

# HealthForceOntario Newsletter

Issue #1 January 2007

## LETTER FROM JOSHUA



Happy New Year and welcome to HealthForceOntario – Ontario's strategy to become the employer of choice for health care professionals. This is the first of a series of newsletters you'll be receiving from us as we put all our programs into place and report on our plans and results. The HealthForceOntario strategy signals a new way of planning and managing our health human resources (HHR).

Ontario already has one of the most skilled health workforces in the world. The challenge we face is keeping the great people we have and attracting more to health careers here. Keeping and attracting health professionals requires complex, multiple strategies working together. It's about education, career opportunities, great communities in which to live, jobs that offer the right balance between work and life, the chance to work as part of a team in a healthy work environment.

In the past, the education of health care providers has been separate from planning for the health workforce. With HealthForceOntario that separation has been eliminated. In my role as Assistant Deputy Minister Health Human Resources, I report to both the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. My team will work through both the education and health systems to help build a stable, skilled health workforce.

Government has an important role to play in making Ontario more competitive, but we can't do it alone. HealthForceOntario is government, local health integrated networks, health professions, educators, employers and communities working together to make Ontario the employer of choice in health care.

We will build teams of people with the right skills to meet the population's diverse health needs. By forging strong links between health, education and the workplace, we will create the lifelong learning programs, the job opportunities and the working environments that will make health care providers want to live and work in Ontario.

Each issue of *HEALTHFORCEONTARIO Newsletter* will feature key statistics about our work force and profile some of the leaders and champions: the people behind HealthForceOntario who are changing the way we do business and making Ontario the best place to work.

Joshua Tepper

### WHAT WE'RE DOING TO MAKE ONTARIO THE EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

- developing programs to keep our health care professionals and students in the province
- encouraging young people to consider careers in health
- reducing barriers for internationally educated health professionals to join Ontario's health force
- matching people to job opportunities
- developing new professional roles
- supporting health care professionals to learn and work in collaborative teams
- getting better data and analysis for work force planning
- creating an education system that supports life long learning and career education
- creating healthforceontario.ca as a one-source site that can be used by any health care professional to keep in touch with Ontario and get information about licensing, educational requirements and job opportunities

*“An ongoing health human resources strategy launched by the Ontario government to attract and retain health care professionals to Ontario.”*

MORE PEOPLE, MANY SKILLS, STRONGER LEADERSHIP, **BETTER OUTCOMES**



Our strategy aims to be inclusive of all those involved in delivering health care services. By harnessing our collective skills and knowledge, we can support our health force, provide more care, and achieve better health outcomes.



KEEPING AND ATTRACTING HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS REQUIRES MULTIPLE, COMPLEX STRATEGIES WORKING TOGETHER. IT'S ABOUT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, GREAT COMMUNITIES TO LIVE IN, JOBS THAT OFFER THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND LIVING, APPROPRIATE REMUNERATION, THE CHANCE TO WORK AS PART OF A TEAM, AND HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENTS.

## KEY HEALTHFORCEONTARIO INITIATIVES

HEALTHFORCEONTARIO HAS ALREADY ANNOUNCED SEVERAL NEW INITIATIVES. THEY WILL BE FEATURED IN FUTURE ISSUES OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

### 1. Four New Roles – physician assistant, nurse endoscopist, surgical first assist and clinical specialist radiation therapists.

These new roles will allow providers to make better use of their knowledge and skills, and provide more career opportunities. They will also help reduce wait times for key services. These are not competitive or replacement roles but are intended to work as part of the health care team.

### 2. A Single Point of Access for Internationally Educated Health Professionals.

Internationally educated health professionals play an important part in our health care system. They help meet health needs and they will make us better at providing culturally appropriate care for our diverse population. Right now, it can be difficult for internationally educated health professionals to find out what they need to know to work in Ontario. HealthForceOntario will work with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and regulators to change that.

### 3. A Coordinated Marketing and Recruitment Centre.

This will be the place where health care professionals can learn about job opportunities, where employers can advertise job opportunities and where advisors can work one-to-one with people who want to relocate to Ontario to help them choose the right community for career and family.

### 4. The Nursing Promise.

We want to keep the health care professionals we educate in Ontario. Beginning in 2007, every new Ontario nursing graduate who wants to work full-time in the province will have that opportunity. HealthForceOntario has assembled a task force of employers, nursing associations, nursing unions, academics, and researchers to plan the best way to provide full-time opportunities for new nurses.

### 5. Valuing the Workforce.

A public education campaign recently highlighted the role of nurses, and a special ceremony was held to recognize international medical graduates. We'll continue to remind Ontarians how important our health care professionals are.

## KEY **HEALTHFORCEONTARIO** INITIATIVES

### 6. Interprofessional Education and Care.

When health care professionals work in interprofessional teams they are able to make the best use of their skills and provide better care. It's also more rewarding for the professionals. To help build strong teams, HealthForceOntario established a fund that employers can use to support innovative interprofessional mentoring and education programs. Successful projects will be featured in future issues of *HEALTHFORCEONTARIO Newsletter*.

