

**Guidelines for Return of Service (ROS)
for
International Medical Graduates (IMGs),
Repatriation Program and
Registration through Practice Assessment**

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DEFINITION

Return of service (ROS) is part of a package of strategies designed to attract physicians to Ontario's underserved communities. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, through the Health Human Resources Policy Branch, provides training and assessment opportunities for physicians in exchange for an agreement to provide service in Ontario's underserved communities.

Physicians fulfilling return of service commitments provide valuable services to diverse communities throughout Ontario and experience unique and challenging practice opportunities.

These guidelines are intended to support the administration of return of service for the following programs:

- International medical graduates (IMGs) – training and practice ready assessment positions
- Repatriation Program
- Registration through Practice Assessment

RETURN OF SERVICE AGREEMENTS

Return of service (ROS) agreements are specific to the program in which you are participating. If you have been offered a Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care funded postgraduate training or assessment position through the:

- Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS) for an IMG position,
- Centre for the Evaluation of Health Professionals Educated Abroad (CEHPEA), or previously through IMG-Ontario,
- Repatriation program or
- Registration through Practice Assessment (RPA) program,

you will be sent an agreement describing the terms and conditions associated with the position you have been offered. To receive a copy of a ROS agreement in advance, please contact the Physician Planning Unit Program Officer at 416-327-8339 or by email at PPUProgramOfficer@ontario.ca

Parts of the agreement

Your agreement consists of two parts:

- the *Main Part*, which may include a *Schedule* for either Assessment or Training
 - This describes the required length of service and repayment expected if the agreement is not fulfilled. This part is signed by the physician and the Ministry prior to entering training.
- the *Addendum*
 - This specifies your practice location. This part is signed by the physician, the community and the Ministry upon completion of your training.

Deadlines and requirements

The *Main Part* of your return of service agreement must be signed and returned before you begin your training or assessment program. Doing so ensures that your position will be funded and that your start date will not be delayed. Some programs have specific deadlines for the return of documents, so be certain to review your acceptance letter and note any deadlines.

The *Addendum* should be submitted to the Ministry for review and approval on or before the last day of your training or assessment program, or for RPA program participants, within 2 months of receiving notice of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) Registration Committee decision.

There are a few other deadlines you should be aware of. You are required to apply for College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) registration within one month of completing your program and are expected to start your service within three months of receiving your CPSO registration. RPA program participants are expected to begin practicing within 6 months of receiving notice of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) Registration Committee decision. If you expect there will be a delay in meeting these deadlines, please contact the MOHLTC Program Officer to avoid being considered in breach of your agreement.

Avoiding a breach of the agreement

Breaching your agreement has consequences. It may result in you being required to repay significant costs associated with your training or assessment position. It may also have implications for your physician registration as the Ministry reports all ROS agreements to the CPSO.

A breach of the agreement can occur if you do not

- Start your training or assessment program as planned
- Complete training or assessment program
- Successfully pass national certification exams in the maximum number of attempts
- Submit an Addendum
- Start or complete return of service
- Maintain your registration to practice in Ontario
- Inform the Ministry and obtain necessary approvals before you change your practice

If a breach occurs

If you do not fulfill the service requirements identified in your return of service agreement you will be required to repay costs associated with your training or assessment position. These costs are identified in your agreement and may include:

- Salaries and benefits that you earned while in a funded training position
- Training costs associated with your position
- Administrative (e.g. exam and evaluation) costs that enabled you to access the position you accepted
- Stipends paid to you
- Interest

If you do not return service you will receive a letter requesting repayment. Full repayment is required within the time period specified in the repayment letter. Failure to repay may result in your file being referred for collections and may affect your credit rating.

FINDING RETURN OF SERVICE COMMUNITIES

Underserviced communities

Eligible locations for your Return-of-Service are those communities that are listed on the ministry's "*List of Areas Designated as Underserviced*" (LADAU). The list designates northern and southern communities for family physicians or general practitioners (LADAU for FP/GP), and designates northern communities for specialists (LADAU for SP).

