

NEWS RELEASE

Opening Doors for International Health Care Professionals *67 International Medical Graduates Accepted to Medical Residency Programs in Ontario with Access Centre's Help*

TORONTO (May 1, 2008) – Since the Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals opened in December 2006, 67 of their International Medical Graduate (IMG) clients have been accepted to a medical residency program in Ontario. The centre is a business unit within the HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency (HFO MRA) which works to help IMGs succeed during Ontario's medical residency-selection process.

“People in this province need better access to physicians,” said George Smitherman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. “This centre is proof that our government is bringing more internationally trained doctors into our health care system and therefore more physicians are moving into communities across the province.”

The centre provides internationally trained physicians and other health care professionals, such as nurses, with the chance to pursue a health care career in Ontario. Many Access Centre clients are IMGs who received medical training in their countries of origin, and who now need to complete one of Ontario's medical residency programs in order to practise here.

“This is a remarkable accomplishment for the Access Centre, considering we have only been in operation for a little more than a year,” said Wayne Oake, Director, Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals. “The medical residency placement process in Ontario is challenging and competitive, particularly for IMGs, so we are proud that we have helped them get closer to their goals.”

IMGs often face skills and language barriers during the medical residency-selection process which can delay acceptance. The support they receive at the Access Centre gives them a better chance to obtain a medical residency position.

HFO MRA Access Centre – IMG Program

In November 2007, the Access Centre established the IMG Program. It is a valuable resource for those who are applying for medical residency and practise in the province. 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.

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Elements of the program include:

- Centralized access to information on eligibility requirements;
- Skills assessment workshops;
- Interview training sessions, and
- One-on-one counseling and ongoing support from an advisor

“Thanks to the Access Centre, I am on my way to becoming a licensed physician in Ontario,” said Meenatchi Ranganathan, Access Centre client. “I could not have accomplished this goal without the guidance, advice and support I received from the centre and my advisor.”

ABOUT HEALTHFORCEONTARIO

HealthForceOntario is Ontario’s health human resources strategy. Its goal is to ensure that Ontario has the right number and mix of appropriately educated health care practitioners in the right place, at the right time and with the right skills.

For more information:

- Visit www.HealthForceOntario.ca
- Call 416-314-4409 or 1-800-596-4046

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