

HEALTH RECRUITMENT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

VIA ZOOM

SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

8:30 a.m. The meeting convened with Councillor L. Baldwin-Sands, Chair, presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Councillor L. Baldwin-Sands, Chair, City of St. Thomas
Councillor G. Jones, County of Elgin
Dr. K. Scott, Family Physician
S. Nolan, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital
A. DeVries, St. Thomas Elgin Home Builders Association

Officials

Sandra Datars Bere, City Manager, City of St. Thomas
Julie Gonyou, C.A.O., County of Elgin
Cheryl Fish, Health Recruiter
Taylor Mooney, Strategic Initiatives Manager
Matt Smale, Corporate Administrative Clerk, City of St. Thomas

Regrets

Dr. C. Egbujuo, Family Physician

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil.

MINUTES

Motion by Councillor Jones - Dr. Scott:

THAT: The minutes of the August 8, 2022 meeting be confirmed.

Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Activity Report and Recruitment Projects - Health Recruiter - Appendix "A"

Ms. Fish provided an overview of activities and recruitment projects for August 2022.

Ms. Fish advised that the Cottage Country Health Team in the Muskoka region had developed a wait list for new patients seeking to roster with that team and that Peterborough had developed a physician recruitment website.

The members discussed the effectiveness of existing resources such as Health Care Connect and requested further information on costs, resources and possible design options required to establish such new websites.

NEW BUSINESS

Medical Discovery Week Surveys

Ms. Nolan advised that a presentation could be made regarding this item at a future meeting.

Incentive Grants - Updates from Recipients

The City Manager advised that Dr. Ikafia had moved into his practice and was transitioning to a new electronic records system.

Health Recruitment Scholarships

The members agreed that this item could be discussed at a future meeting.

CONFIRMED _____ CHAIR

HEALTH RECRUITMENT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE - 2

AMO Delegation - Appendix "B"

The members were in receipt of information from a presentation made by Elgin County representatives to Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health and Deputy Premier regarding rural access to family physicians and municipal funding of health care initiatives.

New Nurse Practitioner in St. Thomas

Dr. Scott advised that Nurse Practitioner Julia Petrakis was establishing a private practice in St. Thomas and that she would forward Ms. Petrakis' practice link to the members.

NEXT MEETING

The members agreed that the next meeting would be held on October 3rd, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

9:05 a.m. The meeting adjourned.

Appendix "A"

St. Thomas-Elgin Recruitment Committee

Update Report

August 2022

Activities:

- 1) I will be attending the McMaster University Recruitment Fair in Kitchener on Monday Sept. 26th. They are back to in person events after a 3 year pause. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to meet with first and second year Residents to share the practice opportunities we have in St. Thomas and Elgin County now and what is coming in the near future.
- 2) Western University is hosting a one day event for the hosts of "Discovery Week" This will take place on Sept. 27th in London. The purpose of the meeting is to review the results from 2022 program and provide us with an opportunity to make suggestions for the future.
- 3) Paul Shipway from the County reached out to me regarding a physician that had expressed an interest in setting up a practice in Port Stanley. I met with this physician for lunch on Aug. 13th to discuss the model of practice and what facilities she would require. This feedback was shared with Paul. Unfortunately the physician has decided she will not be coming to Port Stanley.
- 4) Following discussions with Dr. Haruta, Dr. Scott and Dr. Tenbergen I reached out to the following organizations.
 - ✓ Discussion with Med Point re the possibility of setting up a clinic here in St. Thomas.
 - ✓ Discussion with Dr. Alex MacLennan the lead of Cottage Country Family Health Team regarding the set up and maintenance of a "Wait List" they implemented for their patients in the municipalities of Gravenhurst, Bracebridge & Muskoka Lakes.
 - ✓ Discussion with Peterborough Municipality and their Recruiter Kevin Kirkpatrick regarding their development and launch of a "Web Page" and how well they feel it's working to recruit new physicians.

The information obtained is being reviewed and if the potential benefits warrant the possibility of us pursuing these projects further it will be presented to the committee for further discussion.

- 5) Ongoing advice and suggestions received from Jane Tillmann at Ontario Health are being followed up as well as Dr. Scott's suggestion after she had been in conversation with a physician working in Four Counties that I should reach out to Jean Ray at the Four Counties Family Health Team to see about the possibility of them assisting with some of Dr. Grigore's patients as we continue to look at options for his retirement.
- 6) I followed up with the physician doing a locum for Dr. Osagie providing her with my contact information for future coverage and to provide additional information on permanent practice opportunities that are available now and coming in the future. I also touched base with Dr. Vaideswaren a physician who provided locum coverage for Dr. Gregory as she is interested in providing short locum coverage in the future.

