

Group Family Practice Development Grant

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. What is the Group Family Practice Development Grant?

This grant is intended to help cover expenses incurred when family physicians join or form a new or expanded group practice with three or more co-located family physicians.

Grant payments are payable to eligible family physicians for the following types of expenses:

- Ending a lease;
- Merging/transferring medical records and software licensing fees;
- Moving or relocation to a new clinic space. Family physicians moving or relocating need to transfer their patient panels to the new group practice or to another family physician (e.g. moving expenses and costs of disposing of existing equipment/supplies); and,
- Expanding or renovating clinic space - design and contracting including labour cost and permanent fixtures (e.g. materials for floor and wall coverings, ceilings, partitions, electrical, plumbing, fire protection and security).

Each individual family physician in the group practice can claim up to \$30,000 with a maximum combined total of \$200,000 per consolidated group family practice. For example, if an existing group practice of three doctors adds an additional doctor to the practice, then each of the four doctors may claim up to \$30,000 in eligible expenses. The combined claim of a group family practice cannot exceed \$200,000. The grant covers eligible expenses incurred between September 1, 2020 and March 1, 2022. Applications for the grant must be submitted by March 31, 2022.

2. Who is eligible?

To be eligible, family physicians, including new to practice family physicians, need to meet **all** of the following criteria:

- Have joined or formed a new or expanded group family practice with three or more co-located family physicians;
- Have incurred costs, between September 1, 2020 and March 1, 2022, toward consolidating the new or expanded group family practice;
- Are practicing as a [Community Longitudinal Family Physician \(CLFP\)](#) as defined in the GPSC Preamble.

Please note that physicians working under Alternative Payment/Funding Models are eligible if they meet the above eligibility requirements.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact gpsc.billing@doctorsofbc.ca.

3. Who is **not** eligible?

Physicians are **not** eligible for the grant if **one or more** of the following applies:

- Have closed their family practice prior to forming or joining a group practice, **unless** the physician has transferred their panel of patients to the new group practice or to another family physician prior to joining the new group practice.
- Have moved from one group practice (three or more family physicians) to another group practice (three or more family physicians). Physicians who have merged two group practices may be eligible for the grant. Please contact gpsc.billing@doctorsofbc.ca to discuss your situation.

Please note that in the case of a group practice where one or more physicians have left permanently and one or two family physicians remain, the remaining one or two physicians are no longer considered to be a group practice (less than three physicians). These physicians may be eligible to claim eligible expenses if they join a new group practice provided they meet the eligibility requirements of the grant.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact gpsc.billing@doctorsofbc.ca.

4. Are new to practice family physicians eligible?

New to practice family physicians who meet the eligibility criteria above may claim eligible expenses they incur. Eligible family physicians in an existing group practice may also claim eligible expenses incurred in cases where they are adding a new family physician who is new to practice in BC.

5. How do eligible family physicians apply for the grant?

The group family practice submits an [online application form](#) on behalf of the eligible family physicians. On the application form, the family practice will list expenses incurred (or expected to be incurred) by each physician – individual physicians should not submit separate applications. After submitting the application form, the family practice will be asked to provide copies of receipts to verify expenses incurred. The appropriate documentation required for payment are eligible invoices and proof of payment (e.g.: invoice/receipt showing payment made with a zero balance, credit card receipt, EFT receipt, E-Transfer receipt, bank draft receipt, cheque image or wire transfer receipt etc.). Any expenses without the appropriate documentation will be denied. Each eligible family physician is eligible to claim a maximum amount of \$30,000, with a combined total amount not to exceed \$200,000 per group family practice/clinic. The grant payments are paid directly to the claiming physician. This payment will be remitted to the same bank account you have linked to receive your sessional payments from Doctors of BC. Please login to your [Doctors of BC account](#) to verify the account you have linked. The grant payment will not generate a tax slip. All physicians will receive a payment confirmation from the Doctors of BC and they should hold on to this for their reference. We are unable to provide any tax advice, and advise physicians to speak to their accountant on how these payments should be claimed as every circumstance is different.

