



**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

Nova Scotia physician recruitment incentives threaten to undermine efforts in this province

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St. John's, NL – The new Nova Scotia government says it plans to invest more than \$55 million to improve physician recruitment to address the need for more doctors.

“Our ability to attract physicians to work in Newfoundland and Labrador is about to get a lot more challenging,” says NLMA President Dr. Susan MacDonald.

“The new Nova Scotia government is showing innovation and courage when tackling their family medicine shortage. How are we possibly going to compete with that? We are already less competitive in family medicine than the other Atlantic Provinces, let alone the rest of Canada. The new recruitment incentives in Nova Scotia will put our province even further below the Atlantic average. It should put everyone on notice,” she added.

In Nova Scotia the new government has promised to rebuild the province’s physician workforce to reduce wait times and improve access to family doctors. It plans to do this by:

- establishing clinical health service plans for each region that will determine the right number and types of doctors needed there, match new graduates with physician mentors and provide succession planning when doctors retire
- providing funding to local leadership teams to implement the clinical service plans and recruit doctors at the community level
- supporting foreign-trained doctors to prepare for work in the province in exchange for return of service
- increasing medical residency seats by targeting areas of need
- removing the disincentives for family doctors to work in a community practice as compared to hospital work and creating a pension plan for fee-for-service physicians who practice patient-centred care

“The Nova Scotia plan recognizes there is a shortage of doctors that has led to a problem with access. Our Minister of Health refuses to acknowledge there is a problem and we have seen no plan to address it. He is presiding over the breakdown of family medicine in this province,” says Dr. Macdonald.

“The government is content to rely on band-aid solutions that provide episodic care rather than commit to long-term solutions that address the root of our recruitment challenges. Instead, it should be focused on ensuring that all citizens have access to a family physician and primary health care team that provides continuous and comprehensive care over the course of their lives. If we don’t deal with this problem soon, we will continue to lose more of our doctors.”

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