

# Family Medicine: A Profession in Crisis

Ontario College of  
Family Physicians

*Leaders for a healthy Ontario*



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# About this survey

- To gain deeper insights into the impact of administrative burden, the OCFP and research firm Halmyre conducted a survey in March 2023, through which we received 1,300 responses from family doctors.
- We heard from family doctors practising in various payment models from across Ontario, at all stages of their career - from early learners to those with more than 25 years of experience.
- The results were consistent across all practice types and career stages. The family medicine crisis is present across ALL family physicians regardless of age, tenure, patient type or location.
- Family doctors made it clear that there are 5, priority causes of dissatisfaction; 4 of them are admin burden/systemic in nature and can be influenced by OCFP.

**This report is a call-to-action from professionals who desperately need support, advocacy and empathy.**











# Top Four Recommended OCFP Actions

1. Developing solutions to reduce high administrative burden.
2. Advocating to the OMA/SGFP on FP remuneration.
3. Advocating for streamlined medical forms and requisitions.
4. Advocating for a centralized referral & wait list process, triaged by need.

# **Quantitative Research on the Impact of Administrative Burden on Family Medicine 2023: Detailed Results.**

# Critical Challenges

These are prevailing pain points with widespread agreement and should be addressed across the board.

Challenge	Theme	Challenges Magnitude (Strongly/Somewhat Agree %)	Challenges Ranking (% of times selected in Top 3)
Other parts of the health care system often place unnecessary and/or inappropriate burden back onto me/my practice.	Burden/Stress	 98	 56
I am overwhelmed with administrative burden and paperwork related to the care requirements of my patients.	Burden/Stress	 94	 57
It is difficult to access specialist care for patients.	Access/Referrals	 93	 35
I spend a burdensome amount of time filling out patient forms.	Burden/Stress	 92	 22
It is difficult to manage patient expectations.	Burden/Stress	 92	 33

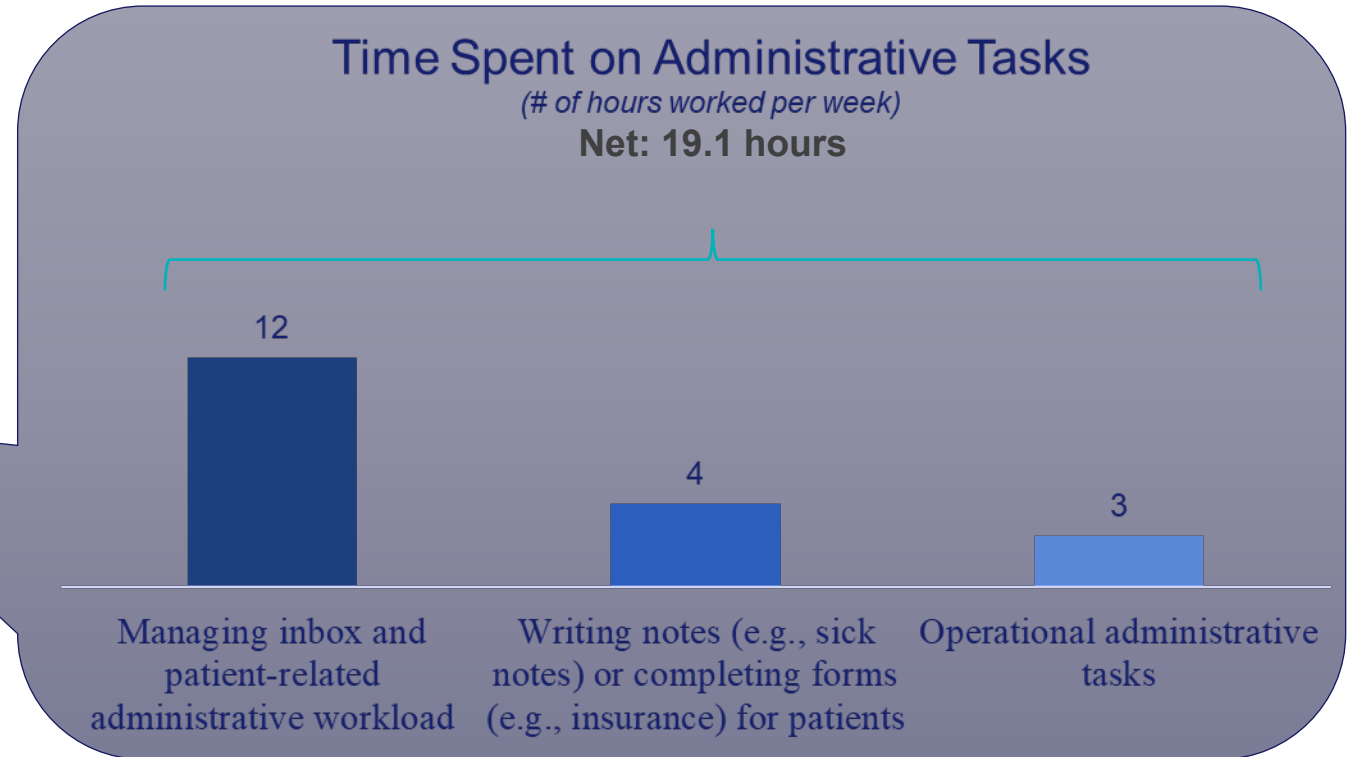
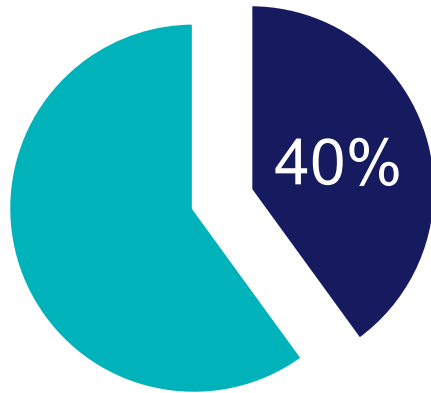
Q24. Below is a list of opinions we have heard from physicians about the challenges they face as a family physician. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree these statements reflect significant pain points for you/your practice.  
 Q25. Below are the statements you agreed with as they relate to challenges you face as a family physician. What would you say are the biggest pain points you experience at the practice level? Please rank the top THREE (3) things you find most challenging, with ONE (1) being the most challenging. Base: Total Sample (n=1,343)

