



From Members of the PEI Medical and UPEI Community

Dr. Colin McMillan, MD, Cardiologist

Let's make no mistake, this project is an educational initiative. However, with the number of Islanders who do not have access to a primary care doctor or nurse practitioner, the establishment of a faculty of medicine that is integrated with nursing, psychology, paramedicine and other health-related education is a tremendous opportunity to kickstart a change in the wait list for family doctors. The practice of medicine will never be the same due to the pandemic. The idea of virtual medicine just a short time ago had no traction but has now become the norm. Without hesitation, I know that the graduates of a UPEI-Memorial joint medical degree will be leaders of their time.

Dr. Herb Dickieson, MD, Family Physician

I asked Islanders and contacted all municipalities a few years ago about the idea of a medical school at UPEI. We are so fortunate to have President Abd-El-Aziz, with his experience of establishing forward-focused health programs, and his vision of creating something here on the Island that goes well beyond an MD program and creates a comprehensive health sciences centre on PEI. This health educational environment is so beneficial on so many levels. Not only will we develop the allied health professionals of tomorrow but we will create opportunities among the existing medical community to pursue continuing medical education and exchange ideas on PEI. Thank you, President Alaa!

Mr. Randy Goodman, Vice-Chair, Health PEI, Chair of HR Committee

This is an important step in working toward improving the health care human resource shortages we are experiencing in Health PEI. The Board of Health PEI fully supports UPEI in developing and flourishing as a center of medical and health professional development. We, as a board, have identified Health Human Resources including recruitment, development, and retention as one of our main priorities and this is a very significant moment for health care on PEI on multiple levels.

Dr. Tom Marrie, MD, Special Advisor to the President on Medical Education, former dean of medicine at University of Alberta, Dalhousie University, and former NS Deputy Minister of Health

If the pandemic has showed us anything, it is that we need to address the gaps in our medical system now. Already we know from the PEI Medical Society that one-third of doctors on PEI plan to retire in the next 3–5 years, further adding to the stress on PEI's health care system. UPEI, with the Atlantic Veterinary College, Faculty of Nursing, PsyD degree, and Canadian Centre for Climate Change and Adaptation, is already in a prime position to develop a medical school and build a program that makes the links between human and animal health and the environment around us. UPEI has all the elements to build a successful health sciences education centre for PEI.

Dr. Bill Stanish, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon and Sports Medicine Specialist

While I practice in Nova Scotia, I have a strong affinity to UPEI and PEI as an SDU alumnus, an honorary degree recipient, and a summer resident. As soon as I became aware of the Faculty of Medicine idea, I wanted to help as this will be a game changer for health care and health sciences education on PEI. I was so pleased to bring Dr. Tom Marrie and President Alaa together, and to be a part of the advisory committee that is developing the Faculty of Medicine at UPEI and a joint medical degree with Memorial University.

Dr. Trevor Jain, MD, Emergency Physician, 33 Halifax Field Ambulance and 3 Canadian Brigade Group Surgeon, Director of the UPEI Bachelor of Science in Paramedicine Degree Program

When I first approached President Abd-El-Aziz about developing a bachelor degree in paramedicine, I expected a “no” but was immediately impressed that he shares the same philosophy as me, the philosophy of “yes.” I am excited about the establishment of a Faculty of Medicine, and I know that with UPEI’s leadership, our clinical capacity and interaction with allied health professionals, and many dynamic medical doctors on PEI, we are going to build something that will be in high demand from prospective students across the country.

Dr. Geraldine Johnston, MD, Family Physician, Member of the UPEI Board of Governors

This is an exciting time to be on the UPEI Board of Governors, especially as a family physician practicing in a rural area of the province. President Abd-El-Aziz has the charisma and will to make our shared vision of creating a health sciences education centre at UPEI a reality. As Einstein said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge,” and by pairing with Memorial University, which has both excellent experience and reputation, on a first-of-its-kind joint medical degree, we will be able to move more quickly in establishing the Faculty of Medicine at UPEI. This is a win-win for UPEI and its future graduates, for the current medical community on PEI in terms of continuing medical education, and for the future of Island health care.

Dr. Randy MacKinnon, MD, Family Physician

As a family physician with a collaborative care practice, I was very supportive of the idea of the creation of a medical school at UPEI from the outset because of UPEI’s other programs in allied health professions such as nursing and psychology. Partnering with Memorial University of Newfoundland makes great sense, with their focus on family and rural medicine. There is a great opportunity to build a medical degree program that will develop doctors for the collaborative care teams of the future.

Dr. Kamran Khan, MD, Anaesthesiologist

I was delighted to hear about the prospects of a Faculty of Medicine at UPEI for the students of PEI. It most definitely will help to train and retain local physicians from our communities to serve our local population. UPEI is building on the success of Nursing, Science, Psychology, and Veterinary Medicine among other disciplines to create a new medical school in collaboration with Memorial. It will be an honour for me to be a part of an amazing team taking the vision of “One Health” forward.

Dr. Scott Campbell, MD, Family Physician

I have been part of this exciting initiative since almost the very beginning and I am delighted to offer my wholehearted support to UPEI on the creation of a Faculty of Medicine, the expansion of the Faculty of Nursing and the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre. Working with Memorial University on developing this joint medical degree will be a huge asset to the project and will be invaluable to its success.

