

# **Patient Attachment Mechanism (PAM) Checkbox Tool**

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## 1. Background

In July of 2017, it was decided that multiple impending retirements of local Physicians in the Oceanside area would result in large numbers of unattached patients looking for a primary health care provider. The Oceanside Division of Family Practice agreed to look into a tool, in conjunction with Island Health, to try and create a database of orphaned patients with the intention that if and when new physicians came into the area, they would have a way to access those patients that had been without care for the longest amount of time.

## 2. Privacy Act

After checking various Divisions of Family Practice, Oceanside was advised that the Chilliwack Division of Family Practice had recently built a patient attachment mechanism tool which they called PAM, and were close to launching the tool to the public. Chilliwack agreed to let Oceanside re-tool their system, which uses online survey software available to all Divisions of Family Practice called Checkbox. This system was vetted by both the Division directors and by a private contractor to ensure it met with requirements for the Privacy Act. The contractor used was David Harris Flaherty, Ph.D., of David H. Flaherty Inc., Privacy and Information Policy Consultants. David is a specialist in the management of privacy and information policy issues. He served a six-year, non-renewable term as the first Information and Privacy Commissioner for the Province of British Columbia (1993-99). He wrote 320 Orders under the B.C. *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and also pioneered the development of Privacy Impact Assessments and site visits as forms of privacy compliance auditing.

## 3. Rollout

The Chilliwack Division began the process of rolling out their PAM tool, via a series of links, the most prominent of which resides on their Division of Family Practice homepage:

Looking for a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner?  
Live in the Chilliwack, Hope, or Agassiz-Harrison area?  
**Sign up for the PAM waitlist!**  
(Patient Attachment Mechanism)

**Click Here to Register Now!**

**How does it work?**  
Register by clicking the button above.  
Then you'll receive an email to confirm you're on the waitlist.  
We'll be in touch when there is capacity to attach you.  
In the meantime, visit [www.medimap.ca](http://www.medimap.ca) for walk-in clinic locations and wait times.

This service is only available for those who do not already have a family doctor/nurse practitioner.

Need to make an appointment at the Primary Care Clinic?  
Call 604-702-2850

**CYHC**  
Chilliwack Youth Health Centre

Medical Walk-in Clinic

Sign up for the PAM waitlist  
[Click Here](#)

**Contact Us**  
Office & Mailing Address  
c/o Chilliwack General Hospital  
45600 Menholm Road  
Chilliwack, BC V2P 1P7

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Executive Director  
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The Oceanside rollout was also facilitated through links on both the Oceanside Division's website, every patient waiting area in the Oceanside Health Centre, and a color brochure delivered to each local medical office, as well as providing the offices with the electronic information to access the waitlist (links and information via newsletter and distribution lists). Packages were hand-delivered to local GPs offices with patient handouts, color posters, and an information letter for physicians.

### One page color flyer:

**NEED A DOCTOR IN OCEANSIDE?**

OCEANSIDE PATIENT SELF-REGISTRY  
 LOOKING FOR A FAMILY DOCTOR/ NURSE PRACTITIONER?  
 LIVE IN THE OCEANSIDE HEALTH REGION?

GET ON THE WAITLIST!

**Patient Attachment Mechanism (PAM) Waitlist**  
 How Does the Waitlist Work?

- Click or scan the link, answer some basic questions about yourself and where you live.
- If eligible, you will receive an email to confirm that you are on the waitlist.
- We'll be in touch when we have the capacity to attach you.
- There is extremely limited capacity in Oceanside, and waiting time is likely to be long. Those on the list are the most likely to be taken on as patients with new or existing health practitioners.
- This service is only available for those that do not currently have a family doctor or nurse practitioner in the "Oceanside health region".
- You will also receive info on accessing alternate care while you wait.
- Paper copies of this self-registry are available at the Oceanside Health Centre, and volunteers can assist you to fill them out if needed.

<https://surveys.divisionsbc.ca/pam.aspx>

\*The "Oceanside health region" encompasses Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Lighthouse Country, Errington, and Arrowsmith Coombs Country.

