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### **Status of the TickMD Program**

Geneticks and Casel Medical are disappointed to announce that the TickMD program has been shut down. This outcome is the direct result of newly ratified changes to the Physician Service Agreement (PSA) between the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) and Ministry of Health which substantially impacts the viability of virtual care programs. Under the new PSA, the billing structure for limited virtual care programs has been altered significantly, making it untenable to retain physicians for this program. Both Geneticks and Casel Medical are extremely disappointed with these changes and the effects they have had on the TickMD program, access to tick-borne disease care, and virtual care as a whole.

Like many of you, we feel that the TickMD program was a huge step forward for acute tick-borne disease care in Ontario. Decentralized care for recent tick-bites provided a unique model to provide a standardized level of care, as well as afforded unique flexibility to reduce the burden on both the patients and medical care providers. With the shutdown of this program, we feel that the ease and accessibility of high-quality prophylactic and acute tick-borne disease care following tick bites in Ontario has been significantly impaired.

Though TickMD was not the intended target of these changes, the effects have rendered the program inviable. As such, Geneticks will be writing to the OMA and Ministry of Health to ensure the impact of this decision on the broader health-care community are understood.

Thank you,

Justin Wood

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*Geneticks* is a private laboratory offering accessible, reliable and comprehensive tick testing. Ticks are accepted from anywhere in Canada, and can be tested for up to a total of 14 tick-borne pathogens. *Geneticks* guarantees results are returned within 1-5 business days, allowing customers to make time-sensitive, informed decisions about their potential exposure to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. For more information, please visit

<https://www.geneticks.ca/>