Mr. John Horreht, Mental Health Advocate, Past President of the Canadian Mental Health Association—PEI

The expansion of nursing programs and the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre, including the UPEI Psychology Clinic, plus the development of a Faculty of Medicine at UPEI is very personal to me. My father was a rural family physician and my mother a registered nurse, and I have been a long-time community advocate for mental health. One of the biggest reasons why I have served on the CMHA board for 18 years is my belief in finding ways for collaboration and intersections in the delivery of primary health and mental health care. I am very much looking forward to lending my personal and financial support to this project.

Dr. Jo-Ann MacDonald, Dean of Nursing

The expansion of the Faculty of Nursing will not only benefit our students and help improve the nursing shortage situation in the province, but will also support strategic partnerships for interprofessional education to enhance the development of a Faculty of Medicine at UPEI that as its hallmark will feature a collaborative health care model. We're excited to be a part of this innovative project and are grateful for Government of PEI support.

Dr. Christina Murray, Associate Professor of Nursing

I am honoured to be on the Advisory Committee and working together with Dr. Jo-Ann MacDonald on the expansion of the Faculty of Nursing. I believe that the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine, along with the expansion of Nursing and the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre, will be a catalyst to advance primary health care and a collaborative care model on Prince Edward Island. This is why I proposed the motion of endorsement that was supported by the UPEI Senate.

Dr. Greg Keefe, Dean of Veterinary Medicine

Being a proponent of the One Health concept, I am very excited about these new developments at UPEI. With the expansion of programming in human health, climate change and environmental studies, and biomedical science; our existing strengths in animal and population health and the expansion of our diagnostic imaging capacity at AVC, there will be tremendous opportunity to collaborate across all faculties, and create a top-notch health sciences centre at UPEI. This will result in improved human and animal health care as well as research capacity in the province.

Ms. Marilyn Barrett, Director of the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre

With our partnerships with the UPEI Psychology Clinic, Faculty of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine and other campus groups, we will be able to develop a model of primary health care at the expanded UPEI Health and Wellness Centre for over 10,000 patients while also being a training location for our future nurses and doctors. I look forward to being a part of this transformative project.

Dr. Nola Etkin, Dean of Science

Students, especially with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, are interested in health-related careers and want to serve their community. With the expansion of Nursing and the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre, along with the introduction of a Faculty of Medicine, I look forward to collaborating with my colleagues to create more opportunities for Science students who wish to pursue the health sciences as a career.

Ms. Bertha Campbell, RN, Member of the UPEI Board of Governors and UPEI Senate

As a registered nurse, I am very excited about the expansion of the Faculty of Nursing and UPEI Health and Wellness Centre in conjunction with the creation of a new Faculty of Medicine. As the UPEI Board of Governors representative on the University Senate, I was so honoured to put forth a historic motion to the Board to endorse these transformational projects that will impact the lives of Islanders.

Dr. Bill Montelpare, Professor (Nursing/Applied Human Sciences); Margaret and Wallace McCain Chair in Human Development and Health; UPEI Health-Centred Research Clinic

The planned addition of a Faculty of Medicine and expansion in Nursing and the UPEI Health and Wellness Centre will add tremendous opportunities for health-related research as new faculty members join the University. This is a great example of when the tide rises, it lifts all boats. New research opportunities will abound as the health sciences community grows. I always say, "create what you want to be a part of," and that's what UPEI is doing.

Dr. Jonathan Spears, Chair, Biomedical Sciences, Atlantic Veterinary College

The benefits of a Faculty of Medicine at UPEI go well beyond the immediate needs for PEI's medical community. Establishing a medical school between two powerful biomedical research universities will rapidly expand and accelerate both institution's capabilities in applied human and veterinary medicine. Such expansion and collaboration will also generate tremendous opportunities for students pursuing advanced and professional studies in many disciplines including Nursing, Veterinary Medicine, Paramedicine, Applied Biomedicine, and "One Health". The future looks incredibly bright for the coming generations of Island students to pursue their dreams right here in PEI!

Dr. Philip Smith, Professor of Psychology

Establishing a medical school with close links to the Doctor of Psychology program will enrich the education of students in both programs and will benefit Islanders accessing health services, both directly through the much-expanded clinic at UPEI, and in other facilities where senior students and graduates of these programs will practice. Mental health and physical health are closely intertwined. Islanders seeking help benefit when health care professionals recognize the biological, psychological, and social determinants of health and work collaboratively to address these needs.

The Honourable Catherine Callbeck, LLD, UPEI Chancellor

This is a historic moment and the biggest project UPEI will ever undertake. It is very exciting and my pleasure to be a part of the early discussions and to now see this come to fruition. Islanders will be overjoyed from tip-to-tip with this announcement given we have the lowest number of family doctors per capita in Canada. We have to do better and UPEI is stepping up to the plate. I wholeheartedly endorse President Alaa's vision for health care, which will give our students an opportunity to be educated at UPEI, put dollars in the economy, and improve the health of Islanders. This expansion of health education and establishment of a Faculty of Medicine at UPEI is as important to the Island in terms of health care as what the fixed link was for the economy. I have never been prouder of the University.