Oceanside Division of Family Practice  
 GPSC  
 island health

### Patient handouts with URL and QR Code:

**PATIENT ATTACHMENT MECHANISM (PAM) SELF-REGISTRY**

**HOW DOES THE WAITLIST WORK?**

- Click or scan the link, answer some basic questions about yourself and where you live. If eligible, you will receive an email to confirm that you are on the waitlist.
- We'll be in touch when we have the capacity to attach you. Please note that there is extremely limited capacity in Oceanside.
- This service is only available for those that do not currently have a family doctor or nurse practitioner in the Oceanside health region- Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Lighthouse Country, Errington, and Arrowsmith Coombs Country.
- You will also receive info on accessing alternate care while you wait.

**ACCESS IT 3 WAYS:**

Online:  
<https://surveys.divisionsbc.ca/pam.aspx>

Scan QR Code:

Or, go in person to the Oceanside Health Centre and fill out and submit a paper copy. Volunteers are on hand to assist you if you need help.

Oceanside Division of Family Practice  
 GPSC  
 island health

### Oceanside Division Website:

**Looking for a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner?**

Sign up for the Oceanside Patient Attachment Mechanism (PAM) Waitlist!

Simply follow this link:  
<https://surveys.divisionsbc.ca/pam.aspx>

Or scan this QR code with your mobile device:

**How does it work?**

If you live in the Oceanside health region (Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Lighthouse Country, Errington, and Arrowsmith Coombs Country), and you do not already have a doctor or nurse practitioner in the area, please click or scan the link, and answer some basic questions about yourself and where you live.

- If eligible, you will receive an email to confirm that you are on the waitlist.
- We'll be in touch when we have the capacity to attach you. Please note that there is extremely limited capacity in Oceanside, and waiting time is likely to be long. However, those on the list are the most likely to be taken on as patients with new or existing health practitioners.
- This service is only available for those that do not currently have a family doctor or nurse practitioner in the Oceanside health region.
- You will also receive info on accessing alternate care while you wait.
- Paper copies of this self-registry are available at the Oceanside Health Centre, and volunteers can assist you to fill them out if needed.

Calendar >  
 UpToDate Information >  
 Job Postings >  
 Practice in BC >  
 Island Docs >

Sign up for the PAM waitlist!  
 Click Here

Welcome Package

Contact Us  
 General Queries/Information:  
 Annie Gaudette,  
 Administrative Assistant  
 email: [oceansideadmin@divisionsbc.ca](mailto:oceansideadmin@divisionsbc.ca)  
 Phone: (250) 937-9079  
 Fax: 888-977-3318

Recruitment/Operations:  
 Sharon Todd, Operations and  
 Recruitment Co-ordinator  
 email: [stodd@divisionsbc.ca](mailto:stodd@divisionsbc.ca)  
 Phone: (250) 937-9511

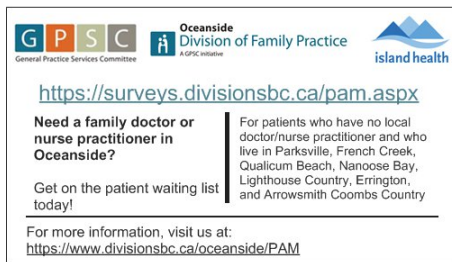
Patients also have the option of filling out a paper version of the online application form, and handing it in to the staff at the Oceanside Health Centre. There are volunteers on hand to assist those that need a hand filling out the form. These forms are then faxed online to the Oceanside Division, where they are entered into the online registry. Patients receive further information to access other community health services while they await attachment.

#### 4. Patient Rollout: Next Steps

To reach the maximum number of orphaned patients in the area, current and ongoing activities to ensure we reach all orphaned patients for inclusion to the list include the following:

- Delivery of color posters to all area pharmacies
- Delivery of business cards containing the PAM URL to all medical offices, pharmacies, and other distribution points that may also be displaying the poster
- Branching out to include Newcomers' Clubs, Seniors' Centers, City and town public-facing websites, and a press release to ensure newspaper coverage

#### Business cards distributed to all access points:



The business card features logos for the General Practice Services Committee (GPSC), the Oceanside Division of Family Practice (a GPSC affiliate), and Island Health. The main text asks if the recipient needs a family doctor or nurse practitioner in Oceanside and provides a link to a survey. It also lists specific geographic areas: Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Lighthouse Country, Errington, and Arrowsmith Coombs Country. A footer provides a website for more information.