The ministry will consider proposals from specialists to return service in an underserviced community in the south only if the specialist first indicates that he or she has looked for a return-of-service opportunity in a community designated as underserviced for their specialty in northern Ontario. The community in southern Ontario must be on the LADAU for FP/GP and must document their need for that specialty. In making a proposal to the ministry, please ask the community to compile the information identified in the "**Request for Return Service in a Southern Community**". Return this form along with all supporting documents to the aforementioned address. The ministry will review your request and notify you of the decision in writing. Please contact Program Officer at PPUProgramOfficer@ontario.ca to get the form.

Please note that in cases where no LADAU-listed communities exist for a given speciality, the ministry will work with the candidate to identify an appropriate community in which to complete the ROS.

The LADAU is updated every 3 months and is posted on the ministry website at http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/desiglist_mn.html

Community Development Officers (CDOs)

CDOs facilitate, liaise and co-ordinate recruitment initiatives with physicians, communities, government agencies and other stakeholders to address regional physician health resources issues. The ministry funds six CDO positions.

CDO's can assist you and your family to find a community that is right for you. To contact the CDO's or find out more about recruitment initiatives visit the ministry website at:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/about/recruit.html>

A contact list for Ontario's CDO's is included in appendix 1.

OTHER RESOURCES

The ministry supports a number of resources to assist you to find the right community:

- **HealthForceOntario- HFOJobs** – a comprehensive job portal
Accessible through - <http://www.healthforceontario.ca>
- **Health Professionals Recruitment Tour**
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/ministry/recruit/rec_06/rec_tour_06.html
- **Resident Placement Program**
 - Helps residents find practice opportunities

<http://www.pairo.org> or contact rpp@pairo.org

Individuals from these programs can provide you with more detailed information!

- **Underserviced Area Program (UAP)**
(Community Assessment Visit Program / Incentive Grant Program)
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/uap_mn.html
Telephone: (705) 564-7280
- **Community Development Officers**
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/about/recruit.html>
- **List of Areas Designated as Underserviced (LADAU):**
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/desiglist_mn.html

OPTIONS FOR RETURN OF SERVICE

In addition to choosing one community in which to return service, the ministry will accept proposals for alternative arrangements as described below:

(a) Practicing in two communities

You may receive approval to complete your return of service by practicing part-time in two communities.

Guidelines:

1. Both communities must appear on the List of Areas Designated as Underserved (LADAU)
2. Total return-of-service arrangements must be equivalent to a full-time basis.
3. Separate Addenda to the Return-of-Service Agreement are required for each community

The ministry will review your request to practice in two communities upon receiving a copy of the Addenda signed by you and each appropriate community contact.

(b) Returning service through locums

To facilitate the fulfillment of return-of-service obligations and to permit physicians to ‘trial’ communities before signing long-term agreements, up to one year of service may be returned, in whole or in part and at any time, as locum tenens in one or more underserved community and in one or more location (hospital, facility, agency, clinic or office).

Guidelines:

1. Program participants must indicate in writing their intention to return service through locums not later than 6 months prior to the completion of their training program.
2. One month prior to the completion of training, the participant will identify at minimum 14 weeks of locum tenens in underserved communities to commence within 3 months from the completion of his/her residency training program and submit a proposed schedule to the Ministry for approval.
3. Each quarter thereafter (every three months), the participant will identify at minimum, 10 weeks of locum tenens in underserved communities to commence in the subsequent quarter and submit a schedule to the Ministry for approval.
4. There is no maximum on the number of communities in which service can be provided however all must be designated as underserved and the service provided must be equivalent to full time practice (e.g. 40 hours/week).
5. There is no limit on the number of locum tenens that may be completed within a particular community.
6. The total of all locum tenens in all communities must be equal to the length of service required in the participant’s Return of Service Agreement. A minimum of 44 weeks of locum tenens is required annually
7. An Addendum is required for each community, for each service period, including service provided on two separate occasions in the same facility. The Addenda must be signed by the participant and the authorized representative of the facility or practice setting. It is possible to have one addendum signed by a regional body (e.g. Local Health Integration Network or LHIN) covering service in multiple communities.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

(a) Deferring Return of Service start dates

The ministry will consider requests for deferral only under exceptional circumstances and on a case by case basis.

