



Department of Family Medicine

2023 Annual Report



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA



Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of Alberta, its buildings, labs, and research stations are primarily located on the traditional territory of Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, and Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe nations; lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7, and 8 and homeland of the Métis. The University of Alberta respects the sovereignty, lands, histories, languages, knowledge systems, and cultures of First Nations, Métis and Inuit nations.

SWEETGRASS TEACHINGS:
HUMBLE KINDNESS
SHARING
HONESTY
DETERMINATION



Editor: Nicole Bork and Mirella Chiodo

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Design: University of Alberta

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Message from the Chair

Family Medicine is the foundation of a strong health-care system, and the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Alberta exists to support the optimal delivery of health care to all Albertans.

Despite numerous challenges over the past few years — including a global pandemic and a recognized national need for primary-care reform — our department and community partners have continued to demonstrate innovation, excellence and resilience in education and research. We have led the way in the development of team-based care within primary-care medical homes. We have continued to expand our faculty and

our educational offerings. Our teams have been successful in grant applications and the production and dissemination of meaningful research for the community. This report is only a glimpse of the work that is happening in Family Medicine. Please celebrate with us as we continually seek to improve care for all Albertans.



Dr. Tina Korownyk



HIGHLIGHTS

Golden Jubilee

2023 marked the Department of Family Medicine's Golden Jubilee, having been 50 years since its establishment in 1973 as the Division of Family Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine.

In 1983, the Division of Family Medicine obtained department status. It has since grown substantially in its education, research mission and the provision of clinical services. The Residency Program hosted 20 residents in 1973; in 2023, the program trained 163 residents between urban and rural streams. With over 80 rural teaching sites spanning the entire province as well as the Northwest Territories and Yukon, the department remains deeply committed to providing family practice training across the province. It is heavily invested in teaching undergraduate medical students and has made significant strides in strengthening the scientific foundation of family medicine research.

To commemorate the Golden Jubilee, a video and brochure chronicling the history of the department were presented at a celebratory dinner held on October 27, 2023, at the Woodvale Facility & Golf Clubhouse.



Golden Jubilee Celebration & Dinner

October 27, 2023





Some of the DFM staff present for the celebration



Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP) President Dr. Noel DaCunha provides a congratulatory address



Olga Szafran and Dr. Connie Lebrun



Dr. Lesley Charles and Dr. Jean Triscott



Dr. Christina Korownyk, Chair delivers the welcome alongside Dr. David Moores

Welcome to:



Dr. Eniola Salami
as the MD Program's Black Health Lead

Dr. Eniola Salami is an assistant professor, family physician at the Grey Nuns Family Medicine Centre site and now the inaugural Black Health Lead in the MD Program for the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry. This role was established to demonstrate the commitment of the MD Program to increasing representation of Black physicians. By advising the MD Program on how to improve education with the goal of promoting a safe and equitable learning environment for all students, Dr. Salami's expertise will prove invaluable to both the Department of Family Medicine and the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.



Dr. Jessica Kolopenuk
as the FoMD's Chair in Indigenous Health

We are pleased to congratulate Dr. Jessica Kolopenuk, an assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine, on her new role as Alberta Health Services Research Chair in Indigenous Health in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry this year. Dr. Kolopenuk is the co-founder and co-lead of the Indigenous Science, Technology, and Society Research and Training Program (Indigenous STS) and the Summer Internship for Indigenous Peoples in Genomics Canada (SING Canada). As Chair of Indigenous Health, she will be expanding the Indigenous STS to include a research and training dry lab and a network "which will bring together academic, public sector, industry, and Indigenous community partners devoted to critically engaging and transforming colonial health systems."

Grand Rounds

2023 saw the option to attend Family Medicine Grand Rounds in-person return. With a renewed topical focus on primary-care advocacy, reform and promotion, the three iterations this year hosted record attendance between in-person and virtual attendees.

Thank you to our presenters for their time and energy in helping us to produce a series of earnest and well-received sessions this year.



