

Healthy Pictou County Profile

Project Navigator: Nicole LeBlanc

Healthy Pictou County's Project Navigator, Nicole LeBlanc, plays a valuable role in all functions of the recruitment process. Her main responsibilities include sharing the best attributes of Pictou County with those considering the area and creating information tailored to the needs of potential recruits and their families.

Nicole helps match physicians and their families to the local area by ensuring that they receive the support and find the activities required to live their idea of a great life. Nicole suggests that this is what makes them stay. She understands that recruitment should focus on the entire family – not only the physician.

“My days are always busy and fun. I get to make sure Pictou County becomes, and stays, home for so many people.”

Another key part of her role starts even before a physician finishes medical school. She contacts medical learners from her region who are pursuing a career in medicine. This way, medical students feel needed at home and return after their education is complete.

The Physician Navigator is a crucial role that complements NSH's physician recruitment team. They act as the local expert and help connect the NSH physician recruitment consultant and our candidates to the community during all stages of the hiring process. Every day is different, from helping a physician find a home, to touring local amenities, connecting with local businesses and religious organizations, and helping plan welcome events and more.

Resource: Let's connect!

<http://www.healthypictoucounty.ca/#ready-to-explore-pictou-county>



Promoting your Community

A physician comes to Nova Scotia to practice great medicine and live a great life. No one knows a community like those who live in it. The goal for successful recruitment is to create a community profile that captures the essence of what you are all about. This helps find the best match for a physician and a family who are likely to thrive in your community and stay long term.

Every community is not a good fit for everyone, and that is okay. A community profile should highlight the benefits that your region has to offer and those that will contribute to the physician's work-life balance.

What makes your community unique?

Simply, your profile should include the major things people need to know that separates your community from others a physician and their family may be considering.



Your Community Profile might include:

- seasonal activities, markets, cultural festivals, quirky town traditions (*i.e. polar bear dip*), annual charity events, skiing resorts, beaches, walking trails
- facilities and amenities: community centres, daycares, youth centres
- different real estate options and price ranges: suburban, urban, rural, waterfront, lakeside
- monuments or museums
- facility descriptions including what type of facility, what it offers, and where it can be found
- religious establishments in your community and how to get involved
- geographic location, climate, and population size
- distance to the nearest major retail centres and international airport
- information about quality education and access to schools and cultural learning organizations (*Greek school, Chinese schools, French School boards*)
- professional details like potential research opportunities, teaching opportunities, and professional development opportunities
- a job bank or curated list of professional employers to help connect the physician's spouse or partner or family members to jobs

Tips & Tricks

Potential candidates need to be able to see themselves working and living in Nova Scotia.

Focus on a message that says, "This is a health care organization that we are proud of, with unique challenges and opportunities for development, and we need YOU."

Glace Bay Case Study

Bay It Forward in Glace Bay

The community group Bay It Forward, in collaboration with NSH, Cape Breton Family Medicine Recruitment Committee, and local doctors, attracts and retains new doctors to Glace Bay by giving them a taste of Cape Breton. Potential recruits take a grand boat tour off the coast, fish for mackerel, visit the Cape Breton Miners Museum, and dine at local restaurants. This is the perfect opportunity for community members to share local history and for potential new doctors to see the difference they can make in Glace Bay.

Together, they showcase all the great ways physicians and their families can be integrated into the community. Bay It Forward and the Cape Breton Family Medicine Recruitment Committee believe that physician recruitment is more successful when both communities and local physicians are involved.

Bay It Forward has a process where they “Roll out the Red Carpet” when NSH brings interested physicians to the community. By spending the day with these potential doctors, the community has the opportunity to show just how valuable their services are in their community. They also have the chance to show them the multitude of recreational and extracurricular activities they have. And, after a great day together, physicians are always charmed by the warmth of the local people who may be their future neighbours and friends.



Photo of boat trip from Bay It Forward



Know your Target Audience

Finding the right fit is essential for physician recruitment and especially retention. Give serious consideration to the characteristics of the candidate and your community to ensure the best possible match for long term success.

Finding the right recruit, for the right position, in the right community is in the best interest of everyone involved. It helps you narrow in on the ideal candidate and create an environment for success.

Research suggests that there are higher retention rates in rural areas when potential candidates have rural backgrounds. A single or younger physician might struggle in an area with few prospects for dating and socializing. Perhaps the community would better attract a physician who is more settled in their family life.

Religion is something that is personal and important to many families. For many, it may be important to them that their faith is represented where they live.

Connect with the physician recruitment consultant in your zone to get to know your guest and their family. Ask about their hobbies and consider how your community can deliver access to this lifestyle.

Recruiting physicians with the right skill sets adds value to the delivery of health care services. Just as crucial, you want to recruit physicians who are the “right fit” for your community. Long-term retention is based on compatibility which will ultimately reduce recruiting costs and enhance health care service delivery.

Tips & Tricks

Focus on the whole family. Many physicians have started or will start families so the decision to move will be made as a family unit, not as an individual.

Important factors are:

- quality of education
- quality of career opportunities for spouses, partners or family members
- community activities, associations and sports teams, etc.



Know your Target Audience

A professional website, video, brochure, folder, or poster with your community highlights can be helpful when marketing your community to specific groups. Some groups create a website that connects visitors to NSH's More than Medicine+ opportunities page. Others promote their community and recruitment activities on social media.

Tips & Tricks

- Connect posts by using the **@healthns** handle and **#morethanmedicine** hashtag to build awareness and align with provincial efforts in recruitment.
- **Contact NSH** to link your website and social media accounts to the “Places” section of **