(b) Transferring between communities

It is generally assumed that a physician will fulfill his or her return of service obligations in the community that the Ministry initially approved. Physicians are expected to investigate fully the details of the practice arrangements before committing to a particular community. Requests for transfers will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and each request will be reviewed and evaluated on its own merits. In addition, the Ministry will consider whether the physician has previously transferred his or her return of service, because the Ministry discourages transfers of return of service.

Guidelines:

1. The physician, the current community/facility, or the Ministry may initiate a request for a transfer.
2. The party requesting the transfer must inform the other two parties of the request in writing and provide a substantive rationale, documenting relevant reasons, for the request.
3. The two parties not requesting the transfer will be given two weeks after the date of receiving the transfer request to provide comments on the request to the other parties.
4. If the physician initiates the transfer request, he or she must provide the Ministry with evidence that he or she made reasonable efforts to reach an understanding with the current community/facility about the proposed transfer. For example, the physician must give sufficient notice of planned date of departure, and identify and make reasonable efforts to mitigate the impact on the current community/facility.
5. In considering the transfer request, the Ministry will review in particular any evidence that the physician has provided that the current community/facility has agreed to release the physician from his or her obligations to the current community/facility.
6. The Ministry will approve a transfer request only if the new location is a designated underserved community.
7. The Ministry may, at its sole discretion, and without penalty, cost or liability, make any approval of the transfer subject to a condition that the physician return service for a period longer than that specifically referred to in the return of service agreement

IMMIGRATION, WORK PERMITS AND SETTLING IN ONTARIO

RPA and Practice Ready Assessment (PRA) position candidates

Note: Repatriation and IMG Training position candidates require Canadian citizenship or permanent residence.

If you are participating in the RPA program or are applying for a Practice Ready Assessment (PRA) position through the CEHPEA or through IMG-Ontario, and are not already a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident, you should begin the immigration process and obtain a temporary work permit to practice in Canada as soon as possible.

Immigration

The immigration process can vary in length, so it is important to start considering what will be involved for you and your family now.

The first step to settling in Canada is to apply for Permanent Resident status. As a candidate in the RPA or Practice Ready Assessment Program, you will likely be applying for Permanent Residents status as “Skilled Worker” and should explore that section of the CIC website first. In this section, you will also find a self-assessment tool to help determine your and your family’s eligibility to immigrate to Canada.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/skilled/index.html>

If you are married and your spouse is either a Permanent Resident or Canadian Citizen, you may be eligible to be sponsored through “Family Class Immigration.” This process can be faster than applying as a Skilled Worker and is also worth exploring.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/sponsor/index.html>

You may also want to visit the CIC Home Page for further information about immigrating.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.html>

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can contact the Canadian Embassy, high commission or consulate in your region for more information about the immigration process.

Work Permits

The immigration process may not be completed by the time you are ready to begin practice in Ontario. In this case, you can apply for a temporary work permit that will enable you to work in Canada while you complete the immigration process. A work permit is a written authorisation, issued by CIC, for a person who is not a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident to work in Canada.

The first step towards getting a work permit is to obtain an offer of employment from the hospital/group/facility where you will be completing your return of service. Before offering you employment, the hospital/group/facility will first need to get approval from **Service Canada** to offer you the position. Service Canada will communicate its approval to both the hospital/group/facility and to CIC, who will match up the approved job offer to your work permit application when you apply.

Work permits are only valid for a specific employer, location, job description and length of time. Any changes to these details would require a new work permit.

Information about obtaining a temporary work permit can be found on CIC website:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/index.html>

Once your Permanent Resident application is approved by CIC and you receive your Permanent Resident status, a work permit will no longer be required.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can contact the Canadian Embassy, high commission or consulate in your region for more information about obtaining a work permit. The CIC website has links to the offices in your area.

Settling in Ontario

There are many websites dedicated to supporting newcomers to Canada settle in their new communities.

Settlement.org has links to many of these sites, as well as resources that will assist you and your family in your transition to living in Ontario.

www.settlement.org

Ontarioimmigration.ca is a new Ontario government website designed to help new and potential immigrants prepare for their arrival in Ontario and settle in once they move here.

