

Background

A major focus of the previous *Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program 2007-2011* and the current *Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program* is to enhance the City of Greater Sudbury's efforts at recruiting family physicians to ensure that citizens have regular access to a primary health care provider.

Significant success has been achieved since 2008, resulting in the recruitment of 78 future family physicians and three nurse practitioners using the various initiatives found within the program. Two family physicians have recently left the community following completion of their return of service period and an additional two family physicians have recently announced their future plans to relocate this Fall due to various reasons. The remaining 74 family physician recruits represent 64% of Greater Sudbury's designated complement of 115 family physicians and will provide access to primary health care to an estimated 102,000 citizens of Greater Sudbury.

By the end of 2017, 63 of these family physicians will have begun practicing, with the remaining 11 scheduled to begin practice over the next three years. Based on their primary practice location address, these physicians have located in CGS neighbourhoods as follows:

Chelmsford – 5	Copper Cliff – 2	Donovan – 1	Flour Mill – 5
Kingsmount – 2	Lively – 4	Minnow Lake – 4	New Sudbury – 12
South End – 23	Valley East – 3		

Despite the successes in recruitment, there are still citizens of Greater Sudbury who remain without a primary healthcare provider. Even with the successes we have experienced in recruitment,

- Each year we are losing approximately three to four family physicians, mostly due to retirement.
- Currently 25% of our family physicians have over 30 years in practice, and it can be assumed that attrition due to retirement will continue for several years to come.
- By contrast, once all new recruits begin to practice, just over half of working family physicians will have been in practice less than 10 years – a positive indication that recruitment efforts are achieving results.

The Role of the City of Greater Sudbury and Staff

The City of Greater Sudbury remains actively involved in the recruitment and retention of healthcare providers by showcasing the excellent lifestyle opportunities which exist here, while offering an incentive program that allows the city to remain competitive when compared with other communities. Year-round staff support includes:

- Customized city tours
- Assistance with finding employment opportunities for spouses
- Linking new family physicians with practice opportunities available across the CGS
- Assistance with housing searches
- Occasional special requests and settlement assistance

Building a strong relationship with NOSM learners and staff

Upon the official opening of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) in September of 2005, the City of Greater Sudbury gained a resource for the future of healthcare in our community. Research has shown that a significant number of new physicians end up practicing in the communities in which they were trained. Furthermore, NOSM is mandated to train medical professionals for future practice in rural, remote and northern communities. As such, the learners who graduate from NOSM are better acquainted with practice models and opportunities in Greater Sudbury.

NOSM is the ideal solution to the specific physician shortages faced by our community. Many NOSM learners are local to Greater Sudbury and the region, and are interested in practicing in our community following residency training. However, without the proper programs and incentives in place, they may not stay. As a municipal government, the City has continued to strengthen its relationship with current and future medical learners and works to foster the development of these learners by providing adequate opportunities for social and professional relationships to be established within our community.

Staff have also built strong relationships with the staff at NOSM. For instance, CGS staff have participated in numerous committees comprised mainly of NOSM staff and tasked with the planning of conferences and other NOSM-hosted events. CGS staff also provide services such as city tours when NOSM has visiting candidates or guests.

INCENTIVES

A. Overview

In Ontario, the business of physician recruitment remains competitive, with neighbouring communities vying for a limited number of medical graduates each year. Many municipalities have developed lucrative recruitment packages to help attract physicians to their respective communities. Some examples include:

- Interest-free loans
- Guaranteed salaries
- Housing subsidies
- Tuition reimbursement
- Rent subsidies
- Turnkey offices including office staff, furniture and equipment

To remain progressive and sustainable in primary healthcare recruitment and retention, the City of Greater Sudbury offers financial incentives to attract these professionals to our community.

From 2008 to 2017, with the exception of 2016, funding for incentives has been provided through one-time funding commitments from City Council. Each year, a one-time funding request has been proposed based on the projections for the upcoming year.

Funding commitments have declined over time since the inception of the program as follows:

2008 - \$220,000
2009 - \$380,000
2010 - \$500,000
2011 - \$440,000
2012 - \$400,000
2013 - \$200,000
2014 - \$150,000
2015 - \$150,000
2016 – 0
2017 - \$150,000

In 2016, funding for the incentive component was provided entirely by funds collected from previously returned incentive payments.