- 7) I responded to questions from Delany Leitch from the Municipality as she was preparing info for a meeting of a delegation from Elgin with the Minister of Health at the annual AMO conference in Ottawa. The stats I provided was the number of residents without a family physician and the projection of how many physicians will be retiring in the next 5 years. I also suggested that maybe the following topics could be floated by the Minister during the meeting.
- a) Research into an Urgent Care center and what support the Ministry would provide. This might help to take some pressure off the Emergency Dept.,
 - b) The impact on what the new Physician Services Agreement might have on the development of new FHO's and the recruitment process.
 - c) The Health Care Connect Program and the suggestion to make changes to the criteria to help make the program more effective.

I'm hoping that any feedback provided by the Minister can be shared with the committee.

- 8) I will be setting up an Elgin Orientation session for Dr. Anthony Ezepue for late Sept or early Oct as he is taking over the family medicine practice of Dr. Ajogwu on Oct., 1st. 2022.
- 9) Dr.Toth has advised that a contract has been signed with a physician to take over his practice effective March 1, 2023. I'm assisting him in completing the paperwork for the Ministry. Sandra and I will be meeting with the new physician to discuss the incentive grant.
- 10) Nine emails were sent to Residents doing placements at the STEGH in the month of August. Three telephone conversations have been arranged so far to share practice opportunity info.
- 11) I was approached by a Nurse who has set up a new medical business for I.V.Infusion Therapy and Nutritional Counselling here in St. Thomas. She is looking for a Medical Director either a physician or a nurse practitioner to fill this role. This is relatively a new treatment to this area although she advised it was very popular in the U.S. I sent out info about this service to several physicians that I thought might have the time to provide this support. I'm hoping she is able to find the support she needs to make her business a success.

Submitted by: Cheryl Fish- Health Recruiter



To: Health Recruitment Partnership
From: Grant Jones, Elgin County Councillor | Mayor, Township of Southwold
Date: September 12, 2022
Re: Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Delegation

Distribution: [Sent via email]

Elgin County representatives had an opportunity to deliver a presentation to the Minister of Health at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference recently held in Ottawa. The purpose of this report is to share information about our delegation with Members of the Health Recruitment Partnership.

Delegation information is as follows:

Delegation: Minister of Health and Staff

Time and Location: Tuesday, August 16th 1:05-1:20pm

County Representatives:

Tom Marks, Deputy Warden & Deputy Mayor – Municipality of Central Elgin
Grant Jones, Councillor and Mayor – Township of Southwold
Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer

We asked for the Minister of Health's consideration of a few key matters and requested support and partnership in addressing our concerns collaboratively. Our presentation materials are attached and we discussed the following:

Background: Health Human Resource Strain Provincially

We provided an overview of the broader landscape of provincial physician shortages and the limitations facing municipalities in addressing these challenges. We specifically noted that access to primary care has become a major concern in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, both in relation to the shortage of primary care physicians and to significantly increased service demand. At least 1 million Ontarians do not have regular access to primary care, and this shortage is especially acute in rural areas. 1 in 5

family doctors in the province plan to retire in the next 5 years, according to the Ontario College of Family Physicians. As older physicians retire, it takes on average 1.5 to 2 new graduates to replace their capacity due to the size of their patient rosters built over time.

We cited this as an issue that local elected officials are hearing about very frequently from residents, and noted that it is a challenging one for us to approach from the current position of Ontario municipalities in relation to health care system decision-making. Municipal governments play an important role in the health care system, but this key relationship often lacks formal recognition. As the closest level of government to the people we are inherently the most reliable and up-to-date source of localized population and planning data that can help to predict when and where services will be most needed. Despite this, municipal integration with the Ontario Health Teams and other health care decision making bodies is inconsistent. Now more than ever, people expect and deserve fair access to high-quality health care and residents are increasingly looking to their local municipal councils to represent their community's concerns about health care provided by institutions, health care professionals, and the province, and we need to have a means of formally bringing forward that information.

