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Best Brain Exchange

Halifax Nova Scotia

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Good morning everyone and welcome
to our Best Brain Exchange on Physician Compensation.

Today's meeting will play a role in how we move forward. I welcome and appreciate the opportunity to look at documented evidence on these issues.

I am grateful to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation for partnering with us to hold this meeting.

As you likely know, in just 10 years, our provincial health spending has more than doubled, according to the Canadian Institute of Health Information.

Chronic disease and complex needs are on the rise. We have some of the highest rates of cancer and chronic disease in Canada.

We have an aging population that requires more complex services and treatment.
Only half of Nova Scotians report being physically active on a regular basis -- more than half are overweight or obese.

We have some serious health disparities.
Evidence shows that despite higher overall use of health services, people in lower socioeconomic status groups are the least healthy in the population.

At the same time, we need to identify and define needs versus wants.
In light of dwindling financial resources, conversations are too often about priorities and trade-offs.

Rather, we need data and evidence that supports investments in best practices and innovations.
We need evidence for change – for letting go of the past.
We need evidence to invest in prevention rather than illness.

We need to work with organizations like yours to get the right information to help us make the right decisions.

As you know, there have been several processes underway recently to compensate physicians for the crucial, sometimes difficult and always compassionate work that they do.

We have asked doctors to help us protect as much funding as we can so that they can deliver the care their patients need. It is important to recognize doctors for their willingness to work with us -- to allow government to live within its means in difficult economic times.

Government's Better Care Sooner action plan to improve emergency care and health care for Nova Scotians outlines several objectives that affect our conversations today. To name a few of the items on the to-do list ...

- Improve availability of health care providers evenings and weekends
- Increase use of tele-consult
- Physician Resource Planning
- Develop new funding models for the health care system and physicians
- Introduce a new funding model for physicians working in emergency care

How will we reflect the burden of chronic disease management in primary care, or the performance of emergency care?

The Best Brain Exchange will lay the groundwork for developing the answers to these questions and many more -- and will lead to the province and its partners delivering Better Care Sooner for people all across the province.