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# President's Letter

November 4, 2013

## NLMA launches new primary care program for members

*MDLink new initiative of the NLMA Physician Care Network*



**Yordan Karaivanov, MD  
President**

Dear Colleagues:

In the past year, we have conducted a comprehensive needs assessment on physician health in Newfoundland and Labrador. Thanks to your participation in key informant interviews, focus groups, and responses to a membership survey we have a better picture than we've ever had about your overall health needs.

As a result, we are moving forward with new programming under the NLMA Physician Care Network, our physician health program. Today, I am pleased to launch *MDLink*, a new primary care program for members.

*MDLink* will match physician-patients with family physician-providers, helping you enjoy access to primary care. All NLMA members are strongly encouraged to avail of the program. By taking care of yourself, you will offer even better care to your patients.

We listened when you told us that confidentiality and discretion were at the top of the list of your requirements. *MDLink* can match a physician-patient with a physician-provider in your own community or a neighboring community. While we hope you will give us your contact information so that we can include you in future evaluation of the program, you can also access the program with total anonymity.

A brochure is attached with more information about how the program will work and how you can participate. A convenient wallet card can be punched out on the back of the brochure and a fridge magnet is also in your package, so that you have the number on hand to use yourself or to provide to a colleague.

### **Volunteer to be a Physician-Provider**

We surveyed members on the 2013 membership renewal form to determine interest in providing care to a colleague. We followed up with those who responded "yes" to that question to confirm their participation.

We have had an enthusiastic response from physician-providers, and are always happy to include more family physician-providers to the program.

NLMA knows that physicians who treat other physicians enjoy and value the opportunity to care for their colleagues. We have learned that physician-providers may have unique needs and face particular challenges in working with this specific population. That is why *MDLink* will support physician-providers by offering orientation and continuing professional development.

*MDLink* CPD curriculum was developed with the support of the Canadian Physician Health Network.



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***inConfidence***

We want to support physician wellness during an acute or urgent episode, as well.

As of July 1, our *inConfidence* program has been providing 24/7 access to professional counselling and information services for all members and their immediate family members.

The program is provided by Medavie Blue Cross, and counselling and information services are provided by Ceridian Canada, Ltd. The program offers confidential counselling, personal support, and referrals to community resources, Life Articles, booklets, audiotapes, CDs, and *inConfidence Online*, an informative web site featuring thousands of online resources, all as a benefit of membership.

If you are in a state of crisis, *inConfidence's* trained professionals offer the necessary support to stabilize the situation regardless of whether your issues are short-term or ongoing.

To obtain your *inConfidence* online login information, please contact the NLMA at [nlma@nlma.nl.ca](mailto:nlma@nlma.nl.ca) or call (709) 726-7424 or toll-free at (800) 563-2003.

**Thank you to members**

I would like to thank all those who participated in some way in the needs assessment. It is your input into that process that is guiding the work of the NLMA's Physician Wellness Advisory Committee and the new programs and services we are offering to all members.

It is our vision, as stated in our Strategic Plan, to support physician health and wellness services and programs, to ensure physicians are resilient in their professional and personal lives.

Regards,



Yordan Karaivanov, MD  
President

*Encl. (3)*