<http://ontarioimmigration.ca>

Ontario Pilot Provincial Nominee Program

The Ontario Pilot Provincial Nominee Program (Pilot PNP) is Ontario's first-ever nomination program. The Pilot PNP is designed to contribute to job creation, job retention and economic development by attracting new investment, and by helping employers in targeted sectors to attract and retain qualified employees for jobs for which there are currently labour-market needs. The Pilot PNP also supports government priorities by facilitating the immigration of professionals in the health care and education sectors.

The Pilot PNP allows Ontario employers who require professionals and highly-skilled workers to meet their human resources needs in occupations that face long-term labour market pressures and address provincial priorities. To be considered, positions must be in eligible occupations on the Pilot PNP's **Occupation List** which includes specialists physicians, general practitioners and family physicians.

To address labour-market needs and government priorities, the Ontario Pilot Provincial Nominee Program has established an Occupation List for the Employer Category. During the first year of the Pilot PNP, jobs within health specific occupations that include specialists physicians, general practitioners and family physicians are eligible for consideration.

International students who have graduated from an eligible Ontario college or university are eligible to apply to the Pilot PNP in listed occupations which relate to their field of study. To get more information about the PNP, please visit this website: <http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/english/PNPabout.asp>

REGISTERING FOR YOUR OHIP BILLING NUMBER

The Ontario Health Insurance Plan, or “OHIP,” is how the public accesses health care services paid for by the government. All practicing physicians in Ontario must register for an OHIP Billing Number in order to bill the government for the publicly insured health care services they provide.

As a participant in the Registration through Practice Assessment (RPA) Program, you should apply for your OHIP Billing Number immediately after you receive your certificate of restricted registration from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO).

You can download the application form on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website by following this series of links:

Website: www.health.gov.on.ca

Navigation: → Health Care Providers

→ Forms Online

→ Forms Catalogue

→ Ontario Health Insurance (OHIP)

→ Form #3384-83, “Registration for Regulated Health Professionals”

Send the completed form to the closest District Office to where you will be practicing. The District Offices are listed at the bottom of the form.

It can take as long as 6-8 weeks to process your application for your OHIP Billing Number. However, you can start practice without a billing number and can submit for services completed up to 6 months back.

MAKING RETURN OF SERVICE WORK FOR YOU

- Plan to live and learn outside of major urban centres
 - Ask about Distributed Medical Education opportunities at your school
- Find out what you need to know about CPSO’s supervision requirements
http://www.cpso.on.ca/Info_physicians/regpol/SupervisionGuidelines.pdf
- Take the time to build strong collegial relationships with physicians, chiefs of service/staff, hospital administration
- Talk in detail about what you can offer and what you need to be successful in your new practice.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT RETURN OF SERVICE (ROS)

- 1) May I go to school part-time?** Residency training is ordinarily a full-time commitment. Alteration of your training schedule due to special circumstances must be negotiated with the program director and in accordance with the policy set out by the Postgraduate Medical Education Committee of the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine.
- 2) Is it possible to change training programs or schools once I have begun training?** If it is necessary to change schools or programs, you must contact the postgraduate medical education office of your medical school, as the medical education offices are responsible for administering any transfers.
- 3) How long is my return-of-service commitment?** Please review your return of service agreement, which specifically identifies the length of your commitment.
- 4) Do I have to choose a location for return-of-service from the List of Areas Designated as Underserviced (LADAU)?** Yes. You are also expected to obtain the necessary hospital privileges required to support your practice. You may wish to contact the Community Development Officers across Ontario for more information on communities recruiting for physicians. The CDO contact list is available at <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/about/recruit.html>
- 5) I am doing a specialty training program, can I return service in southern Ontario?** The current return-of-service policy requires physicians undertaking a specialty re-training program to fulfill their return service in a community designated on the LADAU as underserviced for specialists. At present, such communities are located in Northern Ontario.