DATE	PRESENTATION TITLE	PRESENTERS	ATTENDEES
March 16, 2023	CPR: Community Perspectives on Primary Care Reform - how do we resuscitate our system?	Dr. Vesta Michelle Warren, Dr. Brad Bahler, Dr. Nadine Letwin & Rob Skrypnik	168
June 15, 2023	Ounces of Prevention Have Broken Primary Care: An Honest Reckoning with Our Impossible Competing Demands	Dr. Minna Johansson & Dr. Stephen Martin	164
October 5, 2023	Still the One: Practical Advice From Family Docs Who Love Their Jobs	Dr. Priyanka Hansraj, Dr. Jessica Kirkwood, Dr. Marco Mannarino, Dr. Bryan Frobb & Dr. David Pontin	163

OUR PEOPLE

Our Staff

75 dedicated staff across all programs kept the department running.

On April 26, 2023, the department hosted a bowling and pizza party to celebrate Administrative Professionals Day





Our Teachers

838 clinical academic colleagues within the Department of Family Medicine across Alberta, Northwest Territories and Yukon.

243 clinical lecturers

539 assistant clinical professors

33 associate clinical professors

8 clinical professors

15 adjunct faculty

Airdrie • Ardrossan • Athabasca • Banff • Barnwell • Barrhead • Beaumont
 Beaverlodge • Bellevue • Bentley • Birchcliff • Blairmore • Bon Accord
 Bonnyville • Bow Island • Calmar • Camrose • Canmore • Cardston • Cochrane
 Cold Lake • Coronation • Devon • Delburne • Didsbury • Drayton Valley
 Drumheller • Edmonton • Edson • Fairview • Fort McMurray • Fort Saskatchewan
 Grande Prairie • High Level • Hinton • Hythe • Innisfail • Jasper • Killam
 Lac La Biche • Lacombe • Lake Louise • Lamont • Leduc • Lethbridge • Lloydminster
 Magrath • Medicine Hat • Norglenwold • Olds • Peace River • Pincher Creek
 Ponoka • Provost • Red Deer • Redwater • Rimbey • Rocky Mountain House
 Saddle Lake • Sexsmith • Sherwood Park • Slave Lake • Smoky Lake
 Spirit River • Spruce Grove • St. Albert • St. Paul • Stony Plain • Sundre • Swan Hills
 Sylvan Lake • Taber • Three Hills • Tofield • Vermillion • Viking • Wainwright
 Westlock • Wetaskiwin • Whitecourt • Whitehorse, YK • Yellowknife, NWT

11 eligible clinical academic colleagues sought promotion

1 promoted to clinical professor

- ◆ Dr. Martin Moran

9 promoted to associate clinical professor

- ◆ Dr. Leigh Beamish
- ◆ Dr. Helen Cuddihy
- ◆ Dr. Daisy Fung
- ◆ Dr. Priyanka Hansraj
- ◆ Dr. Irma Kritzing
- ◆ Dr. Christopher Lin
- ◆ Dr. Jennifer Stickney-Lee
- ◆ Dr. Doris Sturtevant
- ◆ Dr. Douglas Woudstra

1 promoted to assistant clinical professor

- ◆ Dr. Scott Matlock

4 tenure-track faculty welcomed by the DFM

Dr. Joanne Baergen

Assistant Professor
Assistant Program Director
Resident Support and Wellness

Dr. Lauren Eastman

Assistant Professor
Assistant Program Director
Urban Clinical Curriculum

Dr. Martin Tieu

Assistant Professor
Assistant Program Director
Recruitment and Selection

Dr. Eniola Salami

Assistant Professor
Black Health Lead, MD Program

38 tenure-track faculty
within the DFM

8 assistant professors

15 associate professors

15 professors

Faculty Development

88 faculty and community preceptors
attended faculty development sessions
from September-November 2023.

