

# Recruitment and Retention Program



Recruitment and Retention **WORK** has directly  
**IMPACTED 39,699** PATIENTS

Established through the GP for Me initiative, the Recruitment and Retention program collaborates with residents, family doctors and community partners to reduce the high number of unattached patients in Vancouver. The program's work supports family doctors during the beginning and ending phases of their careers. With 200+ family doctors projected to retire in the next five years, and an estimated 138,000 patients currently unattached, the Recruitment and Retention team has three main focuses: to attract family doctors to Vancouver, to support family doctors working in Vancouver, and to guide retiring family doctors to successfully transition their practices. Recruitment and Retention invests in ongoing programming and resources, understanding that family doctors are at the core of a healthy community.

***This is very much appreciated, thank you so much for all your help! I'm very excited to be part of the Vancouver Division. It is really a wonderful opportunity with many valuable resources."***

– Vancouver Family Doctor

# 2017 Most Productive Year for Recruitment and Retention Program

\*Based on Nov 1, 2016 – Oct 31, 2017

## There are more family doctors retiring than starting new practices

### 40 Residents

to start practicing in Vancouver in 2018  
200 in the next 5 years\*



### 50 Family Doctors

to retire in Vancouver in 2018  
220 in the next 5 years\*



\*Numbers based on College list averages, and include new Canadian graduated residents. Figures are estimated projections.

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### The Challenge

Practices are changing. One new doctor doesn't replace the capacity of one retiring doctor.



### The Solution

Respond to the evolving needs of family doctors. We help doctors manage their careers, explore their options, and increase their commitment to practice in Vancouver.

## Success

### New-to-Practice Family Doctors

**74** locums matched

**10** permanently placed family doctors

**52** highly engaged with program

**8** Practice Takeovers Facilitated



### Retiring Family Doctors

**28** offices supported

**8** patient panels transferred

**28** highly engaged with program

## Patients Engaged

**10,600** new attachments from permanent family doctor placement

**9,276** patients avoided unattachment through practice takeovers

**25,388**

total patients impacted by Recruitment and Retention work

**3,145** Vancouver patients offered a new family doctor to avoid unattachment

**2,367** out of Vancouver patients given option to avoid unattachment

## System Level Outcomes

### Increased system capacity

Increased attachment from recruitment of family doctors

### Increased provider satisfaction

Peace of mind from retiring family doctors and increased confidence and support from young doctors

### Increased patient access to care

Maintained patient attachment during family doctor retirement

# New-To-Practice Support

## PHYSICIAN EXPERIENCE

Dr. Davis started working with the Vancouver Division in 2015 after she moved back to Vancouver. She engaged with the Recruitment and Retention team to help shape her vision of the type of family practice she wanted to assume, and to find a suitable fit in the community. In 2017, Dr. Davis found a practice she wanted to settle into. With the help of the Division, she took over the practice of a retiring family doctor in the Marpole area, and assumed the care of nearly 1,000 patients. The Vancouver Division digitized the practice files, and helped her plan for the transition. She has settled into her practice, enjoying this new step in her career. The Recruitment and Retention team continues to work with Dr. Davis to assist with finding her locum coverage and other practice support.

*"I completed my family medicine residency in 2013 and wanted to settle into a regular practice but was enjoying the flexibility and diversity of locum work. Running my own clinic, and being responsible for staffing and business management was a daunting prospect, and I was concerned about the time it would take away from patient care. I was, and continue to be grateful for the depth of support I have received from the Vancouver Division. The group-based and individualized practice management resources that I have taken part in have been an indispensable part of my successful transition. The Division lowered barriers that were holding me back from making this significant career commitment. I'm coming up on the end of my first year of having my own family practice, and I am so pleased where I've landed!"*

– Vancouver Family Doctor

Working toward reducing the high number of unattached patients in Vancouver, the Recruitment and Retention team attracts and supports family doctors to develop their careers in Vancouver. The transition from residency to the first years of practice presents many challenges for young doctors. The team provides resources, educational and networking events, and individual supports to enable doctors to make definitive choices in areas such as work placement, career planning, practice development and management.

**Recruitment Efforts** attract residents and family doctors across Canada and internationally promoting practice opportunities and the benefits of working and living in Vancouver.

Recruitment channels include:

- Exhibiting at Canada-wide conferences
- Connecting with Canadian medical schools and residency programs
- Working with UBC Family Medicine Residency Program
- Online advertising
- Referrals

**Locum Matching** offers a personalized, relationship-based approach to ensure successful locum placements.

The intake process for new family doctors includes:

- Informational discussion
- Sharing personalized locum opportunities
- Introducing doctor to opportunities of interest
- Providing support in exploring permanent practice

**New Physician Support** assists new-to-practice family doctors better navigate the local health system and become confident, successful providers in Vancouver.

Examples of support includes:

- Networking, billing, and career planning events
- Financial forecasting and business support
- New clinic startup guidance
- Building patient panels
- Resources to navigate challenges

# Retirement Support

Working toward reducing the high number of unattached patients in Vancouver, the Recruitment and Retention team works closely with retiring family doctors to ensure the successful transition of their practices, and patients.

**Physician retirement support** assists family doctors considering retirement to outline the process and determine a realistic timeline to transition out of practice.

Support meets varying needs, and includes:

- Annual retirement event
- How to Retire Guide
- Recruitment of family doctor to takeover practice
- Facilitation of practice takeover
- One-on-one meeting support
- Resources for office closure, file storage, etc.