The Ministry proposals from specialists seeking to return service in an underserviced community in the south only if the specialist first indicates that he or she has looked for a return-of-service opportunity in a community designated as underserviced for their specialty in northern Ontario, and if the community in southern Ontario (on the LADAU for FP/GP) can document their need for that specialty. In making a case to the Ministry, please work with the community to compile the information identified in the "Request to Return Service in Southern Community" template. Return it along with all supporting documents to the aforementioned address. The Ministry will review your request and notify you of the decision in writing. To get a copy of the request form, please contact PPUProgramOfficer@Ontario.ca or call Program Officer at (416) 327-8339.

Please note that in cases where no LADAU-listed communities exist for a given speciality, the Ministry will work with the candidate to identify an appropriate community in which to complete the ROS.

- 6) I am doing a family medicine training program, where can I return service?** If you are undertaking a family medicine re-training program, you are required to fulfill the return of service commitment in a community designated as underserviced for FP/Gs and identified on the LADAU.
- 7) I have received training in family medicine/anaesthesia. Do I have to go to one of the communities recruiting for a FP/Anaesthetist?** No, however you must go to a community with a hospital on the LADAU that needs your skills and is deemed acceptable to the Ministry.
- 8) I have a position in family medicine - emergency/anaesthesia/surgery/ obstetrics, can I return service in an underserviced community without a hospital?** No, physicians with additional training in emergency medicine/anaesthesia/surgery/ obstetrics must return service in communities with hospital operating and/or emergency services where their skills will be appropriately utilized.

Frequently Asked Questions

9) None of the communities listed on LADAU indicate they are recruiting for a Physician with my skills. How do I determine which communities could use my newly acquired skills? In cases where no LADAU-listed communities exist for a given speciality, the Ministry will work with the candidate to identify an appropriate community in which to complete the ROS.

10) Am I eligible for an Underserved Area Program (UAP) incentive grant? You may be eligible to receive an incentive grant for full-time practice in a designated underserved community. Interested persons must apply for and be approved to receive an incentive grant prior to beginning practice in an eligible community. Contact the Underserved Areas Program at (705) 564-7280 for more information.

11) How do I go about arranging return-of-service with a community? Please contact the Community Development Officer to discuss suitable communities and arrangements for your return of service.

Physicians and their spouses may also be eligible for the "Community Visit Program" to assess practice opportunities. Please contact the Underserved Areas Program at (705) 564-7280 for more information, prior to arranging your travel plans regarding the list of communities designated as underserved and your eligibility for these funds.

Return of Service commitment must be first approved by the Ministry. If you start your work in an underserved community without Ministry approval, your work will not be counted towards your return of service commitment.

If you and the community/hospital/facility/agency agree on a return-of-service commitment, please ask the community contact and/or hospital/ facility/agency administrator to confirm this commitment by completing and signing the Addendum to the Return-of-Service Agreement. Once the Addendum is signed by yourself and the community, send it to the Ministry for approval and signature. Upon review and approval by the Ministry, copies of the signed Addendum will be sent to all parties.

12) Do I have to indicate the community in which I plan to return service now? May I have more time to choose a community? The Ministry requires that you commit to a specific community for your return-of-service prior to the completion of your residency program. You can view the current list of communities designated as underserved on-line at http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/desiglist_mn.html.

13) What if an underserved community has questions about making this commitment? There must be agreement between you and the community about your return-of-service commitment. If you have reached an agreement but the community refuses to confirm the appointment in writing, please contact the Program Officer at (416) 327-8339 or e-mail: PPUprogramofficer@ontario.ca

14) What happens if another program candidate wants to return service in the same community I do?

Many underserved communities need more than one physician. The community has the right to choose physicians it feels would best meet the needs of the community.

15) How do I get housing in the communities designated as underserved? The community contacts or Community Development Officers may be able to assist you in finding an apartment or a house.

16) What can I expect in the way of relocation expenses? The Ministry does not provide funds for relocation expenses.

Frequently Asked Questions

17) If my spouse wants a job, will the Ministry help him/her get a position? Many communities and Community Development Officers can assist in securing employment for a physician's spouse. This matter should be discussed with the local officials.

18) I have indicated to the Ministry that I intend to practice in community X upon completion of my training and have a copy of the Addendum to the Return-of-Service Contract signed by the community and Ministry; what if I change my mind about where I intend to return service?