In 2023, Dr. Lillian Au took over the role of Faculty Development Director after previously serving as Undergraduate Program Director. Dr. Au launched an official pilot of the Clinical Teacher Session Series in the 2023-2024 academic year. The Clinical Teacher Series sessions comprise hour-long Zoom sessions covering the process of taking learners from start to finish – ranging from orientation to feedback to assessment. Four sessions were hosted over Zoom from September through November and were well-received and well-evaluated by attendees. The sessions will continue through winter and spring 2024, and begin again in fall 2024 as a recurring and evolving annual series.

RESEARCH

Grants

\$1,000,000 for Healthy Fit and Strong - Changing the Story for Indigenous Youth and Young Adults

Funder and Program: Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Operating Grant in Diabetes, Psychosocial Health, Prevention
and Self-Management.

Team: Dr. Doug Klein, Dr. Sean Lessard, Dr. Allan Bailey,
Dr. Geoff Ball, Dr. Robert Boushel, Dr. Michael Kennedy,
Dr. Moss Norman, Dr. Carla Prado, Dr. Jeff Round,
Dr. Kate Storey



When looking at new-onset Type 2 Diabetes in Canadian youth, 44 per cent of diagnoses are for Indigenous youth. Not only do these diagnoses bring about a lifetime of numerous physical health concerns, but it also has been shown to increase the risk of psychosocial complications.

Our teachings and prior work have emphasized the importance of wâhkôhtowin, which is understanding how we are all related and how we can conduct ourselves as good relatives. This project will address issues related to the prevention and management of T2D in Indigenous youth and young adults (YYA) by working with youth and their families.

We will adapt the CHCP, a program piloted at small-scale through community partnerships,



in a community-led and contextually and culturally appropriate manner while using an overall Indigenous research methodology to implement and evaluate how a community-informed program can address the psychosocial issues associated with T2D prevention.

Overall, our aim is to develop an Indigenous-centred, community-informed and family-relevant approach to lifestyle interventions that leverages community assets and family resilience.





\$73,990 for Developing a contemporary measure of lifelong learning

Funder and Program: Canadian Institutes of Health Research Operating Grant in Diabetes, Psychosocial Health, Prevention and Self-Management.

Team: Dr. Oksana Babenko and Dr. Lia Daniels (Faculty of Education, UAlberta)

This research aligns with two of SSHRC's Future Challenge Areas: Working in the Digital Economy and The Emerging Asocial Society.

It aims to develop insights into how digital technology is shaping both the cognitive and social elements of lifelong learning – a goal that has become increasingly important as the COVID-19 pandemic provided new opportunities and responsibilities for lifelong learning. The findings stand to contribute to modernizing the measurement of lifelong learning in the digital era.

Objectives: (I) to explore lifelong learning practices among students in professional education programs; and (II) to develop a new measure of lifelong learning based on the findings of how learning happens in the 21st century.

2022-2023 Grant Summary

INDICATOR 2		2021-2022	2022-2023
Total value of NEW research grants			
i.	Value of NEW grants ⁽⁵⁾ awarded and held by University of Alberta, DoFM (Excludes NAAFP/seed grants)	\$764,123.75	\$1,276,332.54
ii.	Value of NEW seed grants ⁽⁶⁾ awarded and held by University of Alberta, DoFM	\$233,408.63	\$485,108
INDICATOR 3			
Number of ONGOING research grants ⁽⁵⁾			
i.	Number of ONGOING grants ⁽⁵⁾ held by University of Alberta, DoFM (Excludes NAAFP/seed grants)	23	19
ii.	Number of ONGOING seed grants ⁽⁶⁾ held by University of Alberta, DoFM	32	55
iii.	Number of ONGOING grants ⁽⁵⁾ held by other organizations or departments	27	20
INDICATOR 4			
Total value of NEW and ONGOING research grants ⁽⁵⁾			
i.	Value of NEW and ONGOING grants ⁽⁵⁾ awarded and held by the DoFM, University of Alberta (Excludes NAAFP/seed grants ⁽⁶⁾)	\$24,034,408.92	\$17,725,910.98
ii.	Value of NEW and ONGOING seed grants ⁽⁶⁾ awarded and held by the DoFM, University of Alberta	\$389,940	\$702,420.87

Awards

Dr. Ginetta Salvalaggio receives 2022 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal.

