

Dr. Muna Chowdhury

DESIGNATIONS

- CCFP, FCFP
- Full Spectrum Family Medicine with specialization in Adolescent Health, Trans Health, Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders
- GP Psychotherapist
- Certified Yoga Instructor

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Thank you for considering my application. I am a family physician in practice since 2008. Although I am originally from Halifax, I have been living and practicing for 11 years in Toronto, Ontario where I practiced in a community health centre setting serving marginalized groups. Part of this work involved advocacy work and system navigation work on behalf of my patients. In 2021, I moved back to Halifax and have been practicing in a full spectrum fee for service family practice as well as at Direction 180, an Opiate Agonist Treatment centre.

Since 2019, I have been actively involved with the CFPC Child and Adolescent MIG Working Group. Together we have been working with both family physician and our specialist colleagues to put forward collaborative statement papers, create educational sessions for health care providers (Cannabis Use in Youth), as well as create information modules for the public (most recently about the importance of getting vaccinated against Covid). This role has allowed me to learn about the benefits of working inter-sectionally with physician colleagues from other specialties as well as how to disseminate health information using various media to the public.

While in Toronto, from 2019-2020, I was the Chair of the Community Health Centre (CHC) Group in the Ontario Medical Association. In this role, I was successful in advocating for and ensuring a salary increase for CHC physicians, a priority we had been working on for over a decade. This role gave me insight on the inner workings of a professional organization (the Ontario Medical Association), as well as challenges when working with the Ministry of Health and other relevant stakeholders in advocating for change while balancing the needs and interests of various parties.

From 2019-2020, I was a board member for a charitable organization – Peacebuilders International – whose mandate was to reintegrate youth who are involved with the criminal justice system, using a restorative justice model. This experience enabled me to see the inner workings of a not-for-profit organization, the challenges these organizations face, as well as creative measures for fundraising, increasing awareness and increasing participant and community partner engagement.

In 2017, I had the opportunity to participate in the Community Health Leadership Program through Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto's graduate business school. This gave me great insight and skills to use in identifying resource limitations and barriers to change, while promoting

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creative internal solutions to promote change, all with the goal of improving health for specific target populations. I continue to incorporate this learning into working with my patients and colleagues in individual and systemic change initiatives.

MOTIVATION

I returned to Halifax, Nova Scotia earlier this year, primarily for family reunification purposes. I inherited a family practice from a retiring colleague. I struggled with advocating for continuing AFP funding for this position, as well as experienced firsthand the limits of FFS billing when working with complex patients while ensuring that our work is compensated for fairly and equitably. In this process, I met and was supported by wonderful colleagues who helped me navigate through many challenges. They highlighted many resources and opportunities that are available in Nova Scotia as well as encouraged me to continue to advocate for change.

These challenges that many of us as family physicians face have motivated me to support and advocate for change in our local and provincial context. It would be an honour to serve my colleagues in Nova Scotia in advocating for systemic changes and compensation model changes to ensure improved work conditions, remuneration conditions, and patient service and safety.

Dr. Andrew Cumming

DESIGNATIONS

Full scope family practice in HRM

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

I have previously sat on committees representing fellow residents at both local and national level. On completing residency, I sat on the Scottish Government Standing Radiology Committee giving a family practice perspective on service provision and development.

MOTIVATION

I have only been in Nova Scotia for two years, but I have seen and experienced many of the problems that some of you have experienced for a lot longer: contract negotiations, secondary care passing off responsibility and overly complicated referral systems to name a few.

I have worked on Government level committees and had success in changing policy but am aware how slowly the wheels of power can turn – I would not be disheartened by slow change and am prepared to work for changes. I would like to be part of the team representing family doctors to make health care better for patients and a more pleasurable career for family physicians.

I would enjoy the opportunity to give something back to the province I now call home by working tirelessly for you.

Dr. Kristian Lobban

DESIGNATIONS

Halifax (Clayton Park) – Family practice (Duffus Health Centre)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- Current member of the Family Doctors Council (1 year term)
- Medical Director – Duffus Health Centre

MOTIVATION

I'm interested in remaining on the Family Doctors Council, as I have a genuine interest in improving primary care in Nova Scotia. As a somewhat recent graduate, I'm very interested in ways to improve recruitment and retention of family doctors in our province, to increase access to primary care for all Nova Scotians and to enhance the working environment for current family doctors. Given our recent election and change in Government, I'm very excited about the opportunity of being a member of the Family Doctors Council, as I see this as such a critical time to lobby and advocate for some very necessary changes to our Health Care System. I've very much enjoyed my first year on the Council and would appreciate the chance to continue for another term.

