

Stephen Brown
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health

December 15, 2022

Re: Doctors of BC Support

Doctors of BC strongly endorses the Practice Standard issued by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC as the appropriate mechanism for integrating virtual care into physician practices and believes that educating physicians and the public is the most effective method to support its appropriate application.

This is to confirm that Doctors of BC endorses the following actions to support the Practice Standard:

- a. There should be increased public communication by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC to ensure that physicians meet its Practice Standard on Virtual Care accompanied by appropriate education of physicians and the public.
- b. It is appropriate that the MSC express concern on patient access to in-person care where it is aligned with the Practice Standard on Virtual Care issued by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC, as well as its intention to follow up with individual physicians as needed using the following mechanisms:
 - i. The Patterns of Practice Committee may monitor and report to physicians on their use of virtual vs in person services in comparison to their reference group. The Patterns of Practice Committee can act immediately to review the current utilization of virtual care fees and identify physicians who provide low or no access to in-person services. This data can be provided to those physicians, and they may be asked to explain how their services are consistent with College guidelines.
 - ii. The Billing Integrity Program may audit physician practices where it is appropriate to do so.
- c. It is appropriate for the Minister and Ministry of Health to raise concerns about appropriate access to in-person care in line with the Practice Standard on Virtual Care issued by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC.
- d. Doctors of BC understands that, as a means of ensuring the safety of patients, the Ministry of Health will provide interim guidance to physicians and the public on appropriate access to virtual care within physician practices pending the Guidance that will be provided by the Virtual Care Clinical Reference Group. The Ministry will

develop any such interim guidance in consultation with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and will seek endorsement by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. D.', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

President
Doctors of BC