**GPSC** Oceanside  
General Practice Services Committee Division of Family Practice  
a GPSC affiliate island health

<https://surveys.divisionsbc.ca/pam.aspx>

**Need a family doctor or nurse practitioner in Oceanside?**

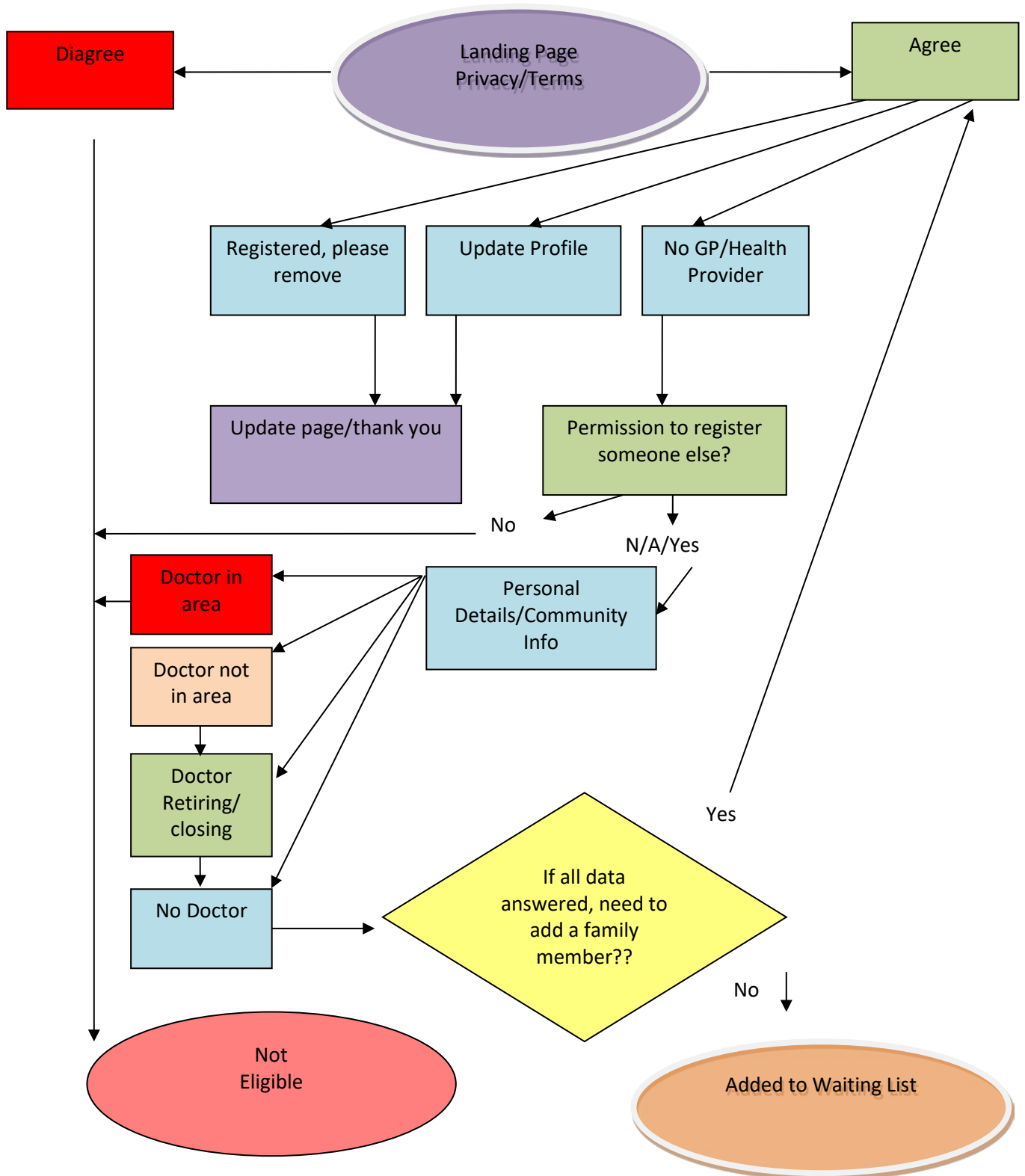
Get on the patient waiting list today!