You have made a commitment to the government and the community where you intend to practice. Changes to your return of service contract are only possible if the Ministry is notified in writing and there is agreement by all parties. Changes to your return-of-service contract will be considered on a case by case basis.

19) When do I begin my return-of-service? The term of return-of-service must commence no later than three (3) months from the date on which the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) issues you the certificate of registration to practice medicine in Ontario.

20) Can I return service on a part-time basis? No. Return-of-service must be completed on a full-time basis.

21) I would like to complete my return of service in two communities, providing services in one community 2 days a week and in another community 3 days a week? Am I able to do this?

If the communities appear on the List of Areas Designated as Underserviced (LADAU) and are acceptable to the Ministry and there is agreement between you and both communities about your return-of-service commitment, you may receive approval to complete your return of service in two communities. Such return-of-service agreement must be equivalent to a full-time basis, in accordance with your residency training. You are required to complete and sign two separate Addenda to the Return-of-Service Agreement, thus confirming that all parties (i.e. physician, community/facility/agency and Ministry) are agreeable to the return-of-service commitments being served in each particular community, and that such service will commence within three months of completing of your program. The ministry will not formally approve your return-of-service commitment prior to receiving a copy of the Addenda signed by you and each appropriate community contact.

22) Can I defer my return-of-service commitment? The ministry will consider requests for deferral only under exceptional circumstances and on a case by case basis.

23) What happens if I do not want to return service in a community that is not designated as underserviced for my specialty or I do not want to fulfill my return of service commitment?

Physicians who do not commence or complete their return of service will be required to pay back all of the costs and benefits associated with their training, and all applicable interest, over the period specified in the return of service agreement.

24) If I cannot pass the RCPSC or CFPC exam do I still have to repay? Your agreement requires that you successfully complete your certification exams (if your program requires it). It is expected that you will endeavour to obtain certification, even if you must repeat examinations. If you are unable to successfully complete the exams, even after all possible attempts, you may be required to repay costs, as per your agreement.

25) What will I be paid during my training? You will be paid according to the rate and conditions specified in the Professional Association of Internes and Residents of Ontario (PAIRO)/Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario (CAHO), and at the level assessed by the university program director and teaching hospital where you are employed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT RESTRICTED REGISTRATION

General

Many physicians participating in MOHLTC funded programs may be required to practice with restricted registration for up to a year before being granted a certificate of independent registration by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO). Additionally, some participants may be able to obtain restricted registration prior to completing certification requirements to obtain an independent license to practice in Ontario.

Physicians with restricted registration are considered qualified to practice, but require supervision from a physician who holds a certificate of independent registration with the CPSO. The following questions and answers, based on information available on the CPSO website, explain restricted registration and what it means for physicians, their supervisors, and the communities in which they are practicing.

1. Why does the CPSO issue Restricted Certificates of Registration?

The CPSO issues restricted certificates of registration to certain physicians who are considered ready for practice, but who may not have successfully completed all the regulatory requirements for an independent practice certificate of registration in Ontario.

For example, they may not yet have completed the Medical Council of Canada exams and/or the certification exams of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), or they may be undergoing a practice assessment.

2. Why would a physician not have completed the MCC or national certification exams, or be undergoing a practice assessment?

In some cases, it may be that a physician has been deemed eligible to take the national certification examination that is conducted by either the RCPSC or CFPC, and he or she is granted restricted registration while preparing to take the exam. Physicians who have participated in Ministry funded programs such as the **Repatriation Program**, or IMGs in training or assessment program may not yet have completed all necessary exams but may be eligible for restricted registration.

Physicians who have participated in the Ministry funded **Registration through Practice Assessment (RPA) Program** administered by the CPSO may also be granted restricted registration as part of their participation in the program. The RPA program assesses internationally trained medical graduates who have at least five years of independent practice experience and are currently practicing in a jurisdiction outside of Ontario. In appropriate circumstances, the CPSO will consider a performance assessment of a physician's established practice as an alternative to the current certification requirements for registration. When eligible candidates are assessed and found to be practicing at Ontario standards, they may be granted a restricted certificate of registration authorizing supervised practice on the additional condition that they complete continuing professional development. After one year of supervised practice in Ontario, the CPSO will reassess the physician to evaluate their readiness to practice independently.

