can improve access and quality of care for patients from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

The task force will identify what regulatory changes are required for physicians to deliver care to patients within and across provincial/territorial boundaries while also addressing its administrative challenges. In addition, the task force will explore how health information can be effectively captured and available to both physicians and patients.

“It is time for our policies and regulations to evolve to today’s available technology. Removing barriers can lead to improved access to care for all Canadians,” says Dr. Gigi Osler, President of the CMA.

“This is a timely opportunity to improve access and communication between patients and their doctors,” says Dr. M. Ian Bowmer, President of the Royal College. “Together, we’re laying the groundwork for an innovative approach to delivering care to patients.”

“The CFPC is leading family medicine into adopting new ways of helping family doctors care for their patients in all communities across the country,” adds Dr. Paul Sawchuk, the CFPC’s President. “This physician-led taskforce will support our members in continuing to provide quality, compassionate care through virtual interactions.”

A 2018 Ipsos poll confirmed that 7 in 10 Canadians say they would take advantage of virtual physician visits if they were available, and 9 out of 10 physicians support either a national licensure regime or universal recognition of provincial/territorial licensure.

The task force is expected to complete its work by the end of 2019, with recommendations put forth in early 2020. The task force will be comprised of representatives from regulatory bodies, medical and healthcare organizations, eHealth industry, among other experts.

About the CMA

Since 1867, the Canadian Medical Association has been the national voice of Canada's medical profession. We work with physicians, residents and medical students on issues that matter to the profession and the health of Canadians. We advocate for policy and programs that drive meaningful change for physicians and their patients.

About the Royal College

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada is the national, not-for-profit organization that oversees the medical education of specialists in Canada by setting high standards for postgraduate medical education and continuing professional development. In collaboration with health organizations and government agencies, the Royal College also plays a role in developing sound health policy in Canada.

About the College of Family Physicians of Canada

The CFPC is the professional organization that represents more than 38,000 members across the country. The College establishes the standards for and accredits postgraduate family medicine training in Canada's 17 medical schools. It reviews and certifies continuing professional development programs and materials that enable family physicians to meet certification and licensing requirements. The CFPC provides high-quality services, supports family medicine teaching and research, and advocates on behalf of family physicians and the specialty of family medicine.

For more information:

Canadian Medical Association

Anick Losier, Director, Media Relations

mediainquiries@cma.ca

613-806-1865

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

Melissa Nisbett, Senior communications specialist

mnisbett@royalcollege.ca

T: 613-730-8177 ext. 426

Cell: 613-218-9570

College of Family Physicians of Canada

Jayne Johnston, Director, Communications

jjn@cfpc.ca

905-629-0900 ext. 303

905-407-9140