Elgin-Specific Context

Like many municipalities, especially rural ones, we shared that our community historically fund above our required cost-share to provide additional health care services using property tax revenue. This is not appropriate as health care is a provincial responsibility.

AMO's analysis of municipal Financial Information Returns found that in 2018, 80% of municipal operating expenditures contributed in some way to the social determinants of health (this includes services like social housing, emergency services, waste management, parks and recreation, and childcare). Municipalities like Elgin often also fund direct health care services in order to ensure that residents have access to the level of care they need and deserve. Elgin County has a long history of exceeding its legislated requirements for health care funding via contributions to our local institution, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital. Elgin County Council is currently fulfilling a ten-year commitment to

provide \$3.5M in funding over 10 years to support additional costs and supplies. Elgin County also subsidizes nearly \$6M annually in enhanced resident care at its 3 long-term care homes. As a result, 35% of the County's annual operating budget is dedicated to long-term care, more than any other service provided by the municipality.

In terms of primary care, Elgin County is currently feeling the pressure of limited access to family physicians compounded by an increasing rate of physician retirement in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ministry of Health sources advised that there were at least 10,000 unattached patients in Elgin County alone prior to the pandemic. That means that before 2020, 1 in 5 Elgin County residents did not have access to a family doctor. Based on localized information sources collected through our staff health recruiter, the County is aware that 10 local physicians will retire in the next 5 years, 3 of whom will retire in 2023 alone. In 2021-22, 5 physicians retired.

Ask

We shared that it is clear that Ontario needs a health human resources strategic plan that will predict how many doctors, nurses, and other professionals it will need in future, and focus on recruitment and retention as its top priority. This plan must include unique consideration for rural municipalities like Elgin County who face additional barriers to attracting primary care physicians. Additionally, municipalities should be at the table as part of these efforts as both partners in health care funding and key resources for localized growth and population data. Similar asks have been made to this effect by AMO and the Ontario Medical Association, and the County of Elgin supports those efforts. We gratefully acknowledge your ministry's March 2022 announcement that the Ontario government will fund new med school and residency places, which is a huge and historic help. However, since that time we have seen further unprecedented levels of healthcare human resource strain and it is clear that more effort is urgently needed.

Feedback from Minister / Ministry Staff

The Minister listened carefully to our concerns and expressed a willingness to work together on these critical issues.

Contact Information

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519-631-1460



Participants



**Rob Flack, MPP Elgin-
Middlesex-London**



**Deputy Warden
Tom Marks (Deputy
Mayor, Municipality
of Central Elgin)**



**Councillor
Grant Jones (Mayor,
Township of
Southwold)**

**Julie Gonyou, Chief
Administrative Officer**

COUNTY OF ELGIN



**August 16,
2022 1:05pm**

Rural Physician Shortage

- Elgin County is currently feeling the pressure of limited access to primary care and an increasing rate of physician retirement amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Prior to the pandemic, Ministry of Health sources advised that there are at least 10,000 unattached patients in Elgin County alone. The population of Elgin County is approximately 50,000.

- Based on localized information sources (surveys and the work of the County's Health Recruiter), the County is aware that 10 Elgin County physicians will retire in the next 5 years, 3 of whom will retire in 2023 alone. In 2021-2022, 5 physicians retired.

Quick Facts



At least 1 million Ontarians do not have regular access to primary care. This shortage is especially acute in rural areas.



1 in 5 family doctors in the province plan to retire in the next 5 years, according to the Ontario College of Family Physicians.



As older physicians retire, it takes on average 1.5 to 2 new graduates to replace their capacity due to the size of their patient rosters built over time.

In 2018, 80% of municipal operating expenditures contributed in some way to the social determinants of health.

Elgin County has historically surpassed its legislated requirement of 10% of hospital capital funding to cover **\$3.5M over 10 years** in additional costs at St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital.

Elgin County also subsidizes nearly **\$6M annually** in enhanced resident care at its three long-term care homes. This is outside of the County's annual operating budget, of which 35% is dedicated to long-term care (more than any other service provided by the municipality).

ASK

- Ontario needs a health human resources strategic plan that will predict how many doctors, nurses, and other professionals it will need in future, and focus on recruitment and retention.
- This plan must include unique consideration for rural municipalities like Elgin County.
- Municipalities must be at the table as part of these efforts as both partners in health care funding and key resources for localized growth and population data.
- The County of Elgin supports similar asks being made to this effect by AMO and the Ontario Medical Association (OMA).