3. How does the CPSO determine the level of supervision a physician requires?

The CPSO's Registration Committee conducts a risk assessment of the physician to determine the level of supervision required in accordance with the physician's particular circumstances and the nature and scope of his or her practice. The Committee determines whether the level of supervision

Frequently Asked Questions

should be *low, moderate or high*, taking into account public safety issues and the following factors, including:

The applicant's situation

- Does the candidate have more than five years experience practicing direct patient care in an independent and non-training environment?
- Is the candidate missing any of the exams? All of them?
- Is the candidate's scope of practice in Ontario comparable to his/her scope of practice in his/her preceding jurisdiction?
- Does the candidate have some or no experience in the Canadian context?

Nature/Scope of practice

- Does the applicant practice a specialty with potential for immediate and serious consequences to patient safety (e.g. surgery, anaesthesia, etc.)?
- Will the patient population be medical or surgical?
- Has the applicant arranged supervision by an acceptable supervisor in the desired community?
- Will the applicant practice in a remote, rural or urban situation?
- Will the applicant practice primarily in a (office-based) community, either solo or group?
- Will the applicant be accountable to others within an institutional framework (Head of Department, Chief of Staff, etc.)?

4. What level of supervision can most program participants expect?

In the situation of the newcomer to Ontario who is a well-trained physician from another country seeking registration to practice, the Registration Committee facilitates supervision under a restricted certificate of registration.

New registrants will not generally have a high degree of supervision, unless they are in a postgraduate training program. For most new registrants, the level of supervision will range from low to moderate. For detailed information, please see the CPSO's *Guidelines for Supervision*, available on-line at www.cpso.on.ca, under "Info>Physicians".

5. How are supervisors identified?

Physicians are expected to identify an appropriate supervisor, usually a physician from the community in which they are practicing, in accordance with the Registration Committee's direction. In some cases, the CPSO may be able to work with the physician to identify an appropriate supervisor (e.g., by enlisting the aid of the Chief of Staff at the hospital where the physician will have privileges).

6. What can supervisors of physicians on restricted registration expect?

During the period they hold restricted registration, most program participants will require either "low level" or "moderate" supervision, according to the CPSO's *Guidelines for Supervision*.

Both "low" and "moderate" risk physicians can make decisions independently and are considered the "Most Responsible Physician" for their patients.

For "low" risk physicians, the supervisor is generally not required to be available on-site or immediately by phone. Most supervision occurs within the context of regular reviews. Ideally, the supervisor will be part of the same group practice or in the same medical building.

For "moderate" risk physicians, the supervisor may be required to be available for the physician in case of patient consults. Most of the supervision occurs in the context of regular reviews. Typically, the supervisor will be in the same group practice or at a minimum, in the same medical building.

In both cases, most of the supervision occurs within the context of regular interviews. Typically reports are submitted to the College on a quarterly basis for "low" risk physicians, and at two-four month intervals for "moderate" risk physicians. In both cases, the supervisor is required to inform the College immediately if there are breaches to their terms or conditions, or there is immediate risk to the wellbeing of the patient.

As these physicians may not have practiced in Ontario, an important role of the supervisor is to act as a mentor in acclimating them to the health care system in this province.

7. How does this affect a physician's Return-of-Service commitment with the Ministry?

Many of the physicians who have participated in Ministry funded programs such as the Repatriation Program, or IMGs in training or assessment program, or RPA Program have to fulfill a return-of-service agreement with the Ministry as soon as they become registered for restricted or independent practice in Ontario.

Physicians need to consider the level of supervision they require when they are looking for a community in which to establish a return-of-service commitment. The CPSO will not authorize a certificate of registration permitting a physician to practice medicine until an appropriate supervisor has been identified.

8. Where can I get more information?

For more information about the CPSO's policies governing restricted certificates of registration, please contact their Registration Department at (416) 967-2617 or visit www.cpso.on.ca.