For patients who have no local doctor/nurse practitioner and who live in Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Lighthouse Country, Errington, and Arrowsmith Coombs Country

For more information, visit us at:  
<https://www.divisionsbc.ca/oceanside/PAM>

## 5. High-Level Survey Branching Process Map

This section explains the survey branching at the highest possible level.



## 6. System Logic

This section has accompanying screenshots and explanations of the convergent and conditional logic used in the PAM system.

1. **Landing Page:** The welcome or landing page contains the information needed to continue with the waitlist process. It contains the following information:

### **Welcome to the Patient Attachment Mechanism (PAM) waitlist.**

This service will assist you in finding a primary health care provider in Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Arrowsmith Coombs Country, or Lighthouse Country areas of Vancouver Island, B.C.

#### **Please note:**

- Register each family member *separately*. You will be able to add additional members at the end of the survey if needed.
- If you are completing this registration on behalf of someone else, please answer all questions with their information.
- If you have technical difficulties with the online application, please email our administrator at [oceansideadmin@divisionsbc.ca](mailto:oceansideadmin@divisionsbc.ca).

#### **In order to use this program you must:**

- Be a resident in the Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Arrowsmith Coombs Country, or Lighthouse Country local Health Areas
- Not already be attached to any Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner in your community
- Have active or pending MSP coverage (If you do not know the answer to this, please call Medical Services Plan at 1-800-663-7100)

#### **Privacy:**

The personal information you provide to our program will be used for the purpose of finding you a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner and in compliance with the BC Personal Information Protection Act, which is subject to the independent oversight of the [British Columbia Information and Privacy Commissioner](#).

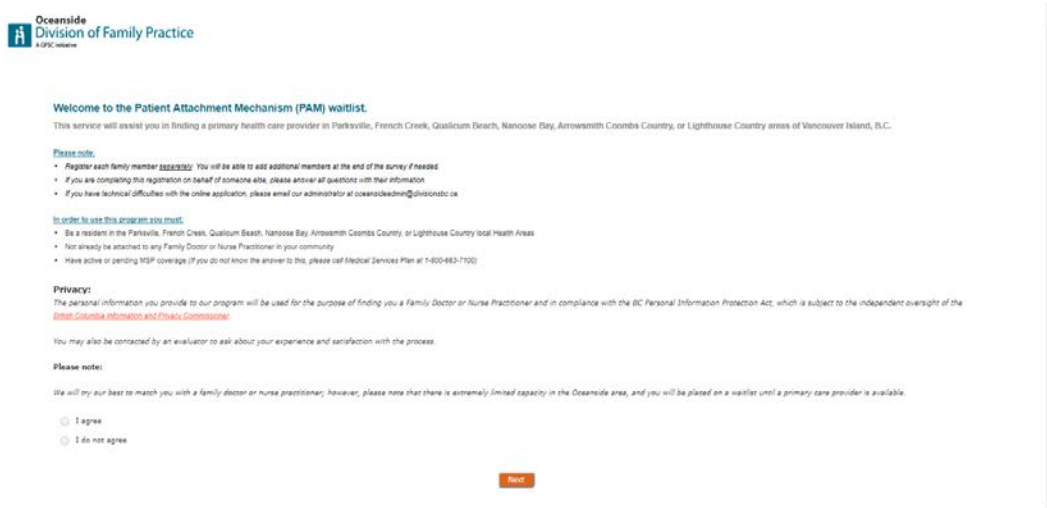
You may also be contacted by an evaluator to ask about your experience and satisfaction with the process.

