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Family Physicians
Nova Scotia

Dear Colleagues,

RE: PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGIST SHORTAGE, IWK HEALTH CENTRE

We are writing to inform you of the current shortage of Pediatric Neurologists at the IWK Health Centre that is substantially affecting wait times for both new and follow-up visits. We currently have 3 neurologists accounting for 2.2 FTEs in the division and have 2 full time vacant positions despite ongoing recruitment efforts.

This is further magnified by the CoVID-19 pandemic resulting in clinic closures, virtual care and delays in seeking treatment leading to growing wait lists. In addition, we have had to absorb the patient volume of two full time neurologists (Drs. Kevin Gordon and Egidio Spinelli); both of whom departed simultaneously at the end of July 2020. This has added extra clinical demand on already over-stretched physician resources.

There is concern from our division that this will lead to further delays in providing safe, timely patient care and potential for physician burn-out. While we encourage ongoing consultation of our service where appropriate, we would like our colleagues to be aware of the challenges and to ensure reasonable expectations and understanding regarding potential delays to consultation.

Yours truly,

Paula Brna MD

Division Head, Pediatric Neurology, IWK Health Center and Dalhousie

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