RESOURCES AND LINKS

- 1) **HealthForceOntario**- HFOJobs – a comprehensive job portal and **Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals** (ACIEHP).
Accessible through: www.healthforceontario.ca
- 2) Centre for the Evaluation of Health Professionals Educated Abroad: www.cehpea.ca
- 3) Professional Association of Internes and Residents of Ontario (PAIRO): www.pairo.org
- 4) Community Development Office (Southwestern Ontario) – <http://www.cdoswomen.ca/>
- 5) Community Development Office (Southeastern Ontario) – www.cdoseo.com
- 6) Rural Ontario Medical Program (Southcentral Ontario) – www.romponline.com
- 7) Northern Ontario School of Medicine – Community Development – <http://www.normed.ca/programs/communitydev/>
- 8) Underserved Area Program – **Community Assessment Visit Program / Incentive Grant Programs**: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/uap/uap_mn.html
Telephone: (705) 564-7280
- 9) Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC): <http://www.rcpsc.medical.org/>
- 10) College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC): www.cfpc.ca
- 11) Ontario Medical Schools – Postgraduate Medical Education
 - McMaster University: <http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/postgrad/>
 - Queen’s University : <http://meds.queensu.ca/medicine/subpages/postgrad.html>
 - University of Ottawa: <http://www.medicine.uottawa.ca/postgraduate/eng/>
 - University of Toronto:
http://www.library.utoronto.ca/medicine/educational_programs/postgrad/pgme/index.html
 - University of Western Ontario: <http://www.fmd.uwo.ca/postgrad-medicine/>

Appendix 1: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICES

CDO Website: www.cdoprogram.com

<p>1) NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO:</p> <p>Ms. Shannon O'Donnell Community Development Officer Northern Ontario School of Medicine Balmoral Street Centre #2021 955 Oliver Road Thunder Bay ON P7B 5E1</p>	<p>Phone: (807) 766-7459 Toll Free: 1-800-279-4859 FAX: (807) 343-2104 E-mail: shannon.o'donnell@normed.ca</p>
<p>2) NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO</p> <p>Ms. Sherri Moroso Community Development Officer-Sudbury Campus Northern Ontario School of Medical Laurentian University 935 Ramsey Lake Road Sudbury ON P3E 2C6</p>	<p>Phone: (705) 662-7117 Toll Free: 1-800-461-8777 FAX: (705) 662-7143 E-mail: sherri.moroso@NorMed.ca</p>
<p>3) NORTHEASTERN-TIMMINS: HEARST TO NEW LISKEARD (COBALT)</p> <p>Ms. Rosemarie Raymond-Simmons Community Development Officer Northern Ontario School of Medicine c/o Timmins District Hospital 700 Ross Ave East Timmins ON P4N 8P2</p>	<p>Phone: (705) 360-6044 Toll Free: 1-877-751-8886 E-mail: rosemarie.raymond-simmons@normed.ca</p>
<p>4) SOUTH EASTERN</p> <p>Mr. Bruce Maitland Community Development Officer Faculty of Health Sciences Queen's University 70 Barrie St. Kingston ON K7L 3N6</p>	<p>Phone: 613-533-6000 x75322 Toll Free: 1-888-544-5457 FAX: 613-533-6884 e-mail: maitland@post.queensu.ca</p>
<p>5) SOUTHWESTERN:</p> <p>Ms. Laurie Roberts Community Development Officer Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry SWOMEN 100 Collip Circle, Research Park, Suite 225 London ON N6G 4X8</p>	<p>Phone: (519) 858-5152 x 22145 Toll Free : 1-877-237-9676 FAX: (519) 858-5131 E-mail: Laurie.roberts@schulich.uwo.ca Website: www.cdoswomen.ca</p>
<p>6) SOUTHCENTRAL:</p> <p>Ms. Michelle Hunter Program/CDO Manager Rural Ontario Medical Program 459 Hume Street Collingwood, Ontario L9Y 1W9</p>	<p>Phone: (705) 445-7667 Toll Free: 1-877-445-7667 Fax: (705) 445-8911 e-mail: Mhunter@romponline.com www.romponline.com www.cdoprogram.com</p>