#### **Please note:**

We will try our best to match you with a family doctor or nurse practitioner; however, please note that there is extremely limited capacity in the Oceanside area, and you will be placed on a waitlist until a primary care provider is available.

At this point, patients are asked to agree to the above terms. If they agree, the next section appears. If they disagree, they are directed to the ineligibility page (see page 11 of this document).

Screenshot of landing or welcome page:



## 2. Section 1

If the patient agrees to the terms above, the following question appears (see more on Page 11 of this document, “Other Streams”):

### **I am contacting the Patient Attachment Mechanism because:**

- I do not have a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner and am currently seeking a health care provider for on-going care.
- I have registered with the PAM waitlist, but no longer need a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner. Please remove me from the list.
- I have registered with the PAM waitlist, but would like to update my profile.

If the patient answers that they need to be removed from the list, or would like to update their profile, they get the following fields:

### **Thank you for taking the time to update your PAM profile.**

**\*First Name:**

**\*Last name:**

**\*What is your email address?**

*This will be used solely for the purposes of confirmation of changes. It will not be shared.*

**\*What is your date of birth?**

**\*I would like to:**

Update my profile details

I no longer need to be on the list



If the patient selects “I do not have a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner and am currently seeking a health care provider for on-going care”, they get the next question:

**If you are registering for PAM on behalf of someone else, have they given you permission to do so?**

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable, I am registering for myself

Screenshot:



### 3. Section 2

If the patient answers “Yes” or “Not applicable” to Section 1, they get the following series of questions:

**What is your given first name?**

**\*What is your surname?**

**If you have a preferred name, what is it?**

**\*What is your date of birth?**

**\*What is your email address?**

*Please note this will only be used to send you information about your attachment and will not be shared.*

**\*What is your phone number?**

**\*What community do you live in?**

*Please note you must be a resident of Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanoose Bay, Lighthouse Country, or Arrowsmith Coombs Country to be eligible.*

- Parksville
- French Creek
- Qualicum Beach
- Nanoose Bay
- Arrowsmith Coombs Country
- Lighthouse Country
- Other:

\*What is your given first name?

\*What is your surname?

If you have a preferred name, what is it?

\*What is your date of birth?

\*What is your email address?  
Please note this will only be used to send you information about your attachment and will not be shared.

\*What is your phone number?

\*What community do you live in?  
Please note you must be a resident of Parksville, French Creek, Qualicum Beach, Nanossee Bay, Lighthouse Country, or Arrowsmith Coombs Country to be eligible.

Parksville  
 French Creek  
 Qualicum Beach  
 Nanossee Bay  
 Arrowsmith Coombs Country  
 Lighthouse Country  
 Other:

If the patient answers “No” to Section 1, they get are directed to the ineligibility page.

#### 4. **Section 3**

Once the patient selects a community from the radio button list, the following question appears. If the patient selects “Other” and then fills in any value other than those listed, they will be directed to the ineligibility page.

##### **Do you currently have a Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner?**

- Yes, I have a Doctor / Nurse Practitioner in this local health care area (Parksville, Qualicum Beach, French Creek, Nanossee Bay, Arrowsmith Coombs Country, Lighthouse Country)
- Yes, I have a Doctor / Nurse Practitioner but they are not in the local health care area.
- Yes, I have a local Doctor / Nurse Practitioner but I have received notice that they are closing their practice (retiring, moving, etc.)
- No

If the patient answers “Yes, I have a doctor in this local health care area“, they will be redirected to the ineligibility page. If the patient answers “Yes. I have a doctor not in the local health care area“, the next question appears:

##### **In what community do you currently see your Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner?**

- Parksville
- Qualicum Beach
- Other:

Only Parksville and Qualicum beach appear because there are no medical practices in communities other than Parksville and Qualicum Beach. If the patient selects “Other”, they can then fill in where they currently see their health practitioner.

