

HEALTH RECRUITMENT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

VIA ZOOM

SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

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

ATTENDANCE

Members

Councillor L. Baldwin-Sands, City of St. Thomas
Councillor J. Couckuyt, County of Elgin
Councillor G. Jones, County of Elgin
Councillor T. McCaulley, City of St. Thomas
S. Nolan, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital
Dr. K. Scott, Family Physician

Officials

Sandra Datars Bere, City Manager, City of St. Thomas
Don Shropshire, C.A.O. County of Elgin
Cheryl Fish, Health Recruiter
Taylor Mooney, Strategic Initiatives Manager, City of St. Thomas
Matt Smale, Legislative Services Coordinator, City of St. Thomas

Regrets

A. DeVries, St. Thomas Elgin Home Builders Association
Dr. C. Egbujuo, Family Physician

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil.

MINUTES

Motion by Councillor McCaulley - Jones:

THAT: The minutes of the August 14, 2023 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 2023.

Ms. Fish advised that the Niagara Ontario Health Team was leading a proposed partnership effort aimed at regional recruitment of international physicians in Southern Ontario and that the Elgin Ontario Health Team had been approached to consider joining the effort.

The members discussed the role of the Health Recruitment Partnership and how the regional efforts could be supplementary to the existing Committee. They noted the benefits of having regional representation at international recruitment events.

The members discussed the potential to increase primary care availability through increased use of Nurse Practitioner led clinics, enhanced assessment of medical qualifications for those that had obtained licences in other Canadian or international jurisdictions and increased recruitment into Ontario medical schools.

Ms. Fish advised that she continues to attend a number of recruitment events around the region and that the Elgin-St. Thomas online community profile had been updated.

CONFIRMED _____ CHAIR

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The members discussed incentives offered and the fact that the incentive amount and eligible expenses offered by the Committee to new and relocating physicians had remained unchanged since the Partnerships inception.

The City Manager advised that the Committee could review the incentives it offered in 2024 including the potential to supplement the program utilizing funds from other outside partners.

Dr. Scott advised that as part of fall preparedness planning, work was being done to update an inventory of what medical office space was available in the area.

Dr. Scott clarified that the St. Thomas Elgin Medical Association was not merging with the Elgin Ontario Health Team but rather would have representation on the Team.

The members were informed that a Family Health Organization in London was disbanding and that Dr. Egbujuo would contact physicians from the disbanding FHO regarding opportunities in Elgin-St. Thomas.

The members discussed the place of residence of patients on the rosters of local physicians.

Dr. Scott advised that she had done a postal code search to determine the place of residence of her patients. She added that many patients retained the same family physician when moving out of the area and that family physicians relocating to other municipalities often offered to carry existing patients with them to the new practice location.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Feedback from Physicians Involved in the Health Recruitment Program

The City Manager advised that feedback was being received from a number of stakeholders and that a comprehensive review of the recruitment and incentive program should be undertaken.

The members discussed financial incentives offered by other communities and non-financial factors affecting recruitment.

The members inquired how a review process would proceed.

The City Manager advised that the scope of the review would be discussed with the Committee at an upcoming meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by S. Nolan - Councillor Couckuyt:

THAT: This meeting be closed to deal with a personal matter about an identifiable individual at 9:07 a.m.

Carried

OPEN SESSION

Motion by Councillor Jones - McCaulley:

THAT: We do now rise from closed session at 9:15 a.m.

Carried.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for October 30, 2023.

CONFIRMED _____ CHAIR

ADJOURNMENT

9:18 a.m. The meeting adjourned.