Burden/Stress	Access/Referrals
System Challenges & Mandates	Obligations

# Largest Critical Challenges need priority focus.

Administrative burden is the largest challenge impacting FPs' day to day work life: two-fifths of their working hours are dedicated to administrative tasks.

Physicians work on **average 47.7 hours** per week; **40% of those hours** are currently being spent on **administrative tasks**



Q14. On average, how many hours do you work each week? Please consider all hours you spend on your practice, including the time you actively see patients as well as the time you are not seeing patients but conducting tasks related to being a family physician.

Q15. Out of that total number of work hours, on average how many hours per week do you spend on:

Base: Total Sample (n=1,343)

# Manageable Time on Administrative Tasks

In an ideal world, FPs envision spending HALF the time they do now on Administrative tasks.

Time Spent on Administrative Tasks  
(# of hours worked per week)



Ideally, Family Physicians expect to spend about HALF that on admin tasks, or **18% of their time.**

- Managing inbox and patient-related administrative workload
- Writing notes (e.g., sick notes) or completing forms (e.g., insurance) for patients
- Operational administrative tasks

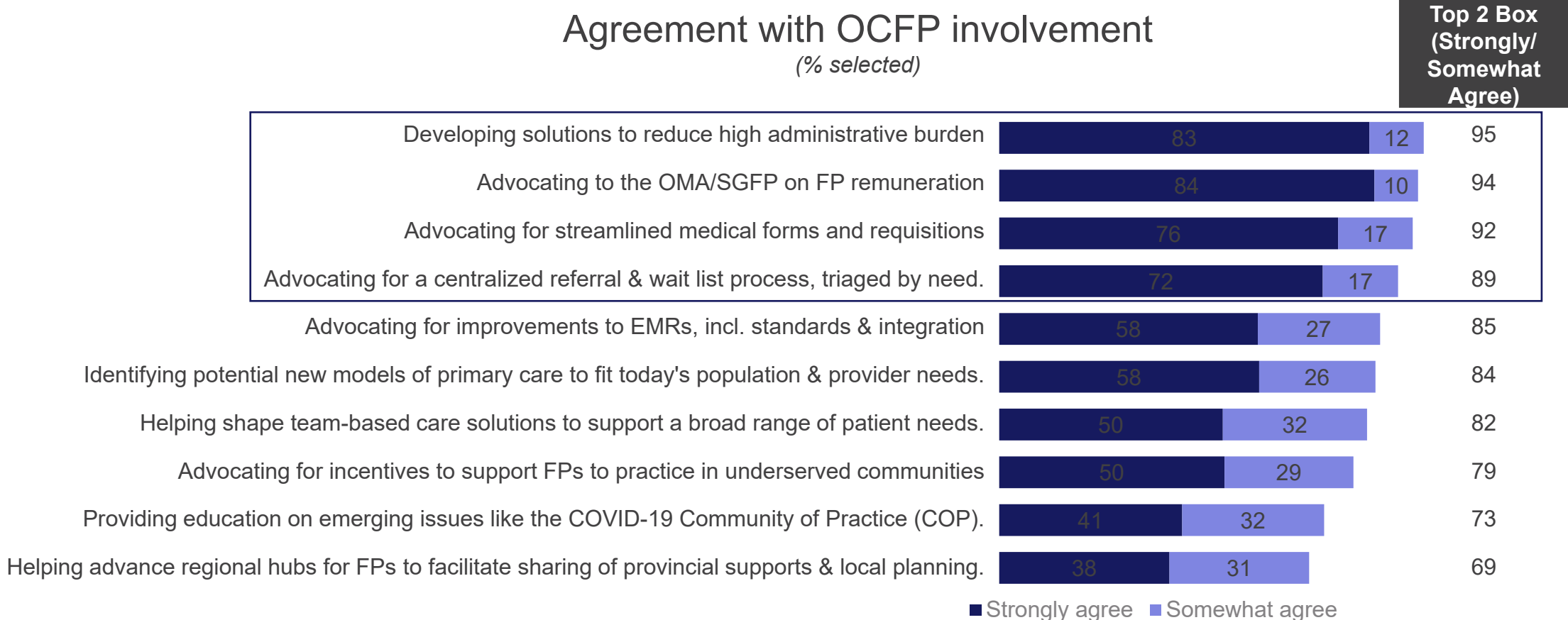
Q14. On average, how many hours do you work each week? Please consider all hours you spend on your practice, including the time you actively see patients as well as the time you are not seeing patients but conducting tasks related to being a family physician.

Q15. Out of that total number of work hours, on average how many hours per week do you spend on:

Q16. And in an average week, what would realistically be the ideal number of hours you would spend on:

Base: Total Sample (n=1,343)

**Family Physicians WANT OCFP to be involved in advocating for them. They STRONGLY agree OCFP should be advocating on their behalf and helping develop solutions to the burden they are facing. There's also strong alignment here with the solutions identified by members in the swiping exercise described earlier.**



Q33. How much do you agree or disagree that the OCFP should be involved in the following?  
Base: Total Sample (n=1,343)