

Dear Patients, Guardians, Friends,

It is with a heavy heart that I let you know as of Jan 31, 2021 I will no longer be able to be your family physician. I am going to focus on Urgent Care work and other short term positions for the foreseeable future. I have been at Glenbrook Medical Clinic for almost ten years and have really cherished my opportunities to grow as a physician and person. I have learned so much from you, and feel that I have improved so much as a doctor for the opportunities you have provided me.

It is no secret that there have been major transformations to my role as a Family Physician from several sources in the past nine months. Covid has impacted us all, and everyone's ability to work and function. Despite this global crisis, there has also been a more significant issue, which is the toxic relationship between Health Minister Shandro and family physicians. Obviously Alberta is in a difficult financial situation and all public servants need to chip in to address this. The way in which the current government has attacked the core of family medicine has been irreversibly damaging. The Dermatologists and Ophthalmologists who earn triple what I make have received virtually no cuts in income, whereas I personally have had a 30% decrease in my income. At the same time my office work has been more burdensome and challenging than ever before, with Covid related tolls hitting all aspects of society, from young children struggling with daycare closures to the elderly population facing unprecedented isolation and stress. Simply put, I have never worked harder for less. When I have attempted to contact my MLA to discuss this, he has refused to meet with me both times. If you are not happy with how this change of circumstance has impacted you, I encourage you to contact your MLA to let them know. Hopefully they will hear your voice louder than mine.

I feel that there has been a death of a thousand cuts to my career at Glenbrook Medical as your Family Physician. Tax increases, increasing demands of regulatory bodies (ie College of Physicians) and Covid related collateral impact. However, the main damage done has been by the current knife wielding government, who has refused to hear the voice of family doctors, insisting that we are all greedy doctors, and there is an endless supply of doctors willing to step in if I step back. For the latter point, I hope they are correct. But I will not be part of a system that is imploding under its own fallacies while ignoring the value of the work that I have strived to provide to you every day of my career. The government is opening more private surgical facilities and encouraging high paid specialists to do more procedures that earn them far more income than I can ever receive providing thoughtful, meaningful care to deserving patients.

A year ago I never would have dreamed that I would leave Family Medicine. I wanted to continue to serve you, my patients and friends, for the next twenty years of my career. However, if I don't make a change now, I will be placing increasing strain on my personal health and family life. That would prevent me from being the type of physician I want to be, so I have to make a change to protect myself and ultimately you, the patient. I don't believe things are going to get better for family doctors for many years.

Going forward, I am advertising to local physicians to see if anyone is available to take over my practice, so that you can have a seamless experience as a patient with minimal disruption to your medical life. If no one is available to take over, you are free to find a new Family Physician any time in the next few months to take over your care. The easiest way to do this is to go to [www.cpsa.ca](http://www.cpsa.ca) and search for family physicians near your postal code who are accepting new patients. The new doctor cannot reject you based on your age, how 'complex' you are as a patient, or if you use certain types of medications (ie opioids). The only reason they can refuse to see you is if they only are accepting a certain demographic of patients, such as only seeing female patients.

(<http://www.cpsa.ca/standardspractice/establishing-physician-patient-relationship/>)

We have enquired with Drs Beach, Nadori and Smit, and they are able to take on a limited number of patients who want to continue at the Glenbrook Medical Clinic. I have approximately 1400 patients in my 'practice' and the other physicians in our building cannot accommodate all of my patients. Our office will contact you if there is a position available with one of those physicians so that you can have a 'meet and greet' appointment with them and see if you are comfortable with their care going forward.

I will continue to have similar hours and work availability as your Family Physician until then end of January. I truly wish each of you the best and I wish this wasn't the message I need to send you. Now please send a message to elected officials if you want this situation made right.

Yours in Service,



Dr Lee Bogle

Cc:

Honorable Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health

MLA Mike Ellis

AMA President Dr Paul E Boucher