

Social Accountability Working Group (SAWG)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Updated: July 2018.

Principle

The Social Accountability Working Group (SAWG) of the College of Family Physicians of Canada will build on the principles laid out by the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition for social accountability in medical education (Boelen, Heck & WHO, 1995). Social accountability refers to an obligation to define priority health concerns by the values of relevance, quality, cost effectiveness and most importantly, equity. It requires intervention at the patient, the community and the policy level in honor of the physicians' social contract with society. It also requires creating partnerships with academic institutions, health institutions, policy makers, health care workers and a true partnership with the community, with the will to translate socially accountable principles into healthy systems.

Purpose

The Social Accountability Working Group (SAWG) advises the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) in the areas of social accountability and explores the needs, opportunities, and barriers related to social accountability in family medicine and family practice.

Responsibilities

- Explore areas and strategies to incorporate social accountability and social justice perspectives into CFPC programs and activities as appropriate, in accordance with the CFPC's strategic planning goals and objectives.
- Engage medical students, residents, and family physicians in practice on how to reach out to disenfranchised and vulnerable populations.
- Advise the CFPC leadership on how to communicate and collaborate with federal, provincial, and territorial governments and with non-profit organizations and non-government organizations dedicated to social accountability and social justice issues.
- Assist the other departments and committees of the CFPC as needed in raising awareness and facilitating the implementation of social accountability initiatives in their own work.

- In an ongoing fashion, identify needs, opportunities, and barriers related to social accountability from the perspective of CFPC members and determine organizational direction on this issue. Investigate existing initiatives, internal and external, and identify gaps.

Accountability

The SAWG is accountable to the Executive Director, Member and External Relations. The Health Policy and Government Relations Department provides the primary support for the SAWG.

Members

The SAWG will be composed of the following:

- One Chair
- Five members at-large: Members to be determined by the Chair in consultation with the Director of Health Policy and Government Relations and the approval of the Executive Director, Member and External Relations; one of the five members is a family medicine resident
- Two non-physician members of the general public representing persons with lived-experience and the patient voice
- Staff support: Director, Health Policy and Government Relations; Manager, Health Policy and Government Relations, and; Health Policy Analyst, Health Policy and Government Relations

Term of the SAWG

The term of the Social Accountability Working Group is renewed at regular intervals at the discretion of the Board insofar as its existence continues to support and enable the needs of the CFPC as reflected in the [2017-2022 Strategic Plan](#).

Frequency of meetings

- One face-to-face meeting of all available members, per fiscal year
- One half-day teleconference at a regular annual interval from the face-to-face meeting
- Issue specific teleconferences between official meetings as required in the judgment of the Chair

References

Boelen C, Heck JE, World Health Organization, Division of Development of Human Resources for Health. *Defining and measuring the social accountability of medical schools*. Geneva: World Health Organization; 1995.
<http://www.who.int/iris/handle/10665/59441>

These terms of reference were approved by the Board in February 2018. At that time accountability was transitioned to the Executive Director, Member & External Relations (ED, MER). The July 2018 update was approved by the ED, MER.