

Brian Pallister
Premier, Manitoba
Premier@leg.gov.mb.ca

November 1, 2020

Dear Premier Pallister,

We are a group of over a hundred physicians and PhDs in Manitoba. We represent many specialties, all age groups, and fulfill a wide variety of professional roles serving the people of Manitoba. What we all have in common is our unanimous alarm regarding the COVID-19 crisis in Manitoba.

Over the last several weeks, we have watched our COVID pandemic spiral out of control, with a test positivity rate of 8.9% and mathematical modelling from jurisdictions around the world showing we are in grave peril. In twelve weeks, our numbers have become the worst in the country, the outbreak at Parkview Place had claimed 22 lives as of October 31, and our existing ICU beds are now full.

In news briefings, we often hear updates about “capacity”. We want to emphasize that capacity is not just where people can be “kept” or cared for when they are sick. Capacity also includes the physical toll and exhaustion being encountered chronically across nursing, medical, lab and hospital staff. In this regard, we believe you have overestimated the capacity of our healthcare workers. We are deeply worried for our patients and the health of Manitobans in the weeks and months that lie ahead.

We are also concerned that Dr. Brent Roussin has neither the budget nor the resources to adequately protect our population from this virus. It is clear that public health is overwhelmed, lacks the power to complete timely contact tracing, and is unable to provide timely results because testing capacity has been overwhelmed. Public Health is also hampered by a communication strategy that suggests they lack the resources to meaningfully educate our public. We also believe that public health should be at arm’s length from central government.

In addition to expressing our alarm to you and the public, we see the following steps as critical:

- 1) Public Health needs emergency allocation of financial resources for contact tracing, public education, and other critical personnel needs. Redeployment is not enough: they must be able to hire new staff. We are hearing countless stories about delayed follow-

up and communication failures, and they are hampering the rest of our efforts, as well as the public's ability to protect themselves.

- 2) Emergency financial resources must be allocated towards increase our testing capacity and turnaround. Results must be available in a clinically meaningful time interval. Rapid testing needs to be available in confirmed or suspected outbreak settings.
- 3) There is a need for more transparency and accountability. Share the structure and status of Incident Command, expand its membership to include more physician voices, and ensure there is Indigenous representation at the highest levels of decision making so the needs of Indigenous communities are met.
- 4) There must be more consultation with community groups who work with structurally disadvantaged populations. This will help improve access to testing, offer supports for those who are staying at home when ill or waiting for test results, and will let us provide access to information through trusted community organizations in a culturally sensitive way.
- 5) There must be an unwavering commitment to protecting our vulnerable elderly and addressing the crisis in our personal care homes. Shared Health or other applicable RHAs should swiftly take over any home that is not clearly controlling its outbreak.
- 6) There should be an expansion of the proposed public health measures, including reviewing the clause allowing religious services to continue, as well as gyms, with a commitment to transparent discussion and additional expert review.
- 7) There must be increased financial support to Manitobans whose incomes will drop precipitously due public health measures.

We realize that these suggestions require enormous financial commitments. However, the virus makes not only the rules but determines the budget required to control it. Attempting to penny pinch and balance the budget will backfire and will cost us far more in both the short and the long term.

We are also appealing to all Manitobans - our patients, our neighbors, our friends - to do more than the current restrictions would suggest, particularly avoiding unnecessary public outings and social gatherings.

It is the fundamental duty of the government to protect its citizens from the physical, mental and economic impact of Covid-19. The only formula that has worked elsewhere in the world is decisive action by government, with compassionate and forward-thinking decisions that come with a high price tag. The price of failure is the highest price of all.

Therefore, we are imploring you to show the leadership the moment requires in order to save Manitobans from further hardship, crisis and loss of life.

