



Alika Lafontaine, M.D., FRCPC

**First Indigenous Physician
Youngest Doctor to Lead the
Canadian Medical Association (CMA)
Grande Prairie, Alberta**

Named *Maclean's* top Healthcare Innovator of 2023, Dr. Alika Lafontaine has been at the epicentre of health care system change for almost two decades. He is the first Indigenous physician and the youngest doctor to lead the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) in its 156-year history, and the first Indigenous physician to be listed on *The Medical Post's* 50 Most Powerful Doctors. As an experienced health leader, Dr. Lafontaine speaks eloquently and passionately on the politics of health care, implementing and scaling equity, effective advocacy and redesigning health systems. From 2013-2017, he co-led the Indigenous Health Alliance, growing it into one of the most ambitious Indigenous health transformation projects in Canadian history. At its peak, the Alliance represented more than 150 First Nations and successfully advocated for \$68 million in funding. In 2017, the Alliance was recognized by the Public Policy Forum, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau presenting Dr. Lafontaine with the inaugural Emerging Indigenous Leader award. Drawing on the work of the Alliance and his own personal experiences, he went on to found Safespace Networks, an anonymous learning platform for reporting racism and health care harm. During Dr. Lafontaine's presidency year at the CMA, he was the driving force behind securing the largest nominal Federal investment in health care since 2004. The CMA also adopted a long-term Indigenous health goal and began an apology process related to Indigenous patient maltreatment in Canada's health care systems, which Dr. Lafontaine continues to lead today. Grounded in a mixed Indigenous ancestry of Metis, Oji-Cree and Pacific Islander, he completed his medical degree and anesthesia fellowship training at the University of Saskatchewan before moving to northern Alberta where he has spent most of his clinical career. Dr. Lafontaine was named one of Canada's "Top 40 Under 40" and is the youngest recipient of an Inspire Award.