**Patient retirement support** assists patients of a retiring family doctor, when a replacement to takeover their practice cannot be found, by allocating those patients to other primary care providers to ensure continuity of care.

The patient transition process includes:

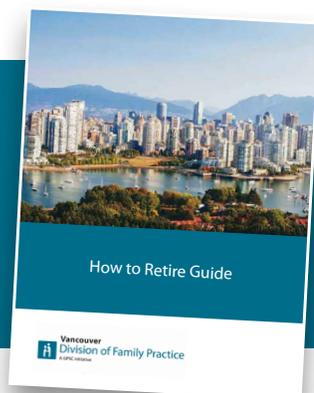
- Assembling a list of patient demographics from the retiring practice
- Identifying capacity within Vancouver family practices to take new patients
- Connecting patients who live outside of Vancouver to their community Division
- Introducing patients, by way of letter, to a new provider

## PHYSICIAN EXPERIENCE

Dr. Lipkowitz reached out to the Division for retirement support in August 2016 with a tentative plan to retire in June 2017. Although the team was not able to locate someone to takeover her practice, three months before Dr. Lipkowitz was to leave her practice, we started the process of re-allocating her patients to new care in their respective communities. One month prior to Dr. Lipkowitz's retirement date, the team started sending re-allocation letters to her patients. Dr. Lipkowitz's patients lived in many communities ranging from West Vancouver to Chilliwack. Patient re-allocation took two months, and every patient was provided a new option for care. Patients were offered either the name of a physician in their community accepting patients or were referred to the Division in their community who would support them in finding a new physician. Dr. Lipkowitz continues to work part-time as a locum in Vancouver and teach at UBC.

*"For me, knowing each and every one of my patients had the opportunity to have a new family physician was very comforting. I cared for many of my patients for close to 30 years and I felt grateful to have the Division help me provide continuity of care for my patients. This was extremely important to me."*

– Vancouver Family Doctor



Our 54-page *How to Retire Guide* outlines a step-by-step process to help family doctors create a plan to transition out of practice. This guide has been shared with over 80 family doctors and disseminated to four other sister Divisions.

# Key Program Outcomes

Recruitment and Retention program has ENGAGED  
**OVER 450 FAMILY DOCTORS** and **39,699 patients**

## FAMILY DOCTOR ENGAGEMENT

**247** NEW family doctors

**81** RETIRING family doctors

**137** locums MATCHED

**9** practice TAKEOVERS

**10** permanent PLACEMENTS

## PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

**15,100** NEW ATTACHMENTS from permanent family doctor placement

**10,076** patients AVOIDED UNATTACHMENT through practice takeovers

**10,058** Vancouver patients offered a new family doctor to AVOID UNATTACHMENT

**4,465** out of Vancouver patients given option to AVOID UNATTACHMENT

Numbers represent engagement since program inception in 2015

*“Many of my patients have already received your helpful letter, and they are delighted as well as immediately relieved that they now have the reassurance of continuity of care.”*

– Retiring Family Doctor

*“Once again, your support is appreciated, and especially I have found that knowing that there is someone available to be ‘in your corner’ when things get crazy is itself a big relief.”*

– New-to-Practice Family Doctor

# Working Toward Patient Medical Homes

In 2017, the Vancouver Division committed to fostering the development of Patient Medical Homes (PMH) and Primary Care Networks (PCN) within the city of Vancouver. Building this effective infrastructure requires recruiting and attracting new family doctors to work in collaboration within the created networks, aligned to the principles of PMH, while simultaneously supporting existing family doctors and their transition to PMH.

The Recruitment and Retention team's work to help create and support PMHs and PCNs includes:

- Recruitment of family doctors interested in working in this new supportive model of care
- Assisting in the transition from solo and small offices to larger group clinics to improve continuity of care for patients
- Transitioning patients from retiring practices to newly established PMHs
- Pivoting recruitment services to assist in the recruitment of other allied health professionals to different networks across the city

The infrastructure and partnerships created through the Recruitment and Retention program continue to impact family doctors and practices, as well as provide a foundation for PMH development, and support the overall work of the Vancouver Division in improving healthcare in the coming years.

## Looking Ahead

- Continue development of resources for new-to-practice family doctors as they explore practicing in Vancouver
- Improve reach of retirement support to properly project and manage influx of retirements in the coming years
- Collaborate with partners to broaden the scope of programming and increase member opportunities in the community
- Expand recruitment from Canadian residency programs
- Provide support to migrate solo offices into group practices
- Develop partnerships and strategies to support retiring family doctors with patients who do not speak English
- Advocate for additional support to digitize paper offices which are willing to transition to EMR
- Strengthen connections with other regional Divisions to support patient allocation and share resources
- Develop new partnerships to expand resources available within the primary care community

## Key Partnerships

BC Ministry of Health

Canadian Medical School and Residency Programs

College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC

City of Vancouver

Doctors of BC

First Nations and Aboriginal Primary Care Network

First Nations Health Authority

General Practitioners Services Committee

Health Match BC

Practice Support Program

Providence Health Care

Provincial Division of Family Practice

Sister Divisions of Family Practice

Society of General Practitioners of BC

UBC Faculty of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine

Vancouver Coastal Health

**For more information contact: [recruitmentvan@divisionsbc.ca](mailto:recruitmentvan@divisionsbc.ca)**