

NEWS RELEASE

Achieving their dream to practise medicine in Ontario

92 foreign-trained doctors selected for Canadian medical residency programs with help from the Access Centre

TORONTO (March 30, 2008) – Securing a coveted medical residency position is the hope of most every international medical graduate (IMG) who lives in Ontario.

This month, 92 IMG clients of the Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals achieved their dream. Many were at an event today to celebrate their achievements with The Hon. David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

"The success of these outstanding international medical graduates is clearly due to their hard work, dedication and perseverance and the indispensable support they have received from the Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals," said Health and Long-Term Care Minister David Caplan.

This group is among the first announced in the 2009 Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS) selection process. The second iteration of the CaRMS match will be announced on April 16.

"I never gave up on my dream to practise medicine in Ontario, said Dr. Zardasht Gaf. "I came to Canada as a refugee from Kurdistan and had nothing. I worked very hard. It wasn't easy but I never gave up. I received great support from the Access Centre and they gave me the confidence I needed when I had very little."

A business unit within HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency, the Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals helps IMGs with information, advice and counselling during the medical residency selection process.

"I was provided with the support and networking opportunities I needed," says Dr. Donna Li, who left Guyana, South America in 2005. "It's difficult at first for new immigrants to try to adapt to a new culture and most people are financially challenged, so it's important for people to feel like they are not alone in the process. In five years I'd like to have my own clinic in a small Ontario community."

"Helping internationally educated health professionals explore the avenue for licensure in one of Ontario's regulated or unregulated health professions is a key mandate of the Access Centre," said Brad Sinclair, Executive Director of HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency. "With respect to IMG clients specifically, we've had great success in helping them prepare for residency and expect even more matches after the second CaRMS iteration."

IMGs often face skills and language barriers during the medical residency-selection process, which can be a barrier to acceptance. The support they receive at the Access Centre gives them a better understanding of the practice requirements in Ontario and how to become more competitive in the residency selection process.

HFO MRA Access Centre – IMG Program

Launched in November 2007, the IMG Program prepares internationally trained physicians for the residency application process by offering a series of workshops, information sessions and one-on-one meetings focused on various aspects of the path to practice.

The program's goal is to ensure that all IMGs living in Ontario have access to the information and resources they need to be as competitive as possible during the residency-selection process.

Key IMG Program Elements

- Orientation Sessions
- Study Groups
- Examination Information and Preparation Sessions
- Interview Skills Development Workshops
- Career Options Workshops

About HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency

The HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency is an independent operational service agency of the Government of Ontario. The Agency is a core component of the HealthForceOntario strategy—a multi-year, collaborative plan to provide Ontario with the right number and mix of health care providers, working in communities across the province to meet our health needs—now and in the future.

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