

**Life With  
a Doctor**

Ontario College of  
Family Physicians

*Leaders for a healthy Ontario*



**2025**  
**Ontario Election**  
Member Toolkit

# Introduction

**The 2025 Ontario provincial election is a pivotal moment for family physicians and the patients they serve. With 2.5 million Ontarians still without access to a family doctor, the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) is amplifying your voice to demand bold action.**

On January 27, 2025, the government made a **historic announcement** through Dr. Jane Philpott's Primary Care Action Team. OCFP is encouraged to see that many of the **pre-budget recommendations** we shared with the government are now on the election agenda. As these plans are implemented, we will continue to advocate for solutions shaped by family physician expertise and leadership, ensuring they meet the needs of members and the patients you serve.

This toolkit equips you with the tools and strategies to advocate for meaningful action during the election. By engaging with local candidates and amplifying our collective voice, we can push for further progress to ensure every Ontarian has access to a family doctor, supported by teams and technology.

# Ongoing Advocacy to Support Family Physicians

The OCFP continues to advance initiatives that support family physicians and improve patient care:



## Highlighting the Essential Role of Family Doctors:

OCFP's **Life With a Doctor** campaign and patient-nominated awards have brought more than 200 stories of family physicians' critical contributions to media across Ontario.



## Bringing Policy Solutions to Government:

Through ongoing member feedback, including focus groups and surveys, OCFP prepared a detailed pre-budget submission and continues to engage key stakeholders to push for meaningful solutions.



## Connecting with the Primary Care Action Team:

OCFP has provided input to the Primary Care Action Team, led by Dr. Jane Philpott, which has committed to connecting all Ontarians to primary care by 2029. We have advocated for changes shaped by family physician expertise and leadership and a digitally enabled health system that streamlines workflows and enhances the patient experience.

**The Ontario College of Family Physicians** represents more than 18,000 family physicians and medical students, including residents, retired family physicians, and more than 15,000 who are working in communities providing care to patients. Our members care for Ontarians across the health system, in primary care offices, hospitals and emergency departments, urgent care centres and walk-in clinics, as well as through home and long-term care, palliative care and more.

# How can you participate?

- 1 Set up meetings with your local MPP candidates and use key messages.  
**Don't forget to leave behind the one-pager!**
- 2 Follow us on social media and share our posts:

 **Facebook**    **X**    **LinkedIn**
- 3 Encourage your colleagues and peers to get involved and take action.

# How to set up a meeting with your local MPP/Candidate

## 1 Reach out

**Use the email template found on page 8 to reach out.**

Fill out the highlighted fields and be sure to customize for your region.

## 2 Follow up

**If there is no response within 48 to 72 hours, follow up by email or telephone at the constituency or campaign offices.**

See the FAQs on pages 7, 8, and 9 to find contact information for your local MPP/candidates.

## 3 Prepare

**Review the key messages** provided in this Toolkit and get comfortable with your talking points. Do not provide the key messages as a leave-behind document to the MPP/candidate but, if necessary, have them in front of you during the call or meeting.

**Prepare an agenda** for the meeting. Include evidence about what is needed in your community specifically. The conversation will be most effective if you're able to connect our overall messaging with your local perspective and insight. For example:

- How many family doctors are there compared to population in your riding or how many people are on your wait list?
- How often do you get calls from members of the community asking you to take them on as a patient?
- What barriers do you frequently hear from your family doctor peers and community that you can highlight in this meeting?

Also highlight the positive work that family doctors are doing in your community and any noteworthy improvements that have been made to the health system/care for Ontarians as a result.

# Key Messages

» **Ontarians want a family doctor:** Across the province, people are lining up for hours, desperate to find a family doctor. This shouldn't be happening in Ontario. Yet, 2.5 million Ontarians still don't have access to one.

» **Family physicians are leaders in their communities, essential to patients' health:** Family doctors provide care in urgent-care clinics, hospitals, long-term care facilities, palliative care, and more. They also lead the development of programs that improve access to care across Ontario.

» **Every Ontarian deserves access to a family doctor working with a team, enabled by technology.**

- **Teams:** More than 70% of family doctors and their patients still lack access to teams. To best meet patients' needs, every Ontarian should have access to a family doctor, working alongside a team.
- **Technology:** Tools like AI scribes and centralized referral systems reduce administrative burdens, decrease wait times, and improve the patient experience.
  - AI scribes allow doctors to spend more time with patients and less time on paperwork.
  - A centralized referral system ensures faster, more efficient access to specialists and diagnostic care.

» **Encouraging Progress with More Work to Do**

- We are encouraged by action taken by the government on several fronts – here's how we can build on the positive steps taken to date so that every Ontarian has access to a family doctor, working alongside a team.
- Together, we can create a system where family physicians practice in a rewarding profession and patients receive the timely, connected care they deserve.

# Our Solutions



## Teams: Better Access for Patients

Family doctors need access to primary care teams to support a broad range of patient needs—especially for their patients with complex medical needs. While recent investments in team-based care are a positive step, about 70% of family doctors don't have access to team-based resources. Every family physician needs access to an interprofessional team to help patients stay healthier in their communities and avoid hospital visits.



