# Physician Recruitment Roundtable Summary

Advancing Access to Family Doctors for All in Niagara

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## Roundtable Overview and Participants

#### **Event Date:**

November 26, 2024

#### Purpose:

Niagara's first-ever roundtable to develop coordinated strategies for attracting and retaining family doctors.

#### Who Participated:

38 representatives from Niagara's municipalities, healthcare system, post-secondary institutions, family doctors, and Mayors and CAOs of the area municipalities.

#### Goal:

To create a unified, region-wide approach to address the growing family physician shortage and improve healthcare access for all residents.







The Current Situation – Addressing the Opportunity

- With Niagara's population expanding, the demand for family doctors is rising.
- Currently, only 65% of Niagara residents
  have access to a family doctor—a gap that we
  are committed to closing.
- The physician shortage is affecting more than just health—it impacts social services such as mental health programs, EMS, and homelessness supports.
- This is a challenge, but it is also a significant opportunity to strengthen our healthcare system and improve services for all.

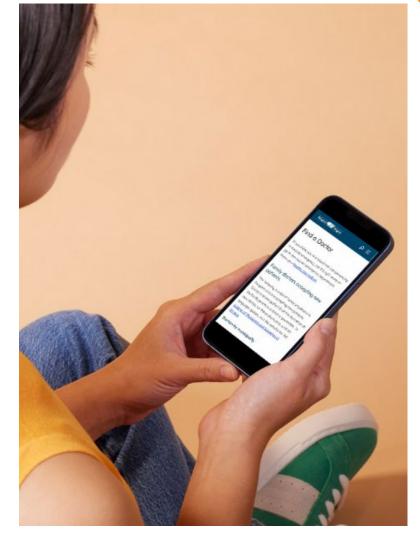






## **Building on Past Successes** in Physician Recruitment

- Niagara has had significant success with the Physician Recruitment and Retention Specialist over the past 14 years.
- In 2024, Niagara attracted a record 26 new family physicians.
- While progress has been made, the demand continues to grow, requiring a more coordinated and collaborative approach.







## Roundtable Discussions – Insights

#### Physicians as Entrepreneurs:

 Physicians are both healthcare providers and business owners. Coordinated support is needed to help them set up practices.

#### Increased Collaboration:

• Municipalities should work together to share office space and financial incentives, improving coordination across Niagara.

#### Supporting Families:

 Attracting physicians requires considering their families' needs and promoting Niagara's lifestyle benefits.

#### Expanding Partnerships:

• Broader community partnerships (e.g., with financial institutions and law firms) will strengthen physician recruitment.

#### Capacity Challenges:

 The current Physician Recruitment Specialist is stretched thin, and additional resources are needed to meet growing demand.







## Recommendations for Strengthening Recruitment Efforts

## Unified Physician Recruitment Strategy:

A coordinated, regionwide strategy involving local mayors, CAOs, and healthcare leaders

#### **Increase Capacity:**

Expanding the Physician Recruitment and Retention office by hiring additional staff.

### **Comprehensive Incentive Strategy**:

Exploring financial and non-financial incentives, including partnerships for office space and housing.

### Advocacy for Systemic Change:

Coordinating
advocacy efforts
across municipalities to
improve compensation
models and reduce
administrative burdens
for physicians.





## Next Steps for Enhancing Physician Recruitment

**Share Insights:** 

The findings from the roundtable will be shared with all participants and stakeholders to ensure transparency and continued collaboration.

**Work Plan Development**:

Economic Development staff will develop a comprehensive work plan to implement the proposed recommendations.

**Council Engagement**:

The work plan will be presented to Council for input, with further opportunities for discussion and engagement.

**Continued Collaboration:** 

Ongoing efforts to collaborate with municipalities, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders will ensure a unified approach to addressing the physician shortage.





## **Questions & Contact:**



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