If they check “Yes, I have a Doctor but they are closing their practice”, they will see the following message:

##### **Please note:**

*Please note: If your Family Doctor/Nurse Practitioner has given you notice that they are leaving, you will be added to the waitlist on the last day their clinic is open.*

From here, patients with either a physician in another area, a physician closing practice will be asked for the current health provider's name:

**What is your Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner's name?**

If they indicate that they currently have no healthcare provider, they go to the next section.

Screenshot:

The screenshot shows a survey form with the following questions and options:

- \*What is your phone number?**  
[252-493-5000]
- \*What community do you live in?**  
Please note you must be a resident of Parkville, French Creek, Quailum Beach, Nanossee Bay, Lighthouse County, or Armstrong County to be eligible.  
 Parkville  
 French Creek  
 Quailum Beach  
 Nanossee Bay  
 Armstrong County  
 Lighthouse County  
 Other:
- \*Do you currently have a Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner?**  
 Yes, I have a Doctor / Nurse Practitioner in this local health care area (Parkville, Quailum Beach, French Creek, Nanossee Bay, Armstrong County, Lighthouse County)  
 Yes, I have a Doctor / Nurse Practitioner but they are not in the local health care area.  
 Yes, I have a local Doctor / Nurse Practitioner but I have received notice that they are closing their practice (retiring, moving, etc.)  
 No
- \*In what community do you currently see your Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner?**  
 Parkville  
 Quailum Beach  
 Other:
- \*What is your Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner's name?**  
[ ]

Buttons: Back, Next

## 5. Section 4

The next section gathers information that might either stream the patient to a fast-track via complex care , and also gather data that might indicate a patient who is “Doctor Shopping”.

**Have you had a Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner in the past 2 years?**

Yes

No

**\*Have you registered with PAM before?**

Yes

No

None of the above

**Are you pregnant?**

Yes

No

**Do any of the following conditions apply to you? Please check all that apply.**

- Renal Care
- COPD
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Diabetes
- Palliative Care
- Asthma
- Cancer (active treatment)
- None Of The Above

If the patient answers that they are pregnant, they will see the following message:

**Please note:**

*If you are pregnant and are not attached to any obstetrical care provider (Family Doctor, Obstetrician, Midwife, etc.), please register online for prenatal and delivery care with [Island Health](#). Please continue your PAM registration for all other medical care.*

Screenshot:

The screenshot shows a registration form with the following questions and options:

- Have you had a Family Doctor / Nurse Practitioner in the past 2 years?
  - Yes
  - No
- Have you registered with PAM before?
  - Yes
  - No
- Are you pregnant?
  - Yes
  - No
- Do any of the following conditions apply to you? Please check all that apply.
  - Heart Care
  - COPD
  - Congestive Heart Failure
  - Diabetes
  - Palliative Care
  - Asthma
  - Cancer (active treatment)
  - None Of The Above

At the bottom of the form, there is a progress bar and two buttons labeled "Back" and "Next".

If the patient answers in the affirmative for any of the indicated morbidities, they will see the following message:

**While waiting to find a physician you may be eligible to receive services from our Community Health Team at the Oceanside Health Center. You can self refer by calling 250-951-9550. Our staff will work with you to determine what supports can be offered.**

6. **Section 5**

At this point, those patients that are registering other family members (only if they indicated previously that they have permission to enter these patients), will be prompted to do so:

**\*Do you have another immediate family member to add to the waitlist?**

*If yes, another survey window will open. If yes, please answer the following questions with their information.*

Yes, there are other members in my family to add

No, I just want to register myself or I am finished registering all members of my family.

If they indicate that they need to enter further members, they are re-routed back to the landing page.

If they answer that they have finished registering all members of their family, they will see the completion screen, and an email will be sent to them indicating the status and same message as below – if the registration to the waitlist is successful, they will receive the email confirmation. Eligibility/Confirmation Message:

**Thank you for submitting your registration to the PAM waitlist.**

**You will receive an email confirmation shortly.**

Due to limited capacity, we are unable to provide attachment for anyone who currently has a Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner within the Oceanside Area.

**Due to limited capacity of local health care providers, we appreciate your patience and understanding.**

**PLEASE NOTE: You will not be contacted until we have space to match you. Submitting duplicate applications will slow down the attachment process.**

If you no longer require a family physician, please come back to this website and let us know.