Appendix "A"

St. Thomas-Elgin Recruitment Committee

Update Report

August 2023

Activities:

- 1) I have sent a request to Schulich School of medicine requesting they share with us any survey results they might have from the "Discovery Health Care Camp" that took place here from July 10- July 14th. If they are available, I will share them in a future report with the committee.
- 2) In August the Elgin OHT was approached by the "Ontario Health West" OHT's led by Niagara with an opportunity to participate in a proposal for a broader recruitment activity, specifically focused on exploring international recruitment more fully. I was contacted by Lauren Caruana and participated in a presentation and discussion presented by Jill Crouteau the recruiter from Niagara who introduced the idea. Following the presentation Sandra and I spoke with Laura to obtain clarification on several issues. Following this discussion, we expressed support for the notion of a proposal going forward and full commitment to the HRP working collaboratively for broader recruitment. The Elgin OHT is clear that support and participation in the Southern Ontario Physician Recruitment Alliance Opportunity is not intended to take on the work that our recruiter currently does, but augment it, if funded. The Elgin OHT sent out a summary to their members outlining the options for consideration and request for a decision to add the Elgin OHT to the collect OHT funding application to support international physician recruitment for Southern Ontario. A request to fund this proposal has been submitted to the Models of Care Innovation fund which closed on Aug. 31st. More information on the results of this request will be shared by the OHT. If successful the Innovation fund will help support some initial costs and possibly the first 18 months of recruitment efforts, however, will have to work collectively to determine how to support continued efforts. The budget after the first year is currently estimated at approximately \$ 50,000 per year which if supported by the 15 OHT's in the West region, the sustainability costs could potentially be split 15 ways.

This model allows regions to maintain their regional recruitment efforts in addition to participating in the collective international efforts. I appreciate being actively involved in the discussions and I'm pleased that the HRP is supportive of moving forward with the collaborative application. I'm supportive of exploring international recruitment more fully as I'm confident it will benefit and enhance our existing local recruitment efforts.

- 3) In follow up from Angela Devries initial contact with Contractors to offer support to our existing incentive program I have followed up with 4 contractors. All 4 are interested in providing support for this program. Details are being reviewed and proposals are being summarized into a document for the Home Builders' Associations final review before presenting to the HRP

committee. I'm anticipating this proposal should be ready to be presented to the HRP in October.

- 4) Our efforts to find property for a physician and his team to renovate or build a clinical practice continue. Several more options inside of St. Thomas has been identified and a tour was provided in Aug. As well options in communities that border the city are being proposed and information on size, cost etc., is being obtained. A tour has been arranged for Sept., and the collection of options for future consideration by the physician continues to be compiled.
- 5) It has come to my attention that a FHO in London will be disbanding. I have reached out to the lead of this FHO offering information about the potential for the physicians to move their practice or start a new FHO in St. Thomas and Elgin County. Many thanks to Dr. Collins Egbujoo for his assistance in reaching out to some of these physicians to share with them the potential for starting a new FHO in St. Thomas and Elgin County. We are waiting for their response.
- 6) In August I met with a Nurse Practitioner to continue to share info on the HRP committee's programs and keep up to date on what's happening in their field. This N.P. is very helpful and wants opportunities for this model of practice to continue to grow. I'm going to work with her to see if we can reach out through my contacts with the Ministry and the N.P. Association to see if we can get some answers to questions, she feels is holding the profession back from being able to provide solutions to our shortages of Health Care Providers.
- 7) In August I arranged a conversation with Dr. Kristin Richter the lead of the Elgin FHO to touch base on what the FHO members succession plans are for the future and to get a general update on the FHO's future plans.
- 8) During the month of August, I had conversations with 3 Residents to review with them the practice opportunities available now and what is coming in the near future.
- 9) Seven physicians were sent emails asking them if they would cover a locum for a local physician for the months of Sept, Oct & Nov.
- 10) I have been approached through Dr. Black to attend an educational event being hosted by Schulich School of medicine in September. Dr. Black invited both Sheri Nolan and I to attend this event to provide input regarding our experience with Schulich's Clinical teaching program.
- 11) I have registered and will be attending the K.W. and area recruitment information session being held in Kitchener on Monday Sept 25th. I will update our Community Information profile and look forward to speaking with at least 40 first- and second-year Residents about the clinical practice opportunities in St. Thomas and Elgin County.

Submitted by: Cheryl Fish, Health Recruiter