

# All Hands

A community resource for  
physician recruitment in  
Nova Scotia



*We have done our best to name all of the community groups who assisted us in this work and those that are doing great work across the province. New groups are starting up in areas across the province regularly and it is not our intention to omit great work. In some cases, the names of groups may change or include different areas. If you would like your group's name included or revised in a future version of this document, please email [physicianrecruit@nshealth.ca](mailto:physicianrecruit@nshealth.ca)*

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# Acknowledgements

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*We gratefully acknowledge the tireless physicians who support health care in our province and take on many other roles in the health system, including hosting community events, joining missions to help recruit their peers, and participating in all elements of the recruitment process.*

*Thank you to NSH's physician recruitment team, a group that is growing in size and subject matter expertise. This hardworking team travels far and wide to promote our province in a highly competitive race for physician resources. These dedicated and passionate individuals are committed to long hours, travel, and a constant focus on learning and process improvement.*

*NSH's project team includes employees from the following departments: Public Engagement and Communications, Project Management, and Physician Recruitment and Retention.*



# Introduction

## Physician recruitment is important to every Nova Scotian.

Every community in our province is impacted by the changing health care system. It's an uphill journey as more health care professionals are currently retiring from the workforce than those entering.

The nature of medical practice is changing with advances in care delivery, an increased focus on collaborative multidisciplinary teams, and a focus on physician work-life balance. In Nova Scotia, like many other areas of the world, recruitment of professionals across many disciplines is particularly challenging in rural areas. Uniquely, physician recruitment has also presented a challenge in urban centres across the province.

*To learn more about the health care environment in Nova Scotia, see the FAQ in the resources section of our toolkit page:*

<https://recruitment.nshealth.ca/toolkit>



We are encouraged by the many examples of great work taking place in communities across the province. Recruitment presents a shared need and a shared opportunity to work together. Local communities are an essential element for successful recruitment and retention of physicians across Nova Scotia.

When NSH received accountability for physician recruitment in 2016, we received feedback from physicians and communities that—while they have been doing this work for many years—they felt left out of the process. This work is impossible to do by any one organization, we need all hands on deck!

In NSH's efforts to increase resources to support physician recruitment, it became apparent that there were already local experts who understand the importance of this work and that we all have something to contribute. The opportunity with one provincial health authority is that we are now better able to coordinate and communicate our provincial efforts, and support each other to build upon each other's success.

In 2018 and early 2019, NSH met with communities and physicians across the province who had experience or interest in supporting local physician recruitment. Some groups had long-standing recruitment committees while others were just getting started.

**The following is a list of recruitment committees across Nova Scotia that are already pioneering this opportunity:**

- Bay It Forward In Cape Breton
- Port Hawkesbury Health Care Recruitment
- West Colchester Medical Society
- Digby Stakeholder Recruitment Committee
- Weymouth Doctor Recruiting Committee
- Clare Doctor Recruiting and Retention Committee
- The Municipality of East Hants Recruitment Committee
- Canso and Area Working Group
- Healthy Pictou County
- Berwick Physician Recruitment Committee
- NOW Lunenburg County
- Sheet Harbour Recruitment Committee
- Victoria County Community Recruitment and Retention Committee
- Shelburne County Health Care Professional Recruitment and Retention Committee Meeting
- Chester Our Health Centre Doctor Attraction and Retention group
- Pugwash Village Committee
- Middleton Physician Recruitment Committee
- Guysborough Memorial Hospital Foundation and Guysborough and Area Working Group
- Strait Area Community Group
- Annapolis Valley
- Doctor Recruitment and Retention Committee (includes Municipalities of Yarmouth, Argyle and Barrington)
- Cumberland Physician Recruitment Committee
- Colchester East Hants Recruitment and Retention Committee
- Antigonish Physician Recruitment Committee



There are other committees that also support physician recruitment in their region. Does your community currently have a recruitment and retention committee and want to be added to this list?

Please email:

[physicianrecruit@nshealth.ca](mailto:physicianrecruit@nshealth.ca)

The information gathered from these focus groups and their collective community wisdom formed the base material used in the creation of this community toolkit.

## Review of the Literature

In parallel with focus groups, NSH conducted a literature review of physician recruitment to help understand how Nova Scotia's challenges and efforts compare with other areas. We found a great amount of evidence that engaged communities have a critical role in supporting physician recruitment and retention efforts.

For a complete list of the literature reviewed, click on the link for Literature Review and Stakeholder Feedback on our toolkit page at <https://recruitment.nshealth.ca/toolkit>