Sincerely,

Anand Kumar, MD	Critical Care and Infectious Disease
Barrett Rush, MD	Critical Care
Allan Garland, MD	Critical Care and Respiriology
Heather Smith, MD	Critical Care
Kendiss Olafson, MD	Critical Care
Owen Mooney, MD	Critical Care and Internal Medicine
Patrick Boreskie, MD	Emergency Medicine, Fellow
Rafiq Andanii, MD	Family Medicine
Andrea Darnbrough, MD	Otolaryngology
Evan Wiens, MD	Fellow, Cardiology,
Eric Jacobsohn, MD	ICU and Anesthesiology
Ryan Amadeo, MD	Anesthesiology
Alex Astell, MD	Fellow, Critical Care
Fred Aoki, MD	Infectious Diseases and Microbiology
Craig Haberman, MD	Anesthesiology
Ben Fultz, MD	Critical Care
Dave Eason, MD	Critical Care
Brad Derendorf, MD	Family Medicine
Alicia Barnard, MD	Family Medicine
Samantha Kimelman, MD	Family Medicine
Allan Ronald, MD	Infectious Diseases
Olivia Hershorn, MD	Resident Physician, Surgery
Greg Neufeld, MD	Anesthesiology
Patricia Mykytiuk, MD	Anesthesiology
Martha Sheperdecky, MD	Respirology
Jillian Horton, MD	Internal Medicine
Zheng Xi, MD	Family Medicine
Paul Komenda, MD	Nephrology
Kelly MacDonald	Infectious Disease
Jason Kindrachuk, PhD	Infectious Disease
Jessica Cudmore, MD	Internal Medicine
Geoff Conrad, MD	Psychiatry
Denice Bay, PhD	Infectious Disease
Peter Pelka, PhD	Microbiology
Ayush Kumar, PhD	Microbiology
Adrian West, PhD	Respiratory Physiology
Tyler Friesen, MD	Internal Medicine

Laura Chisick, MD	Internal Medicine
Justin Cloutier, MD	Cardiology
Alexandra Thielmann, MD	ENT
Kevin Coombs, PhD	Medical Microbiology
Kristine Smith, MD	ENT
Richard Gall, MD	ENT
Sean McKenna, PhD	Chemistry
Aaron Marshall, PhD	Immunology
Josef Silha, MD	Internal Medicine and Endocrinology
Sara Dunsmore, MD	Nephrology
Chris Green, PhD	Epidemiologist
Marina Rowntree-James, MD	Family Medicine
Brittany Burkett, MD	Family Medicine
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Daljit Gill, MD	Cardiology
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Bryan Janzen, MD	Resident Physician, Radiation Oncology
Christine Polimeni, MD	Family Medicine
Joe Polimeni, MD	Psychiatry
Aleeza Gerstein, PhD	Microbiology and Statistics
Esther Kim, MD	Resident Physician, Radiology
Joyce Slater, PhD	Human Nutritional Sciences
Brian Mark, PhD	Microbiology
Rachel Bethune, MD	Resident Physician, Pediatrics
Eileen Burnett, MD	Family Medicine
Kristen Kindrachuk, PhD	Microbiology
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Grant McClarty, MD	Resident Physician
Anna Schwartz, MD	Resident Physician, Family Medicine
Robyn McClelland, MD	Resident Physician, Pediatrics
Amarjot Padda, MD	Resident Physician, Pediatrics
Ryan Vidal, MD	Resident Physician, Family Medicine
Ingrid Baragar, MD	Resident Physician, Family Medicine
Grant McClarty, PhD	Microbiology
Kristen Buchko, MD	Family Medicine
Premal Patel, MD	Urologist

Michael Polan, MD	Family Medicine
Lauren MacKenzie, MD	Infectious Disease
Satwant Singh, MD	Family Medicine
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Lesley Merkel, MD	Fellow, Internal Medicine
Kylee Lewis, MD	Resident Physician, Psychiatry
Aaron Dubyna, MD	Family Medicine
Elise Crocker, MD	Fellow, Internal Medicine
Christopher Burnettm MD	Family Medicine
Nicholas Krueger, MD	Resident Doctor, Psychiatry
Stefan Riel, MD	Family physician and palliative care physician
Joel Loiselle, MD	Anesthesia
Kathy Knezic MD,	Family Medicine
Jana Pilkey, MD	General Internal Medicine
Raelene Foisy, MD.	Fellow, Obstetrics & Gynecology
Erica Halmarson, MD	Family Medicine
Steven Gravelle, MD	CCFP (Family Medicine, rural)
Bernard Cox, MD	Family medicine/palliative care
Catherine Guzman, MD	Family medicine
Vallerie Gordon MD,	Medical Oncology
Dr. Shona Nair, MD	Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine
Kim Colangelo, MD	Family Medicine
Patrick Fredette, MD	Family Medicine
Kathryn Menzies, MD	Family Medicine
Stacey Kitz, MD	Emergency Physician
Simon . K . Sarpong, MD	Family Medicine
Sean Udow, MD	Neurologist
Lynda Kong, MD	Psychiatry
Astrid Guenther, MD	Family and ER Medicine
Steven Gray, MD	Family physician / hospitalist
Susan Cuvelier, MD	Hepatology
Bruce D. Martin, MD	Family Physician
Alyena Fredette, MD	Family Medicine
Tyler Atchison, MD	Family Physician, Carman MB.
Paul Sawchuk, MD	Family Medicine
Michael Volpe, MD	Palliative Care
Terry McCormack MD	Family Medicine
Paul Daeninck, MD	Medical Oncology/Palliative Medicine
Marie Loewen MD	Family Medicine
Buddhini Weeratunga, MD	Family Medicine
Amila Heendeniya, MD	Infectious Diseases
Kathryn Kisil, MD	Family Physician