If you need medical care while you are waiting to be attached, please consider the following local resources:

- Click [here](#) to see a list of local Walk-In Clinics (in Nanaimo)
- Call 8-1-1, HealthLinkBC to get health information and services from a nurse, dietitian or pharmacist. Available 24/7
- Speak with your pharmacist who may be able to provide an emergency refill of your prescription, including medications for chronic conditions, or advice about over-the-counter medications for minor issues.
- For non-life threatening illnesses or injuries that need immediate same-day care, please contact the Oceanside Health Centre at (250) 951-9550. Please note that the Urgent Care Centre is not a Walk-in Clinic. Not sure which medical conditions should be appropriately treated at the Oceanside Health Centre? Please have a look at [Your Urgent Care Journey](#).
- If it is an emergency, please go to the ER or call 9-1-1.

## 7. **Ineligibility**

In the case of Ineligibility, patients will see the following message:

**Please note that you are not eligible to register for PAM at this time because of one of the following reasons:**

- You have not consented for the use of your information for the purposes of this waitlist,
- You do not have permission to register someone else,
- You already have a Family Doctor/Nurse Practitioner in the area, or
- You do not live in the local health area

If the reason for your ineligibility should change in the future, please feel free to register again.

In the meantime, should you need medical care, please consider the following local resources:

- Click [here](#) to see a list of local Walk-In Clinics (in Nanaimo)
- Call 8-1-1, HealthLinkBC to get health information and services from a nurse, dietitian or pharmacist. Available 24/7
- Speak with your pharmacist who may be able to provide an emergency refill of your prescription, including medications for chronic conditions, or advice about over-the-counter medications for minor issues.

- For non-life threatening illnesses or injuries that need immediate same-day care, please contact the Oceanside Health Centre at (250) 951-9550. Please note that the Urgent Care Centre is not a Walk-in Clinic. Not sure which medical conditions should be appropriately treated at the Oceanside Health Centre? Please have a look at [Your Urgent Care Journey](#).
- If it is an emergency, please go to the ER or call 9-1-1.

Have a great day!  
- the PAM team

## 8. Other Streams

If the patient chooses from the title screens “Update Profile”, they will see the following:

They may then make changes to their name, phone number, email address, community, or “other”.

If a patient chooses to have their name removed from the waiting list, they will see the following screen:

They may then choose the option “I no longer need to be on the waiting list”. Both instances of update or removal will then receive a confirmation message as below:

**Thank you for taking the time to update your profile. Your changes have been updated.**

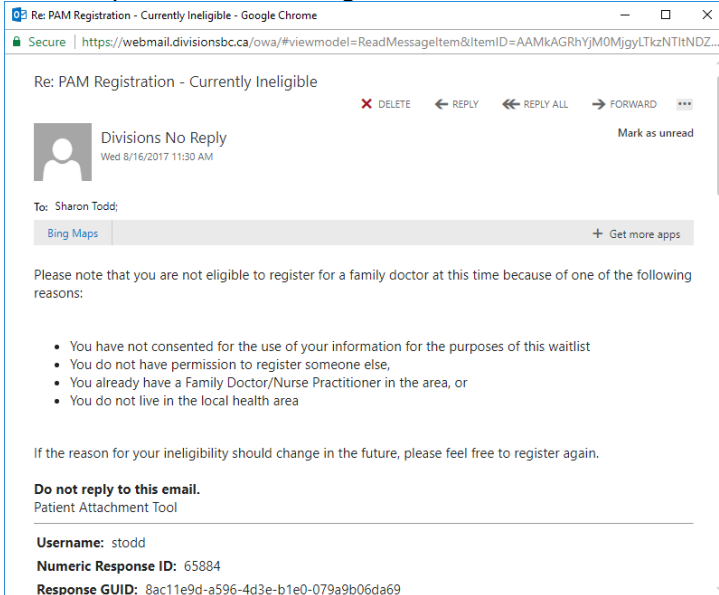
You will receive an email confirmation shortly. Have a great day!