### 7. Allied Health Professional Development Fund.

A fund has been established to support ongoing professional education for physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical laboratory technologists, medical radiation technologists, speech language pathologists and audiologists.



### ... AND MORE

THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF OUR PLANS TO MAKE ONTARIO A GREAT PLACE TO WORK. WATCH FOR FUTURE ISSUES OF *HEALTHFORCEONTARIO NEWSLETTER* FOR MORE DETAILS.

## **HEALTHFORCE**ONTARIO FACTS

### Did you know:

- There are over 240,000 regulated health professionals in Ontario
- A unique competencies-based Health Human Resources plan has been developed for the 2006 Ontario Health Pandemic Influenza plan
- Approximately 75% of all hospital costs are health human resource related
- The number of international health educated nurses registered in Ontario has risen from approximately 12% to 24% in under a decade
- Traditional Chinese medicine is the first new health profession to be regulated in the province since 1991. As a result of the new law, a self-governing regulatory college will be created with the authority to set standards of practice and entry to practice requirements for the profession.

## **HEALTHFORCE**ONTARIO RESEARCH

### WHAT HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS WANT

#### What makes a health care position desirable?

- Nature of the job and the career opportunities
- Quality of life – balance between work and home life
- The culture of the community – opportunities to be near others of similar ethnic background, religion or lifestyle
- Opportunities for spouses/partners
- Recreational and cultural opportunities
- Remuneration and incentives

## BUSINESSNOTASUSUAL

The health workforce today is facing unprecedented pressures and challenges.

Clients and patients are changing. Our population is getting larger, older and more culturally diverse. More people have chronic diseases that must be managed over time. At the same time, consumers are more knowledgeable about their health and expect more of providers. They are also more likely to seek complementary and alternative care and to want help staying well and improving their health.

Health services are changing. More services are being delivered in the community by interprofessional teams, and providers are making greater use of new technology, such as telemedicine to provide care.

Health care providers are changing. Like the rest of the population, many are getting older and are ready to make transitions in their careers or retire. Many are coming to Ontario from other countries. Those in, and entering practice, need new educational models to help them manage both new technologies and the rapid increase in knowledge. They also find themselves in a highly mobile international market: they can practice anywhere. They are looking for more balance and flexibility in their careers, as well as healthy, stimulating workplaces.

## HEALTHFORCEONTARIO

- Encourages patient/client focused collaborative care
- Values patient safety and health outcomes and provider competency
- Treats health care providers as assets
- Includes the broad range of providers in the system
- Recognizes educators, leaders, patients, family and community as key parts of the strategy
- Engages government, providers, employers, planners and people who use the health care system.



THE SAME PRACTICE MODELS, THE SAME EDUCATION SYSTEMS, AND THE SAME PLANNING APPROACHES WE'VE USED IN THE PAST WON'T WORK TOMORROW. WE MUST DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY. HEALTHFORCEONTARIO WILL HELP.

## A PROGRESS REPORT

Efforts to strengthen the health force are underway:

- 23% more training positions for physicians and 70% more training positions in family medicine
- the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine, which will train physicians to work in northern, rural and remote settings
- 218 new international medical graduates accepted in 2006 into assessment and training positions
- more than 50% of the province's family physicians participating in new primary care models
- 150 family health teams
- more than 4000 new nursing positions since 2004
- 150 nurse practitioners graduating this year
- simulation labs in all schools of nursing, so students are better prepared for clinical practice
- safer workplaces and fewer injuries because of \$100M spent on bedlifts.

## THE HEALTH**FORCE**ONTARIO PARTNERSHIP

HealthForceOntario is a partnership between two ministries: Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has the responsibility of working with institutions to keep Ontario a world centre in education. This includes medicine, nursing and the other professional courses that create the members of the health care team that serves Ontarians.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has the responsibility of working with the professions, employers, unions and educators to provide the opportunities for health care providers to bring their full knowledge and skills to the people of Ontario.

Together this HealthForceOntario partnership makes sure that our health care delivery is built on a framework that provides the people of Ontario with a standard of care that is the envy of the world.

## THE PEOPLE BEHIND HEALTH**FORCE**ONTARIO

HealthForceOntario is government, health professions, educators, employers and communities working together to make Ontario the employer-of-choice for health care professionals. We are building, nurturing and sharing leadership – so we can change and grow. Here are two of the leaders within government behind the plan:



**Jeff Goodyear** is the Director of the Health Human Resources Policy Branch and has been with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care since 2000. Prior to his current HealthForceOntario role, he was Manager of the Physician Planning Unit and the Regulatory Programs Unit. Jeff welcomes the HealthForceOntario challenge to make Ontario the province of choice for health care professionals.



**Frances Lamb** is Manager of Policy and Programs in the Universities Branch, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. She is responsible for university policy and program development and delivery related to health human resources. She was the TCU lead in the government initiative to establish the Northern Ontario School of Medicine located in Sudbury and Thunder Bay.

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