

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Section of General Practice celebrates Dr. Phillip van der Merwe

For seven consecutive years, the Section of General Practice Outstanding Service Award has been bestowed upon one family physician per year who has made outstanding contributions in support of the mandate of the Section of General Practice and to primary care in general. This year's award goes to Dr. Phillip van der Merwe, whose tireless work and personal dedication to the advancement of primary care in Alberta made him an obvious and worthy choice for this honor.

SGP selected Dr. van der Merwe as our 2019 recipient because of his outstanding leadership and commitment to the practice of family medicine. With a passion for primary care and optimizing the patient experience, Dr. van der Merwe has led by example in Alberta's transition to the Patient's Medical Home as the new standard of care. He was instrumental in the evolution of Primary Care Networks in Alberta through his work as the Provincial PCN Physician Leads Executive, Co-chair.

In addition to founding the largest Primary Care Network in Alberta (the Calgary West Central PCN), he led the design and ratification of the new formal Governance Framework for PCNs which has provided the next springboard for an integrated Primary Health Care system. His dedication to health care reform has brought together government, health system delivery services and primary care providers in order to collectively advance real change. Phillip wholeheartedly believes that primary care is the bedrock of cost-effective health care and that investing in primary care and bringing family physicians and specialists together will transform the entire system.

SGP is proud to call Dr. van der Merwe a section member and a colleague. He is a true visionary leader, a trailblazer and a credit to the profession. His involvement and dedication has been invaluable to front-line family physicians and our patients. Dr. van der Merwe is an example of what all family physicians can aspire to be.

Congratulations on your achievement, Dr. van der Merwe, and on behalf of all family physicians, thank you for your many contributions to the profession.

Readers can learn more about Alberta's primary care transformation journey, and Dr. van der Merwe's role in it, by checking out his *Alberta Doctors' Digest* article, [Transforming primary care:Telling Alberta's story](#).

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