

# west Northumberland's Community Physician Recruitment & Retention Committee Newsletter - Sept.2008



## Physician Drawn to west Northumberland charm

For 30 years old, Dr. Erin Pepper, life these days pretty much reflects a dream come true.

As a locum physician, filling in for family physicians taking much-needed vacations from busy practices, she is practicing the kind of medicine she loves and was trained for. Better yet, she is doing it in west Northumberland County, in the Cobourg area, a charming old Ontario town on the shores of Lake Ontario one hour's drive east of Toronto. Cobourg is where she grew up.

She is not ready yet to establish her own practice, she says. "There will be time later for that." But she has bought a

house; she has set down roots. Small-town medicine is her future, and west Northumberland will be her base.

I always wanted to come back her," she says. "I love the people; I love the community and I love the life, that rare balance of work and personal life that small-town medicine offers."

Dr. Pepper is exactly the kind of physician to meet that pressing need to resolve the local shortage of physicians. "What we are trying to attract are doctors who will put down roots and become part of the community. We want physicians who will become neighbours, who will

raise families here." "What we are finding is if we can get physicians here as part of their training or as locums or on a visit, we have a head start in convincing them to set up practices here in the west Northumberland County area.

As a locum, Dr. Pepper fills in for local physicians so they can take holidays. Her availability and willingness to take on the role meant there was no disruption in the continuum of care of this physician's patients.

Dr. Pepper also takes shifts in the emergency department of the Northumberland Hills Hospital. The hospital depends on local family physicians to support its clinical programs.

**"Physician-Friendly"  
west  
Northumberland  
County**

**Community Physician  
Recruitment &  
Retention Committee  
(CPRRC)**

**September 2008  
Volume 1 Issue 4**

- **Physician Drawn to west Northumberland Charm**
- **Six Principles of Healthier Care— Ontario's Doctors Thinking Ahead.**

*Special Points of Interest*

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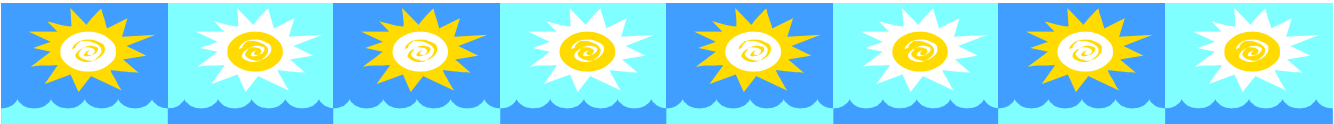
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## Six Principles of Health Care... Ontario's Doctors Thinking Ahead

- Keep Patients front and Centre
- Focus on the Future
- Be Specific
- Think Investment, Not Cost
- Apply what we know now.
- Start now.

[www.healthiercare.ca](http://www.healthiercare.ca)





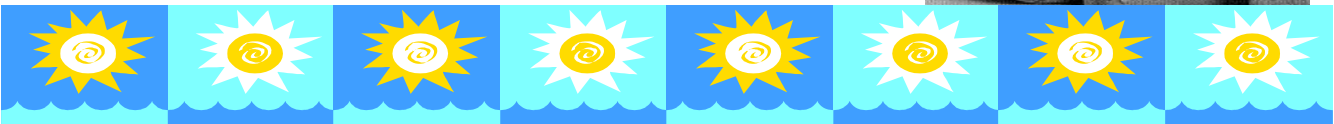
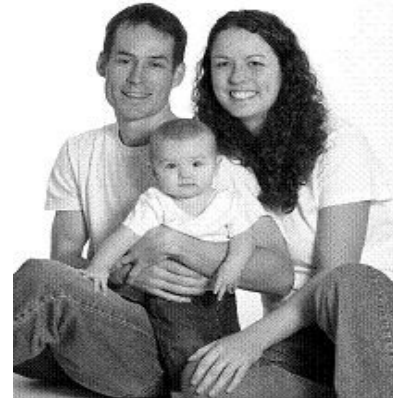
## Six Principles of Healthier Care (continued...)

### KEEP PATIENTS FRONT AND CENTRE:

- We must put and keep patients at the centre of our thinking when making plans and decisions about the future of the health care system
- Patients' needs not the system's constraints, must be our guide

### FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

- We can't predict everything that will happen in the future, but we can make plans and decisions based on the reality we know will confront our health care system within the next decade...
- More people, more elderly, more diversity, more complex conditions, more need for care.



### BE SPECIFIC

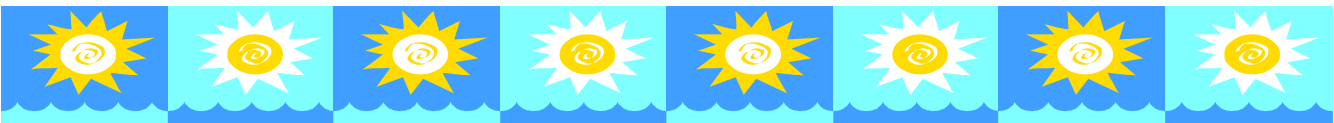
- We need to focus first on making the changes that will do the most to improve access to quality care.
- The big diseases bearing down on the health care system—like cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's—will be enough to overwhelm its capacity to provide care for all patients.

*"Whatever we decide to do, we must set out to achieve the greatest gains in the system, as quickly as possible, to the greatest number of patients."*



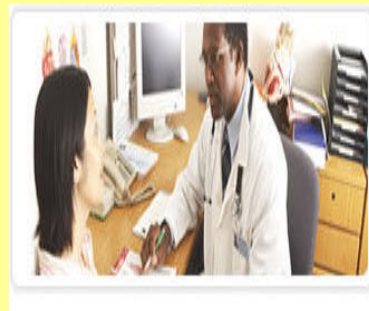
### THINK INVESTMENT, NOT COST

- We need to start thinking about how we can make the health care system a viable, vibrant component of an innovation-driven health economy that will pay dividends in increased employment, education and new knowledge.



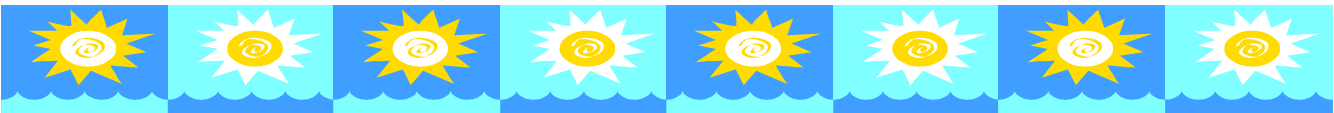
### APPLY WHAT WE KNOW FASTER

- We have transformative, practical and proven solutions to chronic system problems and we need to put them to work.
- We need to continue to innovate and evaluate to improve the health care system.
- The drive for improvement must never stop.



### START NOW

- Plans for the future must commit to action right away to ensure that the care Ontarians' need will be there in the next 10 and 20 years.
- Any plan for the future of health care must start with the actions Ontario can take now. Later is too late.



## Practice Medicine in west Northumberland

You have decided to practice in a small community, however your spouse's career is based in a large urban centre. This region has the answer. Benefit from the best in rural practice opportunities with many progressive opportunities in west Northumberland County. The area covers the Municipality of Port Hope the Town of Cobourg and the Townships of Hamilton and Alnwick/Haldimand. With a combined population of 60,000, the area has 35 family physicians. As of today, there is a need for at least seven more family doctors.

We want physicians to put down roots in this area and become friends and neighbours. In the end, it comes down to an entire community pulling together to show the advantages small-town Ontario can offer family physicians.

- **UAP with support**
- **State of the art, 137 bed medical facility**
- **Quality care to local patients who require medical, surgical, obstetrical, pediatric, ambulatory and emergency care.**

### NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY

Regional Context - Southern Ontario & New York State



## The Business of Recruiting and Retaining

**Family physician recruitment is critical to meeting the primary health care needs of our rapidly growing population. Lack of access to family practitioners is not only a serious community health care issue impacting our citizens, it is also an economic development issue impacting our business community.**



### Engaging Family Medicine Residents

- CPRRC has hosted over 16 family medicine residents to date
- The annual ROMP BBQ positively engages family medicine students and promotes the community as a welcoming, attractive, leading edge centre of medical excellence with promising practice opportunities.

According to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's Underserved Area Program Branch it is estimated that 10,000 - 12,000 people in the west Northumberland County region do not currently have access to a family physician.

To better address the area's critical shortage of family physicians the Community Physician Recruitment & Retention Committee (CPRRC) is a volunteer group of business and municipal representatives formed to enhance physician recruitment efforts and to provide a vehicle for greater community investment and support for the initiative.

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**The four key objectives of the CPRRC are to:**

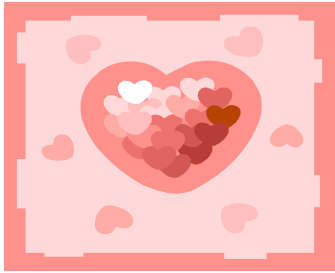
1. **Attract and retain family physicians**
2. **Support the local hospital in their recruitment and retention efforts.**
3. **Make west Northumberland County attractive to health care professionals and support workers.**

**4. To develop policy and advocacy initiatives to address community health care issues as well as broader provincial policy on funding and delivery of health care.**

**To date, the CPRRC has financial commitments from the 5 municipalities of the west Northumberland County area, in support of these strategic goals.**

*Interested in coming for  
a Community site visit?*

*Please call:  
(905) 377-7797  
Call: Mary-Jo Bathe  
mjbathe@nhh.ca*



**Physician-Friendly  
west Northumberland County  
“We Love Our Docs!”**

**COMMUNITY PHYSICIAN  
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE**

**See for yourself!**

*west Northumberland is about wide open  
spaces, a low cost of living and friendly, active  
communities.*

**Work and Play**

The opportunities are as wide open as the sky. Come  
and see what make this the best place in the world!

**The People**

One of the best things about west Northumberland  
County is the people. From city centres to small  
towns you will always find a friendly face and an  
easy-going pace.

## **BUILD THE CAREER YOU’VE ENVISIONED WHY WE WORK?**

“So what do you do?”

How often does an initial conversation at a party start with this simple question. As a society, we place incredible value on the roles people play at work and the professions they have chosen, somehow, seeming to understand the person better by knowing what it is that they do for a living.

How many of us come to work each day to collect the pay cheque at the end of the

week? Many of us find ourselves in a position where that is the only thing that seems to matter anymore. But very few of us actually started at our place of employment with that solely in mind. For many people, the ability to work is about providing purpose to their life, a way in which they can contribute to their community.

As employers we need to recognize stress in the workplace and the possibil-

ity of it affecting an employee’s health. For the majority of organizations, their most valuable asset is their people. Providing support to such valued people such as our physicians, nurses, support staff and other allied health professionals is imperative to the success of any business.

*That’s why we appreciate  
our Northumberland  
Docs!*