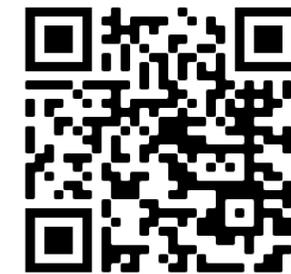


Patient Access to Family Practice in Saskatoon Dean's Project 2022



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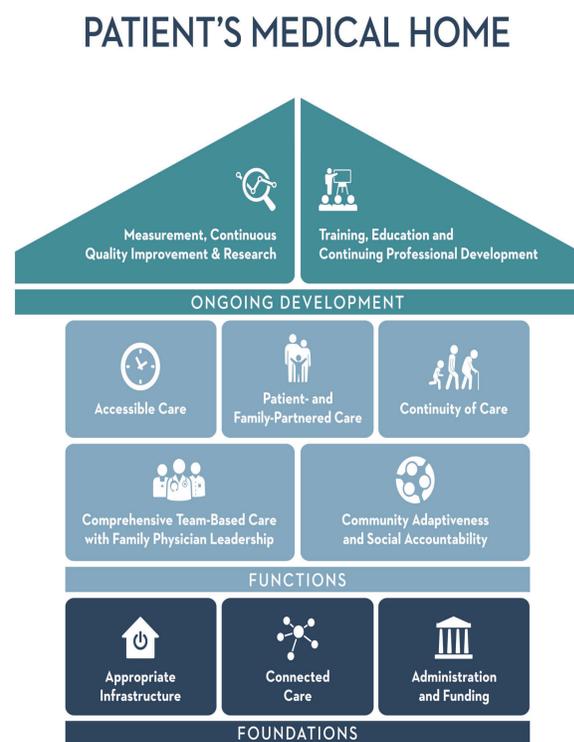
Abstract

Background: Access to family physicians remains a major challenge in Saskatchewan often with a focus on rural SK. The Patients' Medical Home (PMH) model is a reform that can address access. Family Medicine recruitment remains challenging; aggravated by waning interest in family medicine as a career choice. Better data is needed for more accurate Health Human Resource (HHR) planning in Saskatchewan. Family medicine residencies can rise to the challenge to attract medical students to the discipline to meet the need for more family physicians. Distribution will need to be addressed.

It is not clear however, how many family physicians work in Saskatoon, fulltime or part time and how many work in other areas such as long-term care, occupational medicine, emergency or niche practices. This study will provide a description of what the family physician workforce looks like and what services they provide in Saskatoon to assess any gaps and barriers to access. A coordinated overview of family practice in Saskatoon is needed that addresses these gaps to better meet patient needs in the city with accurate HHR data related to family medicine and how this might inform implementation of the PMH and networks.

Research Questions: What is the gap between the absolute numbers of family physicians in Saskatoon and their contribution to comprehensive family practice and what are the implications for patients' access to family medicine care?

Methods/Methodology: This project will update a literature review on access to primary care, conduct an environmental scan of family physicians practicing in the city and complete two surveys- one for family doctors (by fax) and their clinic staff (by phone) regarding access to family medicine in Saskatoon.



Access Survey

1. Who is practicing FM in Saskatoon?
2. What do FP do here?
3. Who is taking new patients?

Why is this important?

This study is adapted from the Models and Access Atlas of Primary Care (MAPP) project by E. Marshall PhD which is described in the QR link above. It will also build on the Saskatoon After-Hours Access study completed in 2021.

There is a perception of a lack of access in Saskatoon and concerns about decreasing numbers of FP available in the city doing comprehensive family medicine. This is important to the SHA, SMA, SCFP and the DAFM.

Suggestions for improvement can only be developed once a more accurate understanding exists of how many family physicians are practicing and the other roles FP are fulfilling in the health care system which might impact the access for patients to family medicine care.

Examples of the questions in the phone study

Section A: Provider Demographic Information

1. Role of person answering the phone
2. Number and type of care providers who are available to patients

Section B: Information About Access

Ask questions for each family physician that has this as their primary office contact number. If more than one primary health care provider at this number, then ask about Dr. X, then Y, then Z in turn.

1. Acceptance of new patients
2. Exceptions, if any
3. Type of practice (eg. walk-in component)
4. Acceptance of patients requiring narcotics
5. Process for accepting patients
6. Wait times for urgent and non-urgent appointments
7. Hours available for patient visits (query each day of the week and weekends)

Section C: Primary Health Care Organization Model

1. Use of EMR
2. Sharing of resources (if not a solo practice)