OurCare

British Columbia Priorities Panel on Primary Care

The OurCare British Columbia Priorities Panel brought together 31 BC residents, randomly selected to roughly match the province’s demographics with emphasis on underserved communities. They spent approximately 30 hours learning from experts and deliberating together before making recommendations on what a better primary care system should look like. OurCare is also conducting Priorities Panels in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Manitoba. Reports are written by members of the public. For more information, visit OurCare.ca/PrioritiesPanels.

Recommendation Highlights:

Accessible primary care for all British Columbians
- Foster, set-up, and fund Community Health Centres (CHCs) in every community to support timely access to primary care, including physicians and team-based care
- Ensure more CHCs in rural, remote, Indigenous and low-income communities
- Legislate zero out-of-pocket costs on expenses such as transport and meals when accessing primary care
- Fund and implement infrastructure in rural communities to support access to virtual care

Primary care system infrastructure
- Assign each resident to a catchment area from where they can select their primary care practitioner or care team similar to how the public school system works
- Refocus the health system to prioritize relational continuity through all stages of life
- Expand primary care coverage, subsidization, and teams to include holistic care, including but not limited to pharmaceuticals, dentistry, physical therapy and mental health services

Technology and information system infrastructure
- Establish a central medical data platform for clinicians and patients to access electronic medical records
- Train and support patients in the technological aspects of accessing primary care, including virtual care
- Offer flexible modes of care including, at minimum, in-clinic, video, phone, and secure messaging. Virtual care should complement, not replace, in-person care

British Columbia Priorities Panel At-a-Glance
31 members
19 speakers
29 program hours
25 recommendations

Members’ Values
Accessible • Equitable • Prevention-focused • Accountable • Sustainable • Person-centred • Universal •

Financial contribution from

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Funding and resource allocation

- Adopt the World Health Organization’s “Health in all Policies” to shape policy and disbursement of resources
- Ensure more resources go to communities in higher need
- Increase the number of primary care clinicians, for example, by reducing licensing barriers for clinicians trained out-of-province and expanding the use of professionals under physician supervision
- Commission independent, third-party monitoring and evaluation of resources expended on primary care initiatives to measure impacts and outcomes

Political will and patient advocacy

- Establish a Patient Advocacy Organization (PAO) that supports consultation on provincial legislation, champions transparency, and ensures accountability
- Implement a comprehensive Primary Health Care Charter to define and clarify the rights and expectations of patients
- Implement and fully fund the Patient Medical Home (2019) and establish Goals and Standards for Primary Care

Public education and mobilization

- Create an independent, publicly funded education campaign about primary care