If applicable, a group family practice may apply for the grant prior to incurring eligible expenses. On the application form, the family practice will list eligible expenses expected to be incurred by each physician. After submitting the application form, the family practice will be asked to provide copies of cost estimates/quotations to verify expected expenses. After the application has been approved, the group family practice will have up to three months to submit copies of receipts to verify eligible expenses incurred. During this three month period, funding for the application will be reserved and will be paid to eligible physicians after all receipts have been submitted and approved. Group family practices that are unable to submit their receipts within the three month period must contact gpsc.billing@doctorsofbc.ca to request an extension of the time period. In situations where a time extension is not granted, the group family practice will have to reapply for the grant.

6. How many times can eligible family physicians apply for the grant?

Each eligible family physician can only apply for the grant one-time. However, eligible family physicians may apply for additional grant payments for eligible expenses in the case where a group family practice, after previously receiving the grant, has increased the number of eligible family physicians in the group practice (i.e.

not replacing physicians that left the group practice) provided that total grant payments per group practice/clinic do not exceed \$200,000.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact gpsc.billing@doctorsofbc.ca.

7. What expenses can be claimed by eligible family physicians?

Grant payments are payable to eligible family physicians for the following types of expenses incurred in the time period of September 1, 2020 to March 1, 2022:

- Ending a lease;
- Merging/transferring medical records and software licensing fees;
- Moving or relocation to a new clinic space. Family physicians moving or relocating need to transfer their patient panels to the new group practice or to another family physician (e.g. moving expenses and costs of disposing of existing equipment/supplies); and,
- Expanding or renovating clinic space - design and contracting including labour cost and permanent fixtures (e.g. materials for floor and wall coverings, ceilings, partitions, electrical, plumbing, fire protection and security).

Each individual family physician in the group practice can claim up to \$30,000 with a maximum combined total of \$200,000 per consolidated group family practice. For example, if an existing group practice of three doctors adds an additional doctor to the practice, then each of the four doctors may claim up to \$30,000 in eligible expenses. The combined claim of a group family practice cannot exceed \$200,000. The grant covers eligible expenses incurred between September 1, 2020 and March 1, 2022. Applications for the grant must be submitted by March 31, 2022.

8. What expenses can **not** be claimed by family physicians?

The following types of expenses are **not** eligible:

- Building a new clinic (construction of a new building is not eligible. This is different from renovating an existing building or “shell” space.).
- Building code upgrades.
- Office furnishings and décor (e.g. art work).
- Capital and medical equipment (e.g. desk, telephone, computer, EMR etc.).
- Staff, consultant, or physician time or severance.
- Personal moving expenses unrelated to clinic space or equipment.
- Work funded through other sources.
- Expenses incurred by clinic owner who is not a practicing physician at the new or expanded group practice (even if such expenses are subsequently charged to the practicing physician to recover costs).
- All expenses incurred prior to September 1, 2020 or after March 1, 2022.

9. Are expenses relating to adding an allied care provider (e.g. nurse) eligible?

No. Please contact your local division of family practice for more information on Minor Tenant Improvement (MTI) funding supporting team-based care in primary care networks.

10. Can eligible family physicians apply for this grant in addition to the original Minor Tenant Improvement (MTI) funding for allied care providers in primary care networks?

Yes. Eligible family physicians can claim both the original MTI funding and this grant, as long as they meet the requirements of these funds. Please contact your local division of family practice for more information on MTI funding supporting team-based care in primary care networks.

11. When will this grant be available until?

Jointly funded by the BC Ministry of Health and the GPSC, the grant is available until March 2022. Costs must be incurred between September 1, 2020 and March 1, 2022. All applications for the grant must be submitted by March 31, 2022. The grant will be available until March 31, 2022 or when the total funding amount has been exhausted (whichever comes first).

12. In addition to the grant, what other supports are available to support group family practices?

Physicians in newly formed or expanded group practices are encouraged to develop a formal group governance agreement to clarify details around clinic operations, business/financial arrangements, and dispute management. Please see Doctors of BC's [A Guide to Governance Agreements](#) for more information.

In addition, please see the [GPSC Practice Support Program](#) (PSP) to learn about practice facilitation and other learning supports available to improve team effectiveness and clinic efficiency.

13. Who do I contact if I have more questions?

If you are considering joining or forming a consolidated group family practice and applying for this grant, we encourage you to contact us in advance to clarify your eligibility. If you have questions about the grant, please contact gpsc.billing@doctorsofbc.ca.