

Challenges and Opportunities for Change

Addressing Occupational Health and Safety in Rural Community Medical Practices

People working in healthcare are twice as likely to be injured on the job compared to the average B.C. worker. Injury rates, both physical and psychological, are rising annually.

Rural and remote medical practices face additional difficulties due to geographic isolation, limited resources, and fewer support networks. There is a higher barrier to accessing occupational health and safety (OHS) resources, and the roles and responsibilities of physicians as employers are not always clearly defined or taught.

Supporting community physicians in building healthy and safe workplaces increases their ability to dedicate more time to patient care and less time on administration. CPHS health and safety advisors are mobile and can travel to clinics located across B.C., including rural and remote areas.

Governance and Oversight

The 2022 Physician Health and Safety Agreement establishes the Community Physician Health and Safety Oversight Group. This Group is composed of representatives from the Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health and provides governance and oversight to SWITCH BC to develop and manage the program. A physician task group composed of Doctors of BC members, that includes both family physicians and specialists, provide opportunities for engagement and feedback on the program.



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Community Physician Health and Safety (CPHS) Program

The Community Physician Health and Safety (CPHS) program, developed by SWITCH BC, Doctors of BC, and the Ministry of Health, takes the guesswork out of workplace health and safety for physicians and their staff. The program provides assessments, and all the tools and resources required for clinics to meet their legislative requirements. What the program offers:

Web portal

- Ready-to-use checklists, policies, and procedure templates for all occupational health and safety topics.
- Reduced administrative burdens with easy access to necessary resources in one central location.
- Progress tracking to build a health and safety program that is unique to each clinic.







Reference Guide

- Digital guide to all occupational health and safety legislative and regulatory requirements for physician-employers.
- Takes guesswork out of roles and responsibilities and outlines why occupational health and safety programs are required in community clinics.

What's Next

- More clinic assessments provincewide including rural and remote locations.
- De-escalation tools for medical office staff.
- Web portal additions including ergonomics training, safe work practices, and more.
- Self-learning credits for completing online modules through our web portal.
- Increased program awareness.

Get a clinic assessment! Build a health and safety program!

Collaborate with our team at cphs@switchbc.ca

Learn more at switchbc.ca

