



Recruitment and Retention Plan

The three main partners from the Hearst medical field are working together on a continuous basis to implement multiple recruitment and retention initiatives that aim to increase awareness and attractiveness of the practice of medicine in our community. These partners are the Hearst Physician Group, the Nord-Aski Family Health Team, and the Notre-Dame Hospital. With the health system across Canada experiencing an unprecedented crisis and with an estimated 2.3 million Ontarians currently without a family physician (OMA, November 1, 2023), we must stand out in order to convince new doctors to settle in our respective communities. Aware that the concerted and coordinated efforts of the aforementioned partners are often not well known to the community, we are using the recent achievements to inform the public about the different strategies adopted by the recruitment team and some of the projects it is currently leading.

- a) Starting by bringing the three aforementioned partners together under one local recruitment entity called the Hearst Medical Recruitment Alliance (HMRA). This alliance will allow the members to speak with one unified voice and the organization's website, presently in development, will allow the recruitment coordinator to gather all information intended for physicians in one place. This will facilitate her work when communicating with potential candidates. Our recruitment vision promoting a rewarding career alongside a healthy lifestyle, the loon was selected as the emblem that best represents the pristine nature and tranquility that surround us. The unveiling of the alliance will take place at the end of September, in preparation for our next international outing scheduled in October.
- b) Regarding the reach of our recruitment efforts precisely, the partners believe that it is more important than ever to expand them internationally as many Canadian municipalities are already doing. Having previously attended the first ever Canadian Medical Student Repatriation Exposition in Dublin and Glasgow in the fall of 2023, and returning from a recruitment fair in Birmingham last June, where she was accompanied by Dr. Marjolaine Talbot-Lemaire, the recruitment coordinator, Mélanie Goulet, will again be present at the second Canadian Medical Student Repatriation Exposition in Dublin and Manchester on October 19 and 20, 2024. This time around, she will be supported by the executive director of the Nord-Aski Family Health Team, Jacques Doucet. He who participated in the first international recruitment missions of *Université de Hearst* in 2012 and 2013 within four countries of West Africa. The Ontario

government recently expanded the entry criteria inside the province to medical graduates from Australia, Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States.

- c) Through a collaboration agreement, the Nord-Aski Regional Economic Development Corporation recently created an interest-free loan program for new physicians who choose to settle in the Hearst area. The loan, which can amount up to \$150,000 each, aims to help cover the high costs associated with setting up a medical practice.
- d) From a teamwork perspective and in order to better support each other, the recruitment coordinator, Mélanie Goulet, is actively involved in two external recruitment associations, one at the regional level, and the other at the provincial layer. First, the creation of the Northeastern Ontario Physician Recruitment Alliance (NEOPRA) is a recent initiative to improve collaboration between communities in our region. As a founding member of this new association, Mélanie works closely with other leaders to ensure that both our collective and respective needs are better represented at international job fairs. This partnership will not only allow communities to share the cost of registration, but also help each other in international physician recruitment efforts. Second, the Ontario Physician Recruitment Alliance (OPRA) is gaining momentum. As an active member of this provincial association, Mélanie is helping to shape Ontario's recruitment strategy on the global stage. Recently, the alliance hosted its first international event exclusively for Ontario recruiters and is planning specialized training sessions for its members. Having a strong voice at the provincial level is essential as we continue to work closely with students, residents, and physicians to address the distinct health care needs of all communities.

Other Initiatives

- Increase in the number of 3rd year medical students in Hearst from 2 to 3 in 2024-2025. Reception of requests for placements from a student and a resident from the University of Toronto.
- Integration of physicians within a single location at the Hearst Medical Centre to promote professional support, and facilitate coordination of care and patient navigation.
- Redesign of the kiosk and recruitment tools in line with the new Hearst Medical Recruitment Alliance branding.
- Upgraded use of social media platforms to reach a larger network without having to travel. Lots of success with the LinkedIn and Instagram applications.