Michelle Grzybowski, MD	Family physician
Harvey Max Chochinov, MD PhD	Psychiatrist
Krystal Montgomery, MD	Family Medicine
Amanda Condon, MD	Family Medicine
Cal Bergen, MD	Emergency, Hospital, and Addiction Medicine
Melina Zylberman, MD	Psychiatrist
Sharon Bruce, BN, PhD	Community Health
Christine Duprat, MD	Family physician
Paul Foster, MD	Family medicine
Anita Soni, MD	Cardiology
Dr. Lisa Craig, MD	Family Medicine
Nancy Porhownik, MD	Respirology
Dr. Glen Drobot, MD	General internal medicine
Timothy Hiebert MD	Family Medicine
Jason Azzi, MD	Resident Physician, ENT
Richard Rusk, DVM, MD	Public Health
Paul M Doucet MD	Emergency Physician
Catherine Wach MD	Family Physician
Jennifer Anderson, MD	Family Physician, Emergency Medicine
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Benjamin A Goldenberg MD	Oncology
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Jonathan Gabor, MD	Internal Medicine
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Ryan Houston, MD	Family medicine
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Dervla Chittal, MD	Family Medicine
Duane Hartley, MD	Family medicine
Jacqueline Anand, MD	Family doctor
Sonja Vermeule, MD	Family Physician
Camisha Mayes MD	Family Medicine
Enrico Mancini MD	Sports Medicine
Faith Cormier, MD	Pediatrician
Jessica Clendenan, MD	Family physician
Aman Gera, MD	Family Medicine / Hospitalist
Travis Magill, MD	Family doctor
Stefan Harms, MD	Anesthesia
Dr Sonja Bruin, MD	Family Medicine
Holly Hamilton, MD	Rural family medicine
Susan Jane Ward, MD	Family Physician

Stephen Goulet, MD	Internal Medicine
Robert Obara, MD	Family Medicine
Carol Holmes, MD	Family Medicine
Ruth Simkin, MD	Family Medicine
Selena Papetti, MD	Family Medicine
Susan Telencoe, MD	Resident Physician, Pediatrics
Christopher Chung, MD	Resident Physician, Pediatrics
Joanna MacLean, MD	Resident Physician, Emergency Medicine
Rukhsana Foster, MD	Family Medicine
Kristin McCrea, MD	Anaesthesia
Allison Stasiuk, MD	Family Medicine
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Clint Wong	Anesthesiologist
Chau Pham, MD	Emergency Medicine
Prabhjot Singh	Family medicine/hospitalist
Trishia Penner, MD	Family medicine
Nicole Towers, MD	Resident, Genetics and Metabolism
Jenwa Beaupré	Family medicine
Bryan Kroeker	Family medicine
Gary Bellan, MD	Family medicine
Chris Loepp	Family medicine
Maegan Rutherford	Obstetrics and Gynecology
Kiran Jhinger	General Internal Medicine
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Eric Lane	Family Practice and Emergency Medicine
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Jacqueline Dirks, MD	Respirology
Martha Ainsley	Respirology
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Anne Durcan, MD	Family Medicine
Ray Singer, MD	Family Medicine
Renate Singh, MD	Anaesthesia
Tim Hiebert, MD*	Internal Medicine
Eleni Giannouli, MD	Respirology

*There are two different doctors named Tim Hiebert who signed this letter. Both have different specialties.