

BACKGROUND

A Planning Tool for Physician Resources in Saskatchewan February 2016

A Planning Tool for Physician Resources in Saskatchewan is one of the resources that will be used to determine overall need for physicians in the province over the coming years. Its methodology takes into account a variety of factors, including: population growth, demographics and geographic distribution, demand for specialist services, and models of care used in the province. The information will guide us towards having the right mix of physicians and specialists in the right places to best serve residents, and it allows for adjustments to the approach as circumstances change.

Findings

The document confirms a continued need to increase our physician supply to meet the population's needs. It forecasts a range of 188 to 536 additional physicians by 2022, recommending 358 additional physicians as the most likely scenario. The recent growth in our physician workforce will be factored in to our forecasted needs over the next few years.

Thorough analysis and consultation with health system partners will be required to determine how best to apply the tool to a Saskatchewan context.

The document focuses on:

- Continued collaboration with health system stakeholders during implementation;
- Continued implementation of care models, including collaborative care teams, and ensuring patient access to the appropriate provider;
- Review of the current distribution of medical education training seats at the University of Saskatchewan, and practice-ready assessments for foreign-trained physicians;
- Ongoing maintenance of the planning tool and updating of relevant data.

Priority Areas

Based on the report's forecast, the highest priority areas of need are psychiatry, anesthesia, obstetrics and internal medicine. The Ministry will work with health system partners to determine how best to address these areas.

Careful consideration will be given to areas or specializations in which the data shows we have more physicians than needed. These may be addressed as vacancies arise. We have no intention of reducing numbers of physicians.

The report forecasts physician needs for clinical services only, not for teaching and research.

Next Steps

The Ministry of Health is planning an information session in the coming weeks to discuss the report with senior leaders of key stakeholder groups. Over the next few months, the Ministry will begin to confirm priorities and how they can be addressed within available resources.

Current rates of recruitment exceed what is recommended in the report. Recruitment efforts will continue; the planning tool will inform and focus that work.