To: All Primary Care Physicians  
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Re: Supporting Areas of High Physician Need: Changes to Entry into Family Health Organizations and Family Health Networks

This INFOBulletin is a follow-up to INFOBulletin #11125 – Changes to Primary Health Care Physician Payments in which the ministry announced the implementation of initiatives that changed the funding of, and eligibility for, certain primary care physician funding models.

One of the changes announced was to the Managed Entry process. For physicians interested in joining or becoming a Family Health Organization (FHO) or Family Health Network (FHN), monthly registrations for entry into FHNs and FHOs are limited to twenty (20) physicians per month in areas of high physician need only. Further, participation in the Income Stabilization Program will be limited to physicians joining a FHN or FHO in areas of high physician need. These changes are effective for commencement dates in a FHN or FHO of June 1, 2015 onwards regardless of when the application documents were submitted to the ministry.

These changes affecting new entries into the FHN and FHO model are being introduced in order to maximize the value of ministry investments in these models. Although capitation models (FHN and FHO) are showing improvements in comprehensiveness of care and have assisted in increasing patient attachment, they are associated with a significant per physician investment as compared with other models.

Please note that the Managed Entry process does not apply to replacement physicians. A FHN or FHO can replace a departing physician outside of the Managed Entry process on a one physician out/one physician in (1:1) ratio. The ministry understands that there may be unique circumstances where a 1:1 replacement may not be feasible, as such, this policy is currently under review. In the interim, while the policy review is undertaken, the ministry will consider exceptions to the 1:1 replacement policy based on the ability of the replacement physician(s) to deliver comprehensive, continuity of care. Please contact your Program Analyst in the Primary Health Care Branch at 416-325-3575 or 1-866-766-0266 to discuss this further.

A list of current areas of high physician need is attached, and will be posted on the Ministry website at www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/highneed/.
The factors considered when compiling this list include the Rurality Index for Ontario (RIO) score and family physician to population ratio. Input from Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) based on factors associated with local demographics, socioeconomic status, population health needs and access considerations have also been incorporated. This list will be reviewed and updated quarterly by the ministry with input from LHINs.

If you are interested in applying to become a FHO or FHN physician within these areas, please contact the ministry at 416-325-3575 or 1-866-766-0266 or by mail at:

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Blended Models Unit
1075 Bay Street, 9th floor
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2B1

Family physicians interested in practicing in other parts of the province have a variety of different practice and compensation models available to them. These include but are not limited to: Comprehensive Care Model (CCM); Family Health Group (FHG), replacement or locum physician within a FHN or FHO and traditional fee for service. With the approval of the ministry and/or subject to available FTE positions within models, physicians can also join Community Health Centres (CHCs), Aboriginal Health Access Centres (AHACs), Rural and Northern Physician Group Agreement (RNPGAs), Blended Salary Models (BSMs) and others.

The attached Questions & Answers provides additional detail related to this process and the options available for family physicians.

If you have any further questions, please contact your Ministry Program Analyst at:
416-325-3575 or 1-866-766-0266.