- The PAM team

## 8. Email Confirmations

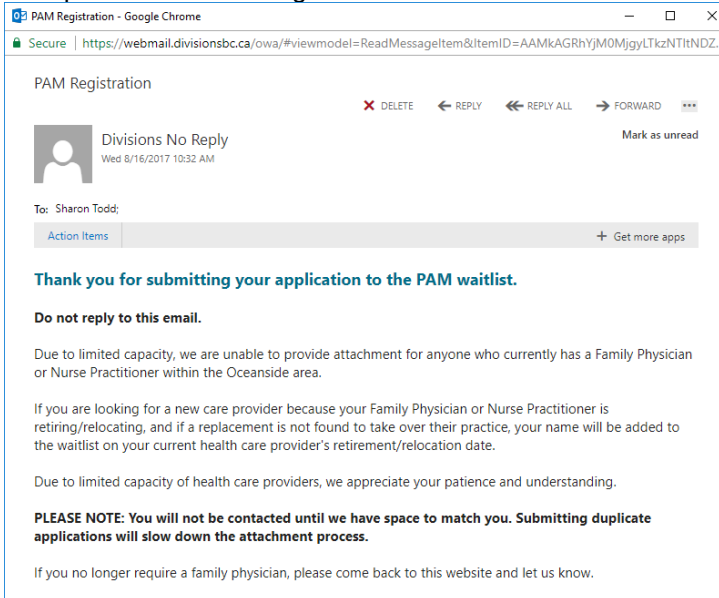
If a patient has been able to complete the survey in full, they will receive an email confirmation of acceptance to the waiting list, or, in the case of answering a question that deems the patient ineligible, they will also receive an email explaining why they were not accepted:

### Not Accepted to PAM Waiting List:



The screenshot shows an email interface in Google Chrome. The subject is "Re: PAM Registration - Currently Ineligible". The sender is "Divisions No Reply" with a timestamp of "Wed 8/16/2017 11:30 AM". The recipient is "Sharon Todd". The email body contains a list of reasons for ineligibility: "You have not consented for the use of your information for the purposes of this waitlist", "You do not have permission to register someone else", "You already have a Family Doctor/Nurse Practitioner in the area, or", and "You do not live in the local health area". It also includes a note that the reason for ineligibility may change in the future and a warning not to reply to the email. At the bottom, it provides a "Username: stodd", "Numeric Response ID: 65884", and a "Response GUID: 8ac11e9d-a596-4d3e-b1e0-079a9b06da69".

### Accepted to PAM Waiting List:



The screenshot shows an email interface in Google Chrome. The subject is "PAM Registration". The sender is "Divisions No Reply" with a timestamp of "Wed 8/16/2017 10:32 AM". The recipient is "Sharon Todd". The email body contains a "Thank you for submitting your application to the PAM waitlist." message. It includes a warning not to reply to the email and explains that due to limited capacity, attachments are not provided for those with a Family Physician or Nurse Practitioner in the Oceanside area. It also states that if a replacement is not found for a retiring/relocating provider, the patient's name will be added to the waitlist. A "PLEASE NOTE" section states: "You will not be contacted until we have space to match you. Submitting duplicate applications will slow down the attachment process." At the bottom, it asks the patient to return to the website if they no longer require a family physician.

## **7. Attachment After Self-Registry**

Once patients have signed up, Oceanside uses a practice invitation, practice policy, and practice questionnaire for each new healthcare provider who is willing to accept new patients from the list. The documents are water-marked so that they cannot be physically copied, and the practice accepting the patients is given an accompanying list of patients who have received the letter so that they may check off patients as they are attached.

Once the clinic is satisfied that all patients with letters have come in, they return the list of patients attached through the initiative back to the Division, so that those names may be removed from the waitlist.

This is necessary simply because not all patients sent to all practices will necessarily accept the new healthcare provider, or vice-versa. Patients and providers are not always a match, but the patient is not penalized (ie, does not lose their 'place' in the line) if this is the case.

To date, over 200 patients have been referred in less than one month of the PAM being up and running.