

building a primary care network

The Primary Care Initiative (PCI) is a joint initiative between Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW), Alberta Medical Association (AMA) and Alberta Health Services (AHS) to provide Albertans with sustainable, accessible and quality primary health care through the

implementation and funding of Primary Care Networks. In a Primary Care Network, family physicians and other health professionals work together as a multi-disciplinary team to increase Albertans' access to the right care, from the right professional, at the right time.

PCIC

Primary Care Initiative Committee

The governing body of PCI, this Committee is ultimately accountable for the Primary Care Initiative. It consists of representatives from each AHW, AMA and AHS who meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the Master Agreement related to the Primary Care Initiative.

PMO

Primary Care Initiative Program Management Office

The PMO is the operational arm of PCI. It provides support for the various steps involved in forming a PCN, from application to implementation, including funding for a Project Planner. Also, it manages communications and marketing initiatives, knowledge transfer and evaluation on behalf of the Primary Care Initiative.

PCN

Primary Care Network

In a PCN, family physicians and other health professionals work together as a multi-disciplinary team to ensure their patients receive the right care, from the right professional, at the right time. PCNs are funded by PCI and supported operationally by the PMO.

Steps to forming a Primary Care Network – from application, to launch, to implementation

- 1 PCIC issues an invitation to family physicians who are not members of a PCN to submit a letter of intent.
- 2 Interested family physicians collaborate with AHS to develop a letter of intent expressing their interest to form a PCN. The family physicians are then encouraged to contact the Practice Management Program consultants through AMA to aid in developing the application to establish a PCN.
- 3 The PMO provides support and advice to guide preparation of the letter of intent if required.
- 4 The letter of intent is reviewed by PCIC for approval.
- 5 Once the letter of intent is approved, the family physicians and AHS partners initiate the planning process, developing a business plan that includes a:
 - Project plan
 - Service plan
 - Draft of the three-year business plan
- 6 The PMO reviews the draft business plan and provides feedback.
- 7 The family physicians and AHS partners submit the business plan.
- 8 PCIC approves the business plan.
- 9 The PCN is now established. An Operations Leader is hired to oversee implementation of the plan.
- 10 The PMO and AHW ensure all proper documentation is in place for PCN start-up, including privacy, legal and registration documents.
- 11 The PCN commences operations and implements local programs and performance monitoring. Financial accountabilities, outcome evaluations and ongoing plans are reported by the PCN to the PMO through:
 - A mid-year operations report
 - An annual report
 - An annual budget
- 12 If the PCN decides to adjust or enhance its local programs, an amended business plan is presented to the PMO.
- 13 PCIC approves any amendments to the business plan, ensuring alignment with provincial objectives.
- 14 In the third year, the PCN submits a three-year business plan for its next phase.
- 15 PCIC reviews and approves the renewed PCN business plan.
- 16 Steps 13 to 15 are repeated every three years.