

SSC Co-chair Letter from Dr Matthew Chow and Mr Brendan Abbott

Dear Specialists:

Role of specialists in the Patient Medical Homes and Primary Care Networks

As work begins to establish [Primary Care Networks](#) (PCNs) and support [Patient Medical Home](#) (PMH), we have heard from many of you interested in knowing about these initiatives and what your role may be in relation to these new structures.

At this time, the provincial government is in the early stages of its work, with a focus on primary care within [11 “first wave” communities](#). This will take some time, and for now, the primary planning focuses on family practitioners. That said, the Specialist Services Committee is taking steps to ensure specialists are well positioned as we move forward.

We are using our networks, partnerships and influence to reinforce the need for consultation and outreach to ensure the specialists’ voice is heard as government designs plan and implements PCNs.

Specifically we are:

- Working with government to encourage the use of language within the planning documents that acknowledges and reflects the integral role of specialists with primary care networks.
- Facilitating and supporting (along with Shared Care) discussions at the local level between specialists and GPs, so that there is open communication to develop local, grassroots models of care in which the specialists play an important role in providing wrap-around care for patients. We expect the number of conversations will increase in the future as work goes on.
- Coordinating with other joint collaborative committees, including the GPSC and Divisions of Family Practice, as each has a role to help integrate specialists’ care into PCNs at the local, regional and provincial levels.

As we noted above, the work on PCNs is in its early stages and will span more than a few years to be fully realized. Ultimately, we can’t predict how PCNs will impact your work, but we do anticipate this work will address an issue currently facing many specialists – the need for specialists to deliver primary care. PCNs are expected to bolster primary care services so they are delivered at the right time and place, and by the right physician.

Watch for updated news from the Doctors of BC, the SSC, Shared Care and GPSC all of whom are engaged and working on these initiatives. Should you have any comments or questions, please send an email to: sscbc@doctorsofbc.ca.

Sincerely,



Dr. Matthew Chow
SSC Co-Chair
Doctors of BC Representative



Mr. Brendan Abbott
SSC Co-Chair
Ministry of Health Representative