



A key component in evaluating the success and benefits of patient medical homes involves collecting stories of health care change from doctors, patients, and allied care providers. These stories take readers on a journey toward understanding how patient medical homes are improving care around the province.

Change Snapshot: How a local Division initiative removed barriers to healthcare for students.

[Listen to an audio version of this story here.](#)

Doctor at School Makes Health Care Comfortable and Accessible for Youth

As a School Principal, I found that some students experienced challenges navigating the health care system. I supported the Docs in School program at our school, an initiative of the local Division of Family Practice. I attended meetings and facilitated the setup of the program, and continue to support it. A lot of the actual work was done by the school counsellors and our Docs in School GP.

The Docs in School program supported students to access care and support for their physical and mental health. Through the program, students learned about self-advocacy to access health care, whether or not their parents visited health care professionals. The program de-stigmatized ideas about accessing health care and that health professionals were not accessible. Accessing health care required certain actions, like finding a medical professional, making an appointment, and arranging transportation, that were at times obstacles for students.

Once we announced the program to the community, we received emails from families thanking us for providing this service. Family members were aware that sometimes students may not feel comfortable accessing medical professionals. We have noticed that some students may be afraid to access services because they don't want their family to know, or they or their family don't know where to go. Through the program, they could access a doctor and wraparound care including Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) during school.

The most significant change for me was that a barrier was removed for students accessing healthcare because the care was onsite at the school. I feel the program made a difference to our students and increased their comfort and confidence in accessing the care they need to support their physical and mental health.