## Technology: Smarter, More Efficient Care

We appreciate the government's commitment to initiatives that will streamline workflows so family doctors can spend more time with their patients. Investing in technology can transform how family doctors work, reducing administrative workloads, releasing more time for patient care, and improving patient outcomes. For example:

- AI Scribes: Proven through pilot projects to reduce time spent on documentation, enabling family doctors to focus on direct patient care.
- A centralized Referral System: Streamlining the process to connect patients with specialists and diagnostics faster, eliminating inefficiencies.

OCFP is calling for the government to prioritize and implement these tools with input from front-line physicians, ensuring they are interoperable, user-friendly, and that strategies are in place to help with on-boarding.

## Supporting Northern Ontario (message for meetings with MPP candidates in Northern Ontario)

We are pleased to see the commitment to develop targeted recruitment and retention strategies for northern and rural communities. Northern Ontario faces unique challenges, from workforce shortages to gaps in care. OCFP supports the creation of a Northern-specific approach, modeled after British Columbia's successful Rural Coordination Centre, to unify efforts, close gaps, and retain rural family doctors and specialists.



# FAQs

## 1 When should I reach out to MPP candidates for my region?

As soon as candidates are confirmed for a party in a region, they are usually available for stakeholder meetings.





## 2 How do I find my local MPP candidates and request a meeting?

Most local candidates will start promoting right away and you should start seeing their promotional materials online and in your region. A quick search should bring you to their campaign website where you can find contact information.

You can also find listings of party candidates on party websites:



We recommend that you prioritize reaching out to any incumbent/current MPP candidates first, but you may also want to consider the electoral chance of each candidate to determine who you may want to meet with or prioritize. This can be done by searching the name of the riding on Wikipedia and seeing what the vote allocation was like in the 2022 election. It is likely the best strategy to meet with the top two candidates in your given riding. For example, in the riding of Ottawa Centre in 2022, the NDP came out in first, with the Ontario Liberal Party in second:

Ottawa Centre 2022 Ontario general election results				
Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
 New Democratic	Joel Harden	30,311	54.34	+8.26
 Liberal	Katie Gibbs	12,596	22.58	-10.20
 Progressive Conservative	Scott Healey	8,773	15.73	-0.31
 Green	Shelby Bertrand	2,718	4.87	+1.35



# FAQs

To request a meeting, customize the email below and send it to the email address provided on your local candidate's website:

Subject: Request for a Meeting – Family Doctors in [Your Riding Name]

Dear [Candidate's Name],

Thank you for your interest in representing the community of [Riding Name]. I am a family physician practicing in [Your Community Name], and I'm deeply invested in improving the healthcare system for Ontarians.

Today, 2.5 million Ontarians are without a family physician. While the Ontario government is taking steps to solve this problem, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet and share information on how these commitments can be implemented in a way that maximizes success – improving patient access to timely, high-quality care and helping to ensure we can retain and recruit the family physicians we need for our community.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Your Contact Information]

3

## My local MPP candidates are not willing to meet with me – what do I do?

Sometimes candidates have too many requests for meetings and prioritize public appearances and door knocking. Although an in-person meeting is preferred, if you are unable to meet with the candidate, consider sending them another email using the key messages included in this toolkit and attach the one-pager document we have provided. Another option is to draft a letter with key messages and print it, and the one-pager, and bring them to the campaign headquarters or email it. A member of their team will likely meet with you and accept the materials.

# FAQs

4

## I have met with my local MPP candidates and used the key messages, now what?

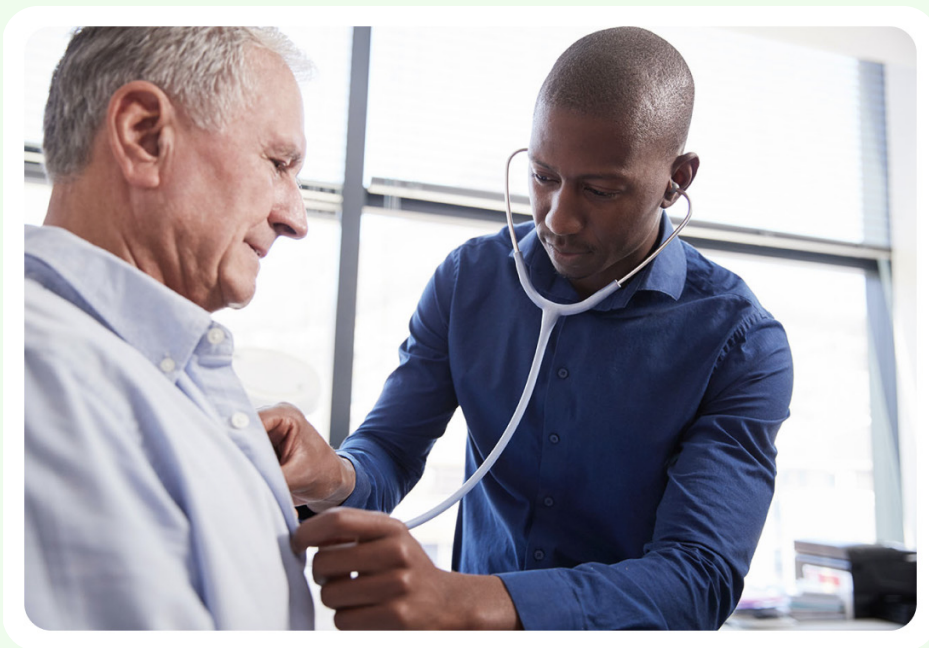
After you meet with the local candidate, email them thanking them for their time and reiterate the key messages and takeaways from your meeting. Attach the one-pager to the email as well.

