



Town of The Blue Mountains

32 Mill Street, Box 310
THORNBURY, ON N0H 2P0
www.thebluemountains.ca

Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee

Hand Delivered

April XX, 2021



RE: The Town of The Blue Mountains Forum – Facebook

I hope that this letter finds you and your family both safe and well.

I am writing with regards to your facebook post in the Town of The Blue Mountains Forum. As you rightly say, the funding of Primary Care in Ontario is complex and there are negotiations going on. To date, I am unaware of the outcome of the March 31st deadline.

There is, however, significant need for Family Physicians within the Town of The Blue Mountains, hence the Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee and Family Physician Survey. The data from the survey will assist us in gaining insight into the unmet need as local residents are not signing onto Healthcare Connect, choosing instead to access local emergency departments, virtual care and or travel long distances to be seen by their Family Physicians. Between the municipality of Meaford and the Town of The Blue Mountains there are only about 200 residents listed as currently seeking a Family Physician through Healthcare Connect and we know that this is not reflective of the need.

In response to your recent post on The Forum/Town of the Blue Mountains this letter is to reaffirm the position of the Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee with respect to their ability to recruit Family Physicians. As outlined on the MOHLTC website link below, the Town of The Blue Mountains' Rurality Index for Ontario (RIO) score is designated as an area of need. Therefore, it is covered off under the Northern and Rural Recruitment and Retention (NRRR) Initiative. This offers taxable financial incentives to each eligible physician who establishes a full-time practice in an eligible community of the province. The grant for the Town of The Blue Mountains is \$81,400 and is paid over a four-year period.

https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/hhrs/physicians/practice_compensation.aspx

I have further confirmed with the assigned Regional Advisors from Ontario Health that Family Physicians can join a Family Health Organization (FHO) practice in Town of The Blue Mountains by applying to the FHO or a new FHO can be established with at least three (3) Family Physicians, because as previously stated it is considered an area of high physician need.

Currently the Town of The Blue Mountains is not limited in the number of Family Physicians we can recruit. All potential Family Physicians are provided with the names and contact details for all the relevant FHOs and includes the one led by [REDACTED]. The case though is not the same in [REDACTED] where you practice.

You are correct in stating that if a Family Physician wants to join the [REDACTED], and set up practice in [REDACTED], they can only do so if a Family Physician is departing as they are not an area of high physician need. However, a Family Physician can start a practice in [REDACTED] if they choose a different payment model – such as fee for service or Comprehensive Care Model because there are no restrictions on these models for Family Physicians – they can set up a practice anywhere in Ontario. An example of which is [REDACTED] who has recently launched eDoctorcare, offering virtual phone or video appointments for patients.

You may find it of interest that the Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee along with their respective Regional Advisor, Ontario Health is supporting [REDACTED] in developing a business case to present to the province to enable them to increase their Family Physician complement. It is hoped that the survey will assist with the data collection process.

I have written this letter as I am very aware of the role Family Physicians in the community play in both recruitment and retention as well as the impact of their credibility. Therefore, it was important to me in my role as Chair of the Committee to reaffirm the provincial context in which Family Physician recruitment is proceeding in the Town of The Blue Mountains.

I would like to also take this opportunity to extend an open invitation for you to attend as a guest at our monthly meetings which are held on the third Thursday between 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please feel free to contact me on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Kind regards,

June Porter RN MScN MBA
Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee Chair
Town of The Blue Mountains

JP/lis



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I hope that this letter finds you and your family both safe and well.

Having noticed your recent post in a response to [REDACTED], I just wanted the opportunity to convey that there is, however, significant need for Family Physicians within the Town of The Blue Mountains, hence the Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee and Family Physician Survey. The data from the survey will assist us in gaining insight into the unmet need as local residents are not signing onto Healthcare Connect, choosing instead to access local emergency departments, virtual care and or travel long distances to be seen by their Family Physicians. Between the municipality of Meaford and the Town of The Blue Mountains there are only about 200 residents listed as currently seeking a Family Physician through Healthcare Connect and we know that this is not reflective of the need.

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You may find it of interest that the Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee along with their respective Regional Advisor, Ontario Health is supporting Collingwood in developing a business case to present to the province to enable them to increase their Family Physician complement. It is hoped that the survey will assist with the data collection process.

I have written this letter as I am very aware of the role the community plays in both recruitment and retention of Family Physicians. Therefore, it was important to me in my role as Chair of the committee to reaffirm the provincial context in which Family Physician recruitment is proceeding in the Town of The Blue Mountains.

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Kind regards,

June Porter RN MScN MBA
Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee Chair
Town of The Blue Mountains

JP/ls