



The Department of Family Medicine – University of Calgary

The Department of Family Medicine has three academic teaching centres where family physicians and multi-disciplinary health teams take care of patients and train future family physicians.

- Central Family Medicine Teaching Centre
- South Health Campus Family Medicine Teaching Centre
- Sunridge Family Medicine Teaching Centre

THE GOAL

Dr. Divya Garg, Medical Director of the Academic Teaching Centres, says these clinics place a high priority on quality improvement and evidence-based medical care.

And as a result, they rely heavily on various data sources including the HQCA's Primary Healthcare Panel Reports and their EMR system to identify opportunities for ongoing improvement.

THE VALUE

"Where we find the HQCA data most valuable is to help us understand healthcare system utilization by our patients," says Dr. Garg. "We can learn about emergency department visits, hospital admissions and length of stay. This information can help guide initiatives to improve access and care provided within the Medical Home."

AT A GLANCE

Organization

Department of Family Medicine – University of Calgary

Number of Physicians

50 physicians across three Academic Teaching Centres

How They Use Their Panel Reports

- ✓ Patient engagement
- ✓ Preventative screening outreach
- ✓ Health service access improvement
- ✓ Pharmaceutical dispensing assessment
- ✓ COVID-19 vaccination outreach
- ✓ Chronic disease management



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– Dr. Divya Garg, Medical Director of the Academic Teaching Centres, University of Calgary

The Primary Healthcare Panel Reports also support the quality improvement (QI) initiatives underway at the teaching centre clinics.

“Right now, we have residents working on QI projects related to proton pump inhibitor use” she says. “We use our panel reports to better understand and assess our prescribing practices.”

With the HQCA data, physicians can review the percentage of pharmaceuticals dispensed amongst their patient panel and compare with the percentages dispensed across panels in their primary care network and clinics across Alberta.

Dr. Garg says the information has led to valuable education with the family medicine residents about the types of questions they should ask patients when filling specific prescriptions. The goal of these conversations is to prescribe appropriately and limit the overuse or an inappropriate extended use of medications such as proton pump inhibitors.

While it’s too early to tell if this education is positively impacting prescription rates at the family medicine teaching centres, Dr. Garg says increasing knowledge is an important first step in their quality improvement cycle.

The family medicine teaching centres have also used their Primary Healthcare Panel Reports to track and increase COVID-19 immunization rates. The preventative screening information has been valuable as well.

“The HQCA simply has access to more data sources than what would otherwise be available to us,” says Dr. Garg. “As shared by our Quality and Informatics team, the panel report includes the most accurate data related to immunizations because it accesses the Imm/ARI provincial repository of vaccination information. The HQCA’s screening data is also more robust than what is available from our EMR.”

In addition to frequent internal reviews of HQCA data, the teaching centers have shared a relevant selection of their panel reports with their Patient Advisory Councils. “It’s important for us to engage patients in meaningful discussions on how we use evidence and data to guide our patient care decisions and QI initiatives,” Dr. Garg says. “Collaborating and sharing this information with our patient representatives helps guide care that is responsive to the unique needs of our patient panels within the Medical Home.”

ABOUT THE HQCA

The Health Quality Council of Alberta is a provincial agency that brings together patients, families, and our partners from across healthcare and academia to inspire improvement in patient safety, person-centred care, and health service quality. We assess and study the healthcare system, identify effective practices, and engage with Albertans to gather information about their experiences. Our responsibilities are outlined in the *Health Quality Council of Alberta Act*.