Email [ocfp@ocfp.on.ca](mailto:ocfp@ocfp.on.ca) to let them know you have completed the engagement.

5

## If I have a question about the campaign, who do I contact?

OCFP staff are here to support you. If you have questions, please contact [ocfp@ocfp.on.ca](mailto:ocfp@ocfp.on.ca).



# Examples

One Pager ↓

Social Graphics ↓

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Strengthening Primary Care in Ontario

2025 Ontario Election



**Family Doctors: Caring for Ontarians, For Life**

Family doctors are the cornerstone of Ontario's health care system, supporting patients through every stage of life. The 2025 Ontario provincial election is a pivotal moment for family physicians and the patients they serve. With 2.5 million Ontarians still without access to a family doctor, below are some of the key ways we can close the gap.

### The Solutions

As the next government takes further steps to strengthen primary care, it is essential that every Ontarian has access to a family doctor, supported by teams and technology.

Here's How:

- Technology: Smarter, More Efficient**  
 Investing in technology can transform how family doctors work, reducing administrative workloads, releasing more time for patient care, and improving patient experience. For example:
  - **AI Scribes:** Proven through pilot projects to reduce time spent on documentation, enabling family doctors to focus on direct patient care.
  - **A Centralized Referral System:** Streamlining the process to connect patients with specialists and diagnostics faster, eliminating inefficiencies.
  - **OCFP is calling for the government to prioritize and implement these tools with input from front-line physicians, ensuring they are interoperable, user-friendly, and that strategies are in place to help with onboarding.**
- Teams: Better Access for Patients**  
 Family doctors need access to primary care teams to support a broad range of patient needs—especially for their patients with complex medical needs. While recent investments in team-based care are a positive step, about 70% of family doctors don't have access to team-based resources.
  - **Every family doctor needs access to an inter-professional team to help patients stay healthier in their communities and avoid hospital visits.**

**Supporting Northern Ontario**

Northern Ontario faces unique challenges, from workforce shortages to gaps in care. OCFP supports the creation of a Northern-specific approach, modeled after British Columbia's successful Rural Coordination Centre, to unify efforts, close gaps, and retain rural family doctors and specialists.



...are ready to work with government to make primary care more accessible and ensure everyone has access to the expertise of a family doctor.

**For more information, please contact:**  
 Deepy Sur, MSW, PhD, RSW  
 CEO, Ontario College of Family Physicians  
 dsur@ocfp.on.ca

### About OCFP

The Ontario College of Family Physicians represents more than 18,000 family physicians and medical students, including residents, retired family physicians, and more than 15,000 who are working in communities providing care to patients. Our members care for Ontarians across the health system, in primary care offices, hospitals and emergency departments, urgent care centres and walk-in clinics, as well as through home and long-term care, palliative care and more.

 OntarioCollegeFPs 
  @OntarioCollege 
  OCFP

lifewithadoctor.ca

## Ontarians want a family doctor, but 2.5M are without.

Braving cold, desperate Canadians line up for family doctor slots in Ontario

Millions of us "We're seeing a Hunger Games" across Ontario: Hundreds in this town line up for a chance at a desperate bid for family doctor

Hours-long wait demonstrates "crisis in access to care in Ontario," woman says

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Every Ontarian should have access to a family doctor working with a team, with the right technology.

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Ontarians want a family doctor.

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Connect Ontarians to a family doctor, empowered by the right technology.

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Connect Ontarians to a family doctor, empowered by a team.

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Tech for family doctors = Improved access for patients

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## Empowering family doctors with technology improves patient access.

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

## This shouldn't be happening in Ontario.

That size of office's doctor's services in hundreds to line up

"We're seeing a Hunger Games" across Ontario: Hundreds in this town line up for a chance at a family doctor

Hours-long wait demonstrates "crisis in access to care in Ontario," woman says

Millions of us "We're seeing a Hunger Games" across Ontario: Hundreds in this town line up for a chance at a desperate bid for family doctor

**Life With a Doctor** Ontario College of Family Physicians

# Life With a Doctor

Ontario College of  
Family Physicians

*Leaders for a healthy Ontario*



**Contact:**

[ocfp@ocfp.on.ca](mailto:ocfp@ocfp.on.ca)