Dr. Sarah Rushworth

DESIGNATIONS

- MBChB, BA(hons), MRCP, MRCPGP, CCFP
- Family Physician at Family Focus Medical Clinic in Cole Harbour, Dartmouth.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Medical Professional Roles

- Current Family Physician at Family Focus Medical Clinic, NS since August 2021
- Locum GP in the UK from February 2019-April 2020 and April 2021-August 2021
- GP Partner from April 2020- April 2021 and Salaried GP from May 2015- Feb 2019
- Gastroenterology Specialist Registrar Aug 2009 – Aug 2011

Strategic and Specialist Roles

- Named Doctor for Children's Safeguarding MerseyCare NHS Trust
- Strategic Lead for Safeguarding Policy for Children Division, MerseyCare NHS Trust
- Primary Care Practice Education and Development Lead for Central Park Medical Practice
- Primary Care Lead Liaison between Liverpool NHS CCG, Liverpool Council and Education Board for School Absenteeism
- Lead Safeguarding GP for Belle Vale Medical Practice
- Forensic Practitioner for Merseyside Police
- Medical Editor for Pastest Ltd for 10 years

Dr. Sarah Rushworth profile cont'd

Teaching and Education Roles

- Associate Professor for Dalhousie University, NS - Preceptor
- Educational Supervisor and Examiner for University of Liverpool Medical School, UK
- GP Mentor for University of Liverpool GP Society

MOTIVATION

As a new doctor in Nova Scotia I am already seeing some of the challenges family physicians and patients face. I would like to bring fresh eyes and ears to the council and offer my experience of problem solving and strategic management within healthcare to my colleagues. I am particularly keen to help promote and support inclusivity and encourage recognition of diversity within our profession. Raising awareness of the exceptionally difficult job we do every day, where we are asked to accept tremendous responsibility for our patients, and accountability for the services that our patient access is of utmost importance. In light of the recent Truth and Reconciliation Day I would like to help develop policies and protocols to protect the most vulnerable and believe that the role of the Family Physician is vital to this process. I have extensive safeguarding experience from the UK and would like to share this to ensure multi-agencies provide oversight and are accountable for their actions. I would love the opportunity to represent my peers to raise the profile and support the tireless efforts of my colleagues in Family Practice.

Dr. Shalini Veerassamy

DESIGNATIONS

- Family Practice, Halifax, NS
- M.Eng., MB.BCh. (Ireland), CCFP, FCFP, ACBOM
- Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine
- Dalhousie University

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- Physician Leadership Institute course: Leading change 2021.
- Medical Advisor WCBNS: January 2020 to present.
- Active preceptorship with medical students, residents and nurse practitioners: 2013-present.
- Member of the Fellowship Council 2020 to present.
- CFPC examiner (Bilingual) 2017 to present.

MOTIVATION

As a community Family Physician in the HRM for the past 15 years, my motivation is to be involved, be a representative and bring a strong voice of HRM Family Physicians. What I hear from my fellow Family Physicians colleagues is concern about the future of our specialty. My goal is to gain better

2021-22 Family Doctor Council Election – Candidate Profiles Halifax Metro (two vacancies)



Dr. Shalini Veerassamy profile cont'd

understanding of how decisions are made and be an advocate for my colleagues to improve delivery of care, improve patient outcome and work in a sustainable collaborative team.

As we navigate through this complex health care crisis, it is even more vital that we continue to improve access to care to Nova Scotians. Fostering a growth mindset is key to recharging our profession. Clear roles and responsibilities in primary care is important now more than ever to reduce duplication of care, reduce mistrust, improve access, efficiency, and foster healthy communication.

I am motivated to support our new Family Medicine graduates and recent IMG recruits find their way, settle, and grow in our province.

It would be an honor to represent my fellow Family Physicians on the Family Doctors Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dr. Jessica Wentzel

DESIGNATIONS

Family Medicine, CCFP, Bedford, NS

I also have a special interest in addiction medicine and work 2 days per week at the withdrawal management unit in Dartmouth, NS

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- Atlantic Mentorship Network – Member – 2018-current
- As a resident and medical student, I was a member/executive of many various organizations and am happy to elaborate or provide this information.

MOTIVATION

I have been practicing Family Medicine for almost 3 years, and they have flown by. I may be a newer graduate, but I have seen the field of Family Medicine continue to transform and evolve in that time, for both the good and the bad (and maybe some ugly as well). I have witnessed many holes, redundancies, as well as processes for the sake of processes, to name a few. I also currently work several days per week in Addiction Medicine. In my addiction position, I must have a strong voice and often advocate for a population who may be vulnerable. I want to use some of this voice to advocate for Family Medicine as a whole, and to try and support my colleagues. I want to work as part of a team to come up with solutions, rather than continuing to criticize the inefficiencies and lack of access. Most importantly, as a community Family Physician, I want to represent Family Medicine and ensure that our day-to-day obstacles and triumphs are heard and represented. Thank you for your consideration.