In some years, surplus funds remained in the physician recruitment marketing budget at year end. This surplus was utilized to complement the one-time funding commitments from Council resulting in additional family physicians being recruited.

For 2018, a business case option for one time funding for the Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment Incentives, in the amount of \$150,000, has been prepared for consideration during the 2018 Budget Process.

The financial incentives offered by the City of Greater Sudbury are issued on a first come, first served basis. It is difficult for staff to predict which opportunities will arise over the course of a year, which heavily depend on the stage of training that potential recruits are in along with their practice interests. To date, the current policy has allowed the City of Greater Sudbury to remain flexible and secure recruits as opportunities present themselves.

B. Current Incentives

The following incentives are offered to primary healthcare providers:

- **Family Medicine Resident Return of Service Incentive**
 - \$20,000 per Family Medicine Resident (two year return of service) who commits to practice family medicine within the City of Greater Sudbury upon successful completion of residency training.

- This incentive is paid out in two annual instalments of \$10,000.
- Note that those who have received the City of Greater Sudbury Medical Student Bursary are not eligible to receive the Family Medicine Resident Return of Service Incentive.
- Under the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program, this incentive was a \$40,000 incentive for a 4 year return of service commitment.
- Under the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program, those who received the City of Greater Sudbury Medical Student Bursary (\$20,000 for a two year return of service) were given the option of receiving a reduced (\$20,000 incentive for a two year return of service) Family Medicine Resident Return of Service Incentive to equal a total of \$40,000 for a 4 year return of service.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of Family Medicine Resident Return of Service Incentives issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program and the current City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Issued	5	8	6	8	6	7	6	4	6	1
Total	\$200,000	\$240,000	\$160,000	\$220,000	\$180,000	\$160,000	\$120,000	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$20,000

- **City of Greater Sudbury Medical Student Bursary**

- \$20,000 per student (two year return of service) who commits to practice family medicine within the City of Greater Sudbury upon successful completion of residency training.
- This \$20,000 incentive is paid out in one lump sum instalment.
- Note that those who receive this bursary are not eligible to receive the Family Medicine Resident Return of Service Incentive.
- Under the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program, those who received the City of Greater Sudbury Medical Student Bursary (\$20,000 for a two year return of service) were given the option of receiving a reduced (\$20,000 incentive for two year return of service) Family Medicine Resident Return of Service Incentive to equal a total of \$40,000 for a 4 year return of service.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of City of Greater Sudbury Medical Student Bursaries issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program and the current City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Issued	1	5	4	6	4	2	5	3	-	3
Total	\$20,000	\$100,000	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$80,000	\$40,000	\$100,000	\$60,000	-	\$60,000

- **City of Lakes Family Health Team Incentive**

As a partner in the development of the City of Lakes Family Health Team, the City of Greater Sudbury holds a responsibility to ensure that these teams are adequately staffed.

- New physicians (must not have practiced medicine in the City of Greater Sudbury for at least four years) who agree to practice with the City of Lakes Family Health Team are eligible to receive a \$10,000 incentive paid out in one lump sum instalment.
- Note that those who join the City of Lake Family Health Team at one of their outlying community locations, are not eligible to receive the Outlying Community Incentive.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of City of Lakes Family Health Team Incentives issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program and the current City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Issued	-	1	4	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Total	-	\$10,000	\$40,000	-	-	-	\$10,000	-	\$10,000	\$20,000

- **Outlying Community Incentive**

Considering that the City of Greater Sudbury covers a large geographical area with 45% of the population living in outlying communities, it is important to ensure that primary healthcare services are accessible across the city. To encourage family physicians to set up practices in our outlying communities, we offer the following incentive:

- New physicians who open family practices within any outlying community located within the City of Greater Sudbury are eligible for a one-time \$15,000 incentive which is paid out as a single lump sum payment.
- Note that those who set up practice with the City of Lakes Family Health Team in an outlying community are only eligible to receive the City of Lakes Family Health Team Incentive.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of Outlying Community Incentives issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program and the current City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Issued	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-
Total	-	\$15,838	\$15,000	-	\$15,000	-	-	-	\$45,000	-

- **Nurse Practitioner Incentive**

Several Nurse Practitioner Led Clinics which include the Sudbury District Nurse Practitioner Clinic and the Capreol Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic have been created within our community since the start of the Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program. In 2011, Council directed staff to begin offering financial incentives to new nurse practitioners working within these clinics. The Nurse Practitioner Led Clinics provide access to primary healthcare providers to those citizens who may not otherwise have access. In response to this development, an incentive was created to assist with the recruitment of nurse practitioners in the amount of \$4,000. Newly recruited nurse practitioners must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive the incentive:

- Agrees to a minimum of four years return of service within a Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic.
- Provide service in a clinic located within the City of Greater Sudbury but outside the former City of Sudbury.
- Has not worked as a Nurse Practitioner in any other capacity in Greater Sudbury within the last four years.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of Nurse Practitioner Incentives issued annually through the current City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Issued	1	1	-	1	-
Total	\$4,000	\$4,000	-	\$4,000	-

- **Community Ambassadors Medical Students Bursary Fund**

Sudbury-born or Sudbury-based medical students are scattered throughout Ontario and across Canada. These Sudbury-based medical students are often very good ambassadors for our city, speaking very highly of our community to their peers in medical school. In turn, medical students who have never before experienced our community travel to Greater Sudbury on elective rotations to find out what opportunities exist here.

By extending and formalizing our relationship with Sudbury-based medical students, the City of Greater Sudbury has actively participated in the promotion of our community and the opportunities which exist here.

A bursary in the amount of \$1,000 per student is offered to Sudbury-born medical students studying at any of the five (5) medical schools in Southern Ontario. Students with strong ties to Greater Sudbury and who demonstrate an interest in practicing family medicine upon graduation will act as Community Ambassadors for Greater Sudbury.

Under the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program, a bursary in the amount of \$5,000 per student was offered. In 2010 this incentive was reduced to \$1,000 per student.

Four former community ambassadors have begun practicing in Greater Sudbury upon completion of their medical training.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of Community Ambassadors Medical Students Bursaries issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program and the current City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Issued	3	4*	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	-
Total	\$15,000	\$17,500	\$2,000	\$1,000	-	-	-	-	\$2,000	-

*one student issued \$2,500 due to enrolling half way through academic year.

C. Incentives No Longer Offered by the CGS

Under the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program 2007-2011 there were two additional incentives in place which have since been discontinued. They are as follows:

- Community Ambassadors Medical Students Bursary Fund

- Specialists recruited by the former Sudbury Regional Hospital were eligible to receive a one-time \$5,000 incentive from the City of Greater Sudbury.
- In order to receive this incentive, specialists had to maintain privileges and on-call expectations at the former Sudbury Regional Hospital.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of Specialist Incentives issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Issued	10	7	12	14	14
Total	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$60,000	\$70,000	\$70,000

Hospital Privileges Incentive

- Family physicians were eligible to receive a one-time \$5,000 incentive from the City of Greater Sudbury if they committed to maintain privileges and on-call expectations at the former Sudbury Regional Hospital.

The following table is a breakdown of the number of the Hospital Privileges Incentive issued annually through the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Issued	-	-	8	2	5
Total	-	-	\$40,000	\$10,000	\$25,000

With the creation of the current Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program, both the specialist incentive and the hospital privileges incentive were removed and discontinued after 2012.

D. Incentives Offered by Other Agencies

Incentives from the Province of Ontario

HealthForce Ontario Northern and Rural Recruitment & Retention Initiative (NRRRI):

At this time, eligible physicians who establish a practice within the City of Greater Sudbury may receive \$80,000 through the NRRRI. It is important to note that this incentive applies to many communities throughout the province, and incentives range from \$80,000 to \$117,600, depending on the community's *Rurality Index for Ontario* (RIO) score, which is derived from three factors: population (count and density), travel time to a basic referral centre, and travel time to an advanced referral centre.

Currently Greater Sudbury scores a RIO of 3, which is well below the eligibility cut off point for the NRRRI, as the initiative only issues incentives to physicians who set up in communities who scored a 40 or higher. As Greater Sudbury, along with the other four Northern Urban Referral Centres (Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins and North Bay), has been grandfathered into the program, the city's eligibility for this program could be in jeopardy in the future.

Incentives from Health Sciences North

Health Sciences North provides new physicians with:

- \$2,500 incentive to assist with covering moving expenses incurred by the physician.
- 12 month \$20,000 interest free loan.

In order for new physicians to be eligible for these incentives they must have active hospital privileges, assume a full-time workload, and participate in department call expectations.

Incentives from the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce

Through various donations of goods and services from their members, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce has put together an award winning Physician Recruitment Incentive package that is valued at approximately \$10,000. Goods and services range from a gift certificate for a free pizza to free accounting services for one year. This package has been very well received by those who have utilized it.

Marketing Initiatives

While financial incentives are offered by the City of Greater Sudbury, Health Sciences North, Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, and the Province of Ontario, they only make up part of the initiatives within the recruitment program. Marketing our community to medical learners and visiting physicians is a key component of the overall strategy.

Marketing initiatives as part of the Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program are funded through the annual physician recruitment and retention marketing budget which was \$35,000 in 2017. As indicated previously in this report, the marketing budget has been reduced by 56% from \$80,356 in 2010. The following is a breakdown of the annual budget allocation for the physician recruitment and retention marketing:

2008 - \$78,000
2009 - \$79,560
2010 - \$80,356
2011 - \$80,356
2012 - \$75,356
2013 - \$75,356
2014 - \$75,356
2015 - \$36,356
2016 - \$35,000
2017 - \$35,000

The City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment Program continues to be actively involved in attracting new family physicians and nurse practitioners to our community. Showcasing our city to both medical learners and visiting physicians is done through the following initiatives:

i) Northern Ontario School of Medicine Medical Learner Orientation/Social events

Every year the City of Greater Sudbury sponsors and hosts numerous events for the new and continuing medical learners at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) which highlight the lifestyle opportunities which exist in Greater Sudbury while affording us the opportunity to strengthen relationships with these future physicians. By strengthening relationships with these learners, staff are able to identify those who plan to remain in the community to practice and remain in contact with those who have not yet made practice decisions.

Examples of events are as follows:

- Afternoon skate on Ramsey Lake Skate Path
- Sleigh ride & Dinner
- William Ramsey Cruise Welcome Event for new NOSM medical students
- Sudbury Yacht Club Welcome Event for new NOSM medical residents
- Science North/Dynamic Earth Tours (year-round/as requested)

ii) Guided City Tours

The City of Greater Sudbury regularly provides guided city tours to prospective medical learners and visiting physicians. Coordinated and hosted by CGS staff, these tours include visiting various points of interest throughout the city while answering any questions that candidates may have.

- Personalized to focus on an individual's interests.
- Coordinated for events such as the Canadian Residency Matching Service interview weekend, as fourth year medical students from across the country and around the World are in Sudbury, being interviewed for available spots in the NOSM residency program.
- Perfect opportunity to showcase our community first-hand to a very broad audience.

iii) “Welcome to Greater Sudbury” Packages

The City of Greater Sudbury provides the Northern Ontario School of Medicine with welcome packages for all students and residents who come to our community for their training. Learners are provided with an opportunity to experience our community through a selection of complimentary passes to attractions throughout the city, generously provided by some of our community partners. Partners include:

- Science North/Dynamic Earth
- Sudbury Theatre Centre
- Sudbury Yacht Club
- Sudbury Wolves

Other information in the packages may include visitor guides, leisure guides, maps, trail maps, real estate information and other brochures on attractions and amenities available to our guests.

iv) Events to Reduce Professional and Social Isolation

Coordinating physician-resident-student events helps foster professional relationships between medical learners at NOSM and established physicians in the City of Greater Sudbury. Trained to practice in rural locations, NOSM students are ideal candidates to practice in the smaller outlying communities of Greater Sudbury. By encouraging professional relationships between our medical learners and established medical professionals, the City of Greater Sudbury can promote ties between learners and practitioners that could lead to recruitment.

v) Other Events

Northern Ontario School of Medicine Family Medicine Residents Holiday Gathering

Annually, the CGS sponsors a holiday gathering for the family residents during their December Academic Rounds. Academic Rounds take place monthly where NOSM Residents who are located across Northeastern Ontario come to Sudbury for various group training sessions taking place over a two day period. This December dinner event is an opportunity to foster healthy relationships with future family medicine practitioners and to share information with the group.

Northern Ontario School of Medicine Graduation Celebration

The City of Greater Sudbury sponsors the annual NOSM Graduation Celebration which takes place each spring. This student-organized formal provides those graduating from the undergraduate program at NOSM an opportunity to celebrate their achievements with family and friends. It also provides staff with an opportunity to:

- Congratulate the graduating class
- Showcase our community to a group of bright, driven and determined future physicians, many of whom will be coming back to Sudbury to practice after completing residency training.
- Build a strong relationship with those moving onto residency programs across the country.

Staff work with contacts at NOSM to provide resources and advice as appropriate to assist with the planning of events such as the graduation celebration event.

RETENTION INITIATIVES

While recruiting primary healthcare professionals is of paramount importance to improving overall healthcare in our community, equally important is retaining them for the long term. The City of Greater Sudbury continues to host and/or support the following retention events to show appreciation for current providers, the services that they provide to our community and their continued dedication towards their profession:

- **Physician and Family Appreciation Day Brunch**
- **Docs on Greens Golf Tournament**
- **Sudbury and District Medical Society (SDMS) Christmas Party**

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND OTHER SUPPORT

Physician Recruitment Community Partnership

The City of Greater Sudbury has created strong community partnerships with local businesses to support recruitment and retention. Through in-kind donations and private sector funding, the CGS secures additional resources to support various initiatives to help market our community.

Through these affiliations, staff have been able to provide medical students and residents with complimentary passes to local attractions.

In some cases, businesses located in some of our outlying communities have contributed goods and services to be put towards a “recruitment package” for physicians who are considering setting up in their areas. These incentive packages further assist in encouraging new family physicians to practice in outlying communities.

Affiliations with local businesses provide access to a multitude of support services and programs that are invaluable to new physicians and their families. As well, community partners may provide an important source of employment opportunities for spouses of physicians.

Additional Support Services

Despite offering a relatively lower level of incentives when compared to some municipalities, Greater Sudbury has experienced much success with its recruitment efforts. The strategy has remained effective due to the complementary support and resources provided by staff, as well as the promotion of the general advantages associated with living in the City of Greater Sudbury. These support services and resources include the following:

- Finding locums for existing physicians to cover for leaves of absence/maternity leaves
- Set up meetings with property owners regarding available practice space
- Provide overview of current practice opportunities including site tours
- Facilitating meetings with groups such as the Health Care Connect Program
- Answering city related questions
- Providing support to the recruits family ie. Assistance with finding schools for children, spousal employment opportunities etc.

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS BY THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY

While not part of the initiatives included in both the former Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program or the current Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program, as a partner in the development of the City of Lakes Family Health Team, the City of Greater Sudbury has made capital investments to make the City of Lakes Family Health Team's proposed four sites a reality. Since the idea was first presented to Council, four sites have been opened including the Sudbury Clinic (Pioneer Manor Site), Val Caron Clinic, Walden Clinic and recently the Chelmsford Clinic. By the end of 2017, a total 17 family physicians will be practising within the City of Lakes Family Health Team's four sites with one vacancy remaining in Chelmsford.

The following table is a breakdown of capital investments made by the City of Greater Sudbury at each of the City of Lakes Family Health Team's four sites.

Completion Date	Site	CGS portion of capital
2008	City of Lakes Family Health Team – Pioneer Manor Site (6 family physicians)	\$554,598
	City of Lakes Family Health Team – Val Caron Site (4 family physicians)	\$121,260
2011	City of Lakes Family Health Team – Walden Site (4 family physicians)	\$364,896
2017	City of Lakes Family Health Team – Chelmsford Site (3 family physicians/one vacancy remaining)	\$1,101,662 (estimated)
TOTAL		\$2,142,416

SUMMARY

The current *City of Greater Sudbury Primary Healthcare Provider Recruitment and Retention Program* and the former *City of Greater Sudbury Strategic Physician Recruitment and Retention Program 2007 – 2011* have proven to be effective at recruiting family physicians and nurse practitioners to Greater Sudbury. The results of the program have had a significant impact within the community, allowing many citizens to gain regular access to a primary healthcare provider who otherwise would not have had one.