



Physician HR Progress Report

A Physician Human Resources Strategy for Canada
TASK FORCE TWO

Winter 2004

Task Force Two: First Year in Review

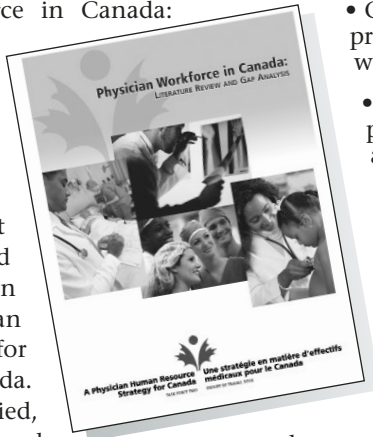
Task Force Two has reached important milestones, completing the first of its three-phase mandate. In this phase, the diverse partners on the Steering Committee have established a positive and collaborative relationship, defined the overall research direction and work plan for the duration of the initiative, and concluded a comprehensive environmental scan related to physician human resources. The findings of the environmental scan are published in a report entitled "Physician Workforce in Canada: Literature Review and Gap Analysis" and a summary report entitled

"Assessing New Models for the Delivery of Medical Services: Inventory and Synthesis." Since any initiative of this magnitude requires strong administrative and project management support, and thoughtful communications, the Task Force has secured the services of two firms to assist with these functions. Although the Task Force's ultimate goal is to develop options for a long-term human resource strategy for physicians, the Steering Committee is keeping a close watch on issues requiring more immediate attention.

Identifying Gaps in our Knowledge

"Physician Workforce in Canada: Literature Review and Gap Analysis" is the first report published by Task Force Two. It identifies gaps in our knowledge that should be addressed in developing an effective human resources strategy for physicians in Canada. The authors identified, analyzed and assessed the information on the physician workforce published since 1990 and conducted 31 interviews with key informants.

The report provides an overview of the environment in which physicians work, and a summary of the many important trends and issues that are shaping the physician workforce today. It also identifies several gaps that exist in our current understanding of the physician workforce, such as:



- Certain aspects of the profile of the physician workforce in Canada;
- Changes to the physician environment and how those will affect human resources planning;
- Patient needs and demand for medical services;
- How changes to the scope of practice for physicians will affect physician human resources;
- How medical schools and teaching hospitals will have to evolve to meet changes in physician human resources needs;
- How advances in medical knowledge and technology will affect human resources planning for physicians; and
- Gaps in access to data and on-going research to keep pace with the constant changes to Canada's healthcare system.

Assessing New Ways of Delivering Medical Services

With increasing pressure on health-care systems in Canada and around the world to deliver more and better care with less money and fewer health professionals, much attention has been paid to developing innovative *models* for delivering health care. Many new models have been introduced but the majority of them have yet to be fully analyzed, evaluated or widely publicized. The second report published by Task Force Two – "Assessing New Models for the Delivery of Medical Services: Inventory and Synthesis" – is a collection of sample models of care.

The authors of the study conducted an extensive literature search and
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The authors explain that these gaps should be addressed in order to develop an effective human resources strategy for physicians. The report concludes with recommendations for improving the collection of data and information and calls for future research activity in a number of key areas.

To read the full text of "Physician Workforce in Canada: Literature Review and Gap Analysis," please visit the Task Force Two Web site at www.physicianhr.ca and click on the **Reports** link to download the PDF document.



Task Force Two is on the Web

The various stakeholders who are watching the progress of Task Force Two can now benefit from more timely access to updated information thanks to the World Wide Web. In March, the new Web site for Task Force Two was launched at www.physicianhr.ca. Visitors will find background information on the issue of physician human resources, as well as the history and composition of the Task Force. The site also features

the latest news, published reports and a schedule of upcoming presentations to various stakeholder groups. Visitors can even request that a presentation be made to their group by a member of the Steering Committee. Journalists will also find a media background and recent news releases.

We invite you to bookmark the site and visit regularly to keep abreast of the important progress being made.

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numerous interviews with leading experts to find new and emerging models for delivering health care. The authors focused on models that feature a substantial involvement by physicians and on those that feature:

- Collaborative approaches with other physicians and other health professionals;
- New ways of funding the health services;
- Improvements in how health professionals are organized and managed, how they coordinate and integrate their efforts, and how they use new technology; and
- Integration of evaluation and evidence into the development and maintenance of the model.

The authors developed an electronic and searchable database that captures the key characteristics of each model. Task Force Two will consult this inventory as it evaluates various models and considers how certain models can help alleviate physician shortages. The objective is to identify models that could have a long-term impact on the supply of and demand for physicians in Canada.

To read a summary of Volume 1 of "Assessing New Models for the Delivery of Medical Services," please visit the Task Force Two Web site at www.physicianhr.ca and follow the **Reports** link to download the PDF document.

Physician HR Progress Report is published by Task Force Two – A Physician Human Resource Strategy for Canada. This project is funded by the Government of Canada and the medical community. We invite all stakeholder groups to make use of the text in this newsletter as they communicate with their own members. Enquiries and feedback can be directed to Task Force Two via mail, telephone, facsimile or e-mail:

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