



*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 the PMH initiative drove diverse work - care in high schools, working with the First Nation, and improved coordination with Child and Youth Mental Health.**

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

#### **Seamless Care for Child and Youth Mental Health Builds on Collaborative Relationships**

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As a GP nearing retirement, I saw the Patient Medical Home (PMH) initiative as an opportunity to have a voice about how health care is delivered in our community, which I didn't think we'd had before. I was Co-Chair of the PMH steering group, and the Lead for the Child and Youth Mental Health sub-committee, as well as a member of the seniors working group sub-committee.

We have a fractured system of mental health care for young people and their families, and I wanted to see it be more seamless, from my office, to crisis management in the hospital, to care within Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

It was a real detriment that PMH was introduced without initial engagement, so we had to deal with a certain degree of resistance and lack of implementation. We facilitated larger group meetings with physicians informing of the work we were doing as part of PMH. We wanted to have a dialogue and explain our perspective, as well as gather input from the GP population to modify the direction we were taking.

We started by progressively building dialogue with MCFD and hosted an evening session with physicians, CYMH and MCFD workers. We were able to build on relationships with other professionals who had been involved in collaborative care for child and youth mental health through our Local Action Team over the previous three years, which included CYMH, MCFD, ambulance services, the hospital, school counsellors, RCMP, FamilySmart, and drug and alcohol counsellors.

Through our voice, we started and are progressing on important changes that otherwise would not have happened. We started to see physicians working together on local community programs and having avenues to do that. Their voice was being registered, and they had this opportunity through PMH funding.

The most significant change for me was the work we did on seamless care, creating medical access for youth at two high schools, working with the local First Nation to build trust with people seeking care, and improving coordination with CYMH. It's been painful to watch people who have suffered because of trauma in their childhood, and who haven't developed the skills and modeling to become more effective parents themselves. I have witnessed the cycle of adversity in my career and want to mitigate the impact of mental health and drug abuse. Children are born as innocent, beautiful creatures and need to have the best chance possible.