

2022 PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATION SUBMISSION

To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
From: Craig Barnes

Please accept this written submission in response to the pre-budget consultation process on the future of health care delivery in the province.

Physician Assistants (PAs) are academically prepared and highly skilled health care professionals who provide a broad range of medical services. PAs are physician extenders and not independent practitioners; they work with a degree of autonomy, negotiated, and agreed on by the supervising physician(s) and the PA. PAs can work in any clinical setting to extend physician services. PAs complement existing services and aid in improving patient access to health care. A relationship with a supervising physician is essential to the role of the PA.

Today there just over 800 certified PAs working in the country to deliver seamless care in a cost-effective manner. Enhancing the PA model will improve patient care and encourage more team-based care.

Invest in PAs in priority areas

Request: Increase the number of opportunities for PAs in the province to improve patient care.

While PAs are not replacements for physicians, they do help physicians manage more patients and improve outcomes. Another important consideration—it costs significantly less to train a PA and takes only two years (compared to approximately seven to train a physician). Further, the cost of hiring a PA is up to 90 per cent less than a doctor.

The province faces challenges in several areas of health care. By funding additional PA positions, we can help to improve access and help to care for our ageing population.

- In **primary care**, PAs make services more accessible, and help physicians grow their roster while increasing the volume and scope of services they provide.
- In **hospitals**, PAs play a significant in-house role that continues to expand in the light of the evolving work patterns of medical residents (resulting from changes to resident training practices).
- PAs in **emergency departments** can cut wait times and reduce left without being seen rates by half.
- In **long-term care centres and residential care homes**, integrating PAs can help improve key quality benchmarks such as reducing annual hospital admissions.
- PAs are working in various **surgical specialties** such as orthopedics to help with the surgical backlog.

As the province works to develop a health human resources strategy to tackle the important challenges our health system is facing – investing in PAs should be one of the key priorities.

Increase the number of PAs in the workforce

Request: Train More PAs

In Canada there are three accredited PA education programs which meet national standards of education, including a defined set of competencies that are outlined in the profession's Entrustable Professional Activities. The programs are:

- University of Manitoba Master of Physician Assistant Studies
- McMaster University Physician Assistant Education Program
- The Consortium of PA Education (University of Toronto in collaboration with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and the Michener Institute at UHN).

On average, the programs collectively receive more than 2000 applicants per year for relatively few seats. The current admissions cycle (class of 2023) received over 2000 applicants combined for an existing 69 seats. All programs are highly competitive.

Increasing enrollment in PA education programs is one cost-effective way of meeting health human resource issues. Given the shorter education period (two years), a PA can enter practice more quickly. And with training that has a generalist focus, future PAs can be effectively deployed between primary care and specialties to meet evolving provincial workforce demands.

By immediately adding more training spots for PAs in the fall of 2022, the health system would see more advanced care professionals graduating and entering the workforce in August 2024.

Thank you for your consideration. Enhancing support for the PA profession by developing a plan to invest in PAs is one cost-effective way of meeting health human resource issues to improve health care delivery in the province.

Sincerely,

Craig Barnes, CCPA
647-309-9586
craig_barnes@rogers.com

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To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
From: Kenneth Crosby

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- In **primary care**, PAs make services more accessible, and help physicians grow their roster while increasing the volume and scope of services they provide.
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Sincerely,

Kenneth Crosby, BSc., BSc.PA, CCPA

Physician Assistant at North Bay Regional Health Centre

kencrosby10@hotmail.com

2022 PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATION SUBMISSION

To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
From: Manasi Patel

Please accept this written submission in response to the pre-budget consultation process on the future of health care delivery in the province.

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The province faces challenges in several areas of health care. By funding additional PA positions, we can help to improve access and help to care for our ageing population.

- In **primary care**, PAs make services more accessible, and help physicians grow their roster while increasing the volume and scope of services they provide. This helps patients get seen faster by their healthcare system without compromising care.
- In **hospitals**, PAs play a significant in-house role that continues to expand in the light of the evolving work patterns of medical residents (resulting from changes to resident training practices).
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Sincerely,

Manasi Patel

2nd year PA Student at McMaster University

manasi.patel@medportal.ca

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From: Mizna Zaveri

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Sincerely,

Mizna Zaveri, M.Sc, CCPA
Canadian Certified Physician Assistant
miznaccpa@gmail.com