



# Understanding Smoking Cessation Training Needs

**FOR PRIMARY CARE  
PROVIDERS IN BC**



## Primary care providers play an important role in helping patients living with Tobacco Use Disorder (TUD) to quit smoking.

To better understand the challenges and opportunities for primary care providers in BC to optimally support their patients wishing to stop smoking, we conducted an online survey of family physicians (FP) and nurse practitioners (NP) to determine their perceptions, knowledge and training needs related to TUD and its treatment. The survey was conducted between December 2022 and March 2023 and was completed by 156 practicing FPs and 42 NPs in BC.

*This project was developed by the BC Smoking and Vaping Cessation Community of Practice, led by Legacy for Airway Health ([www.legacyairwayhealth.ca](http://www.legacyairwayhealth.ca)) and funded by Doctors of BC Shared Care Committee.*

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### The results of the survey identified the following barriers and opportunities

#### 1. Time and compensation are key barriers in primary care.

##### Opportunities to support providers include:

- Building capacity and competency within primary care teams (e.g., allied health team members) through training in smoking cessation counseling and treatment.
- Creating and embedding referral pathways into clinical care using existing workflows and tools (e.g., electronic medical records) for efficiency.

#### 2. Communication (about TUD, referral pathways, available programs, treatment) and access to resources and tools are needed to support primary care teams. Opportunities to support providers include:

- Creating and storing all resources and information (i.e., information on treatment, counseling, and available provincial programs) in a single, accessible place for all care providers, which should be embedded within existing workflows and in concise and condensed forms (e.g., practice guidelines described in a one-pager).
- Creating specialized and accessible clinical smoking cessation services when barriers to implementing smoking cessation counseling within primary care teams are insurmountable.

#### 3. Education and awareness of smoking cessation treatment and supports are needed to increase knowledge and confidence for FPs and NPs. Information desired includes:

- Evidence-based treatment for smoking cessation (e.g., brief interventions, motivational interviewing, pharmacologic coverage).
- Strategies to overcome patient barriers to quit smoking (e.g., lack of motivation, concurrent substance use or mental illness, and lack of support).

**The results from the survey have identified gaps and opportunities for relevant organizations (e.g., government, professional associations) to enhance support by primary care providers to their patients wishing to quit smoking. Activities to disseminate the survey results and identify strategies for addressing the gaps are underway.**



Physician

79%



N = 198



Nurse Practitioner (NP)

21%



Urban/Suburban

74%



N = 198



Rural/Remote/Isolated

26%