Congratulations to Dr. Ginetta Salvalaggio on receiving the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal from the Government of Alberta. This award was presented to Albertans who have made significant contributions to the province and is a distinct honour. Dr. Salvalaggio is currently a professor, physician at the MacEwan University Health Centre, Co-Director of the DFM Research Program, and serves as Associate Scientific Director of the Inner City Health and Wellness Program.





EDUCATION



Undergraduate Program

In 2023, the DFM Undergraduate Program launched an exciting pre-clerkship elective program called Discovering the Versatility of Family Medicine and increased opportunities for clerkship electives led by Dr. Martin Tieu with the help of Nicole Stubbs. Both of these initiatives were designed to increase exposure early in medical school education to the diverse work of family physicians.

In the pilot year of this program, Family Medicine received 89 pre-clerkship elective requests. A total of 61 pre-clerkship electives were completed by 36 unique students. A survey of the pre-clerkship elective (42 per cent of students participated) showed the following results and selected comments:

4.81

average score answering

“This shadowing elective was a valuable learning experience for me”

4.42

average score answering

“This shadowing elective increased my interest in pursuing a career in Family Medicine”

4.65

average score answering

“I would recommend this shadowing elective to another medical student”

[Results (Likert 1 (Strongly disagree) - 5 (Strongly Agree) Avg score]

“This was such a great experience for me - I was not aware that there were maternity clinics run by family doctors, and the clinic was so welcoming and taught me many different skills. I hope that this elective continues so that I can take part next year as well!”

“This was a fantastic shadowing experience. It increased my understanding of what a family physician can do in terms of in-office procedures.”

“There was a lot of hands-on experience that I gained from this elective. It was super exciting to have this as a fresh first-year medical student.”

For the clerkship electives, we improved the number of opportunities for students interested in exploring a career in family medicine. There was a decline in interest in 2022, but through increased funding towards these electives and improved processes for accommodating requests, we have seen an increase in clerkship electives completed:

149

2023-2024 academic year

97

2022-2023 academic year

132

2021-2022 academic year

Residency Program

68 rural and urban residents graduated in 2023



New Plank System with CaRMS

This year our selection team transitioned to utilizing the Plank Admissions platform to assist in the CaRMS selection process. This new process was an overwhelming success and its automation and organization of both file review and interview processes yielded significant improvements. During file reviews, Plank enabled administrators to assign, reassign and collect results more efficiently while allowing our file reviewers a unified hub to access files and score them. This bypassed the need to use two separate systems (previously REDCAP and CaRMS.ca).

Similarly with interviews, Plank allowed interviewers a clean, simplified and central location for all required information for accessing remote interviews, scoring interviews and viewing

their interview schedules and candidate assignments. Many of our administrators described the entire process as “eerily quiet” — a testament to how smooth the process has been.

1,170 CMG file reviews were conducted via Plank through both rounds of CaRMS 2024, with a roughly estimated time savings of 10 minutes per file (compared to previous years’ processes). This has led to an estimated saving of almost 200 file reviewer hours. In combination with the added efficiencies of the back-end administrative processes (estimated to days saved in admin work), this new streamlined process has been a great aid to our selections team.



HEALTH SERVICES



Embracing Innovation at the Four Academic Teaching Sites

The Covid-19 pandemic has been a catalyst for change in the way we deliver primary care services. As face-to-face interactions became discouraged to mitigate the risk of spread, clinicians and their teams were pushed to innovate, leading to the adoption of new technologies and ways to provide care.

One of the most significant advancements was the implementation of patient portals (secure messaging between patients and their care teams) as well as secure virtual video visits. These tools, initially introduced to bridge the gap created by social distancing measures, proved to be extremely successful and were embraced by patients and health-care providers.

What began as a temporary solution is now a permanent fixture in primary care delivery in our four academic teaching clinics as well as community practices in the country and beyond. Patient portals enable asynchronous communication which increases accessibility for patients for non-urgent matters and creates efficiencies for providers and their teams.

Virtual video visits and telephone visits have also emerged as a valuable asset, particularly for patients who face challenges attending face-to-face appointments.

While face-to-face interactions remain crucial for certain aspects of care delivery, the integration of patient portals and virtual visits has been proven a welcome addition, complementing traditional methods and expanding the scope of services available to patients.

The Evolution of Team-Based Care in a Primary Care Setting

Since the mid-1980's, team-based care has been championed by academic teaching clinics as the preferred way to deliver effective primary care. It wasn't until the emergence of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in 2003 and the subsequent adoption of the Medical Home model of care, that team-based care gained widespread recognition as the preferred approach to delivering primary care services in the province.

In the face of an aging and increasingly complex population, recognizing the inherent limitations of individual practitioners and the importance of a multidisciplinary team in providing high-quality care has become increasingly apparent.

At the forefront of this movement towards team-based care are the four academic teaching sites – in particular the MacEwan University Health Centre, a purpose-built facility to embody the principles of the Medical Home model. Since opening in 2018, the health centre has been experimenting with the optimal composition of the health team. Initially drawing inspiration from other Medical Home practices in the United States and southern Alberta was helpful but it became evident that a one-size-fits-all approach was insufficient. The team needed to leverage their data to understand the unique needs and

Patient Portal	Patients Registered	Patient-Initiated Conversations	Patient-Initiated Conversations
MacEwan	4,320	19,683	27,099
Misericordia	1,721	3,616	6,847
Grey Nuns	1,033	680	1,202
NEHC	1,477	1,551	4,264
TOTAL	8,551	25,530	39,412

characteristics of their patient population and their providers. Clinic data plays a crucial role in shaping the team composition and reflecting the changing needs and priorities of their patient population.

The current health care team, all co-located within the clinic and all working to their full scope of practice consists of:

- two clinical health assistants per 1.0 FTE physician
- reception
- LPN’s
- RN’s
- CDM RN
- social work navigator
- pharmacist

(Additional centralized services available through the PCN such as dietician, kinesiologist, mental health support)

Team Success

All the work indicated in the table below would have gone to the primary care physician should the team not have been in place.

The strategy: take away as much work from the primary care provider that can be done by someone else in order to free up time for that provider to do what only they can do best – diagnose undifferentiated illness.

	All four academic teaching sites, 12-month period
In-person visits to multidisciplinary team member	7,499
Patient portal visits to multidisciplinary team member	2,593
Telephone visits to multidisciplinary team member	19,295



MUHC Medical Home Award

MacEwan University Health Centre was awarded the 2023 Patient's Medical Home Outstanding Family Practice Award by the Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP). The award, which honours clinic excellence and leadership in demonstrating principles of the Patient's Medical Home, was presented by ACFP President Dr. Noel DaCunha and accepted by Site Director Dr. Julia Chronopoulos at a celebration on October 17, 2023. The ACFP lauded MUHC's design and dedication to fostering "a high-functioning multidisciplinary team environment." The celebration was attended by the majority of MUHC's staff and Department of Family Medicine partners who powered the inception, development and realization of the clinic which opened in 2018.





ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD

To facilitate achievement of the Vision and Mission of the Department of Family Medicine, a strategic plan was crafted. The core of this plan consists of the **Accountability Framework** supported by a balanced scorecard. The balanced scorecard is a strategic management framework designed to support the objectives of this department, balanced across the areas of Education, Research, and Health Services. Key indicators for each objective are tracked to ensure progress towards achieving the stated objectives. The Accountability Framework and Balanced Scorecard covers the yearly academic and clinical activity in the Department of Family Medicine.

[View the Scorecard here.](#)



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