Physician Recruitment Update

Planning and Economic Development Committee

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Jill Croteau, Physician Recruiter





Overview of the Physician Recruitment Program

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The **Physician Recruitment Program** works to **attract, retain, and support** family physicians in Niagara to address **primary care shortages**.

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In November 2024, the program moved from Public Health to Economic Development, strengthening strategic marketing and outreach efforts.



Works with municipalities, clinic leads, economic development, and health sector partners to coordinate recruitment efforts. 04

Enhanced communications, promotional materials, and physician engagement to position Niagara as a top destination for medical professionals.

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Despite recent recruitment success, ongoing retirements and population growth continue to drive demand for long-term recruitment strategies.

Physician Recruitment Roundtable





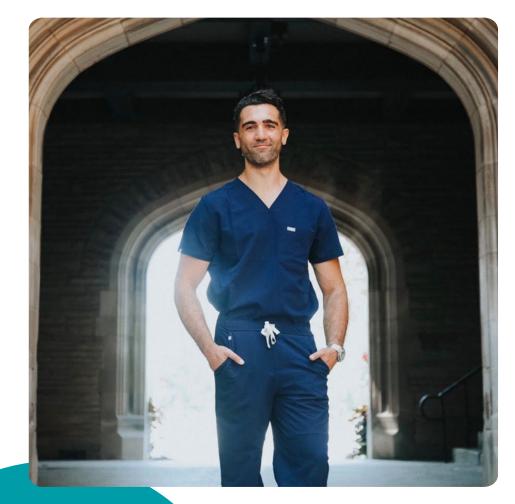
State of Primary Care in Niagara

- Niagara welcome 26 new physicians in 2024 marking a record year for recruitment. 7 more will start in Q1/Q2, 2025.
- 31 physicians are currently accepting patients, the highest number at one time on the Niagara Region's "Find a Doctor" page.
- 2024 was our most successful year on record for physician recruitment, but with Niagara's growing population, we continue working to meet increasing healthcare demands.



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Challenges and Opportunities



- Ongoing primary care shortages and increasing patient waitlists
- 14% of current physicians are over 65 and nearing retirement
- Expansion of medical school seats by Ontario Government provides future opportunity
- Strengthened partnerships with municipalities, clinics, and postsecondary institutions





Physician Recruitment Update

International Recruitment Efforts

- Physician recruitment initiatives in the U.S., U.K., Ireland, and Australia.
- Over 60% of new Niagara physicians recruited from the U.K.
- Key recruitment events in 2024:
 - Career MD Fair (Boston, February 2024) Engaged with specialists and Canadian-trained doctors
 - U.K. Career Fair (Birmingham, June 2024) Connected with 70+ family physicians looking to relocate
 - AAFP Conference (Kansas City, August 2024) Engaged with Canadian students in 175 U.S. medical schools
 - Repatriation Expo (Ireland, October 2024) Connected with 150+ students and health authorities



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Strategic Partnerships



- Southern Ontario Physician Recruitment Alliance (SOPRA) (Founded September 2023):
- **18 recruitment programs** across Ontario Health West
- Shared database and international marketing strategy
- Ontario Physician Recruitment Alliance (**OPRA**) (Founded April 2024)
- Province-wide initiative to coordinate recruitment efforts

Niagara // // Region



Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Effective Region: Supports workforce development and service delivery

Equitable Region: Expands access to healthcare for all residents

Green & Resilient Region: Contributes to sustainable healthcare solutions **Prosperous Region:** Attracting physicians strengthens economic stability and growth





Physician Recruitment Update

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Conclusion



2024 was the strongest year on record for physician recruitment



Continued commitment to attracting and retaining top medical talent



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Ongoing collaboration with regional and municipal partners



Ensuring long-term access to primary care for Niagara residents





Questions & Contact:

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