

west Northumberland's Community Physician Recruitment & Retention Committee (CPRRC) Newsletter December 2008

Policy asks MDs not to screen patients Doctors know best

The Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons passed a new policy, Thursday November 20, 2008, asking doctors to accept new patients on a "first-come, first-served" basis.

The policy was introduced in hopes of eliminating the practice of screening potential patients and then assessing whether to accept them based on the interview.

According to a draft of the policy, some doctors prefer interviewing patients before-hand to "determine whether or not there are "philosophy or personal-

ity clashes."

Some critics say the practice gives doctors room to turn down patients for other reasons, such as age or difficulty to treat—especially at a time when there are physician shortages across the province. Others defend the practice, as a doctor's right to choose their patients based on the quality of care they can provide.

The intent of the policy is understandable. The purpose is to protect the public from physicians who may selectively care for easier patients, leaving the more vulnerable individuals to fend for them-

selves. The real problem is not a bias against specific patients, rather the issues are related to numbers and time constraints. These concerns beg for solutions.

The purpose of the patient interview is to allow the physician to get to know the patient, so that they can determine if the relationship is going to work and develop a plan of care.

There are still only 24 hours in the day, so new physicians must put limits on the scope of their practices and on the number of more complex patients they accept. What is needed is the active promotion of positive, broad based solutions.

Family Doctor Week Celebrated November 24-29th

To acknowledge the contributions of family physicians and to recognize Family Doctor Week in Canada, a special exhibit was on display at the Northumberland Hills Hospital, during the week of November 24-29, 2008.

The CPRRC asked members of parties in the federal House of Commons, provincial legislature and municipal leaders to send a letter or statement of support,

proudly acknowledging the outstanding contributions of Canadian Family Doctors for their dedication to their patients and the delivery of high quality health care.

Further information may be reviewed at:

<http://www.cfpc.ca/English/cfpc/home/default.asp?s=1>



December 2008

Volume 1, Issue 7

- Policy asks MD not to screen patients—Doctors know best.
- Family Doctor Week Celebrated November 24-29, 2008

Special Points of Interest

HealthForce Ontario Relocation Expense Assistance Program 2

Addressing doctor shortage holds many challenges 2

What's New? 2

FAMILY PHYSICIANS WE WANT YOU!



We Love our Docs!

HealthForce Ontario—Physician Relocation Services

HealthForce Ontario Marketing and Recruitment Agency offers Relocation Services to help physicians and their families move to Ontario. The first Relocation Services program to be launched is the Relocation Expense Assistance Program. (REAP)

REAP is a new province-wide initiative of HealthForce Ontario Marketing

and Recruitment Agency. The program offers financial assistance to physicians who move to Ontario from a jurisdiction outside the province to start a full-time permanent professional medical practice in the province.

To lessen the financial burden and ease the moving process, HFO provides financial assistance to defray some

of the costs associated with relocation for physicians and their families.

Relocated physicians will be reimbursed for eligible moving costs, as well as certification and registration fees incurred to a maximum of \$9500. Total available funding for REAP is limited in each fiscal year and is granted on first come, first serve.

Addressing doctor shortage holds many challenges

GENERAL THOUGHTS

- The Physician Shortage will get worse before it gets better
- New grads want to work part time (30-40 hours per week)
- One-half of new grads, will take maternity leave (thus be out of the workforce for at least one year)
- Therefore, it will take 3-4 doctors to replace the practice of a seasoned, established physician.

COMMUNITY INCENTIVES MAY INCLUDE:

- Car or mini van for duration of their stay
- clinic investment assistance
- Guaranteed Daycare
- A loan that the hospital takes
- Preceptorship and Teaching opportunities
- Invite locums to CME events
- Sell the work, sell the incentives..
- Close to major centres
- The local hospitals' future vision is key for future recruitment

- Ministry of Health ratios dictate a ratio of 1, 384 patients per physician.
- Across Ontario, 10 per cent of physicians are aged 55 or older.
- The CPRRC Committee works closely with the west Northumberland County's municipalities, as well as with economic development, realtors, tourism, local school boards in providing a diverse attraction package.
- Some inroads are being made, as the CPRRC continues to work towards finding solutions.

What's New?

What's New?

- This has been a busy fall and continues to be, as we continue our work recruiting and retaining Family Physicians in the west Northumberland County area.
- Thank you to our many committee volunteers who have participated in community site visits, marketing, community incentive and other committee meetings. Their devotion to Physician Recruitment and Retention and the CPRRC is paramount to meeting the physician recruitment needs in

the west Northumberland County area.

- The new year will present its usual challenges and the CPRRC volunteers will be ready to support the committee once again. 2008 has been a productive year for the CPRRC, as our website and physician recruitment efforts have been very successful to date, with 3 new family physicians recruited to the area.
- For 2009, the CPRRC will continue to advocate for primary health care, physician recruitment and retention, support

applications for Family Health Teams, whether it be by recognition, advocacy, networking or improving opportunities or services, available to physicians and their families.

- That noted, we are only as good as our human and financial resources permit and it is through a true team approach that our goals may be achieved.
- A very sincere thank you to everyone involved in the CPRRC successes in 2008. All the best for the holiday season; may it be safe and that 2009 is our best year yet! MJB