



## Patient Perspectives on Team-Based Primary Care

Date Prepared: March 24, 2026

### Summary

Canada's primary care crisis is affecting patients' ability to access care when and where they need it. In response, several provinces have introduced primary care teams in which family physicians work with other healthcare professionals to deliver coordinated patient care. Using a systematic approach, this report summarizes what the research tells us about patient perspectives on team-based primary care.

### What does this mean?

There is intrinsic value in integrating patient perspectives into healthcare evaluation and planning. While the evidence in this report offers helpful insights into patient perspectives on their primary care, research in this area remains limited. Gaining a clearer understanding of patient perspectives on team-based primary care models will be critical to ensuring their current success and identifying opportunities for future improvement.

### Citation:

Carter, C., Lester, R., Mackey, S., Granter, E., Audas, R. (2026). Patient Perspectives on Team-Based Primary Care. St. John's, NL: Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research, Memorial University

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### What question did we aim to answer in our research?

What does the research literature reveal about patient perspectives on community-based primary care delivered by interprofessional teams, specifically regarding access, continuity, and other relevant aspects of quality of care?

### How did we approach this question?

A patient-led research team in Newfoundland and Labrador located health evidence from a variety of databases and conducted a rapid synthesis of studies that were published between 2020 and 2025. Results were filtered to include only adult patients accessing team-based primary care in either rural or urban settings. Care teams had to include a minimum of one physician or one nurse practitioner working with at least one other healthcare professional. Outcomes included patient perspectives on access to care, continuity of care, and other relevant aspects of quality of care. The report synthesized evidence from one integrative review of 48 primary studies and 14 recently-published primary studies. Much of this research focused on patients with complex or chronic conditions. All studies were appraised for quality. The researchers then outlined a series of contextual factors for decision makers to consider when applying the synthesized evidence for use in Newfoundland and Labrador.

### What did the research evidence tell us?

**Patient perspectives vary.** The research evidence suggests patients generally have positive experiences with team-based primary care; however, patient perspectives may differ, often depending on individual needs, the local context in which their care is delivered, and how team-based care is organized.

**Patient perspectives on access to care** emphasize the value of having access to a wide network of healthcare professionals as this helped fill gaps sometimes found in solo-GP practice. Patients also value co-located services, multiple modes of access, flexible booking, and affordable healthcare.

**Patient perspectives on continuity of care** emphasize the importance of building supportive relationships across the care team, and the value of the GP as the central anchor to their care. Coordinated teamwork among providers, clear care plans, regular follow-up, and smooth information-sharing are also seen as essential to ensuring continuity of care.

**Patient perspectives on overall quality of care** are most typically viewed in terms of care access and continuity and how these dimensions may interact. As an example, better access to care might involve having to see an unfamiliar care provider, meaning patients gain access at the expense of continuity. Patients also value patient-centered and holistic approaches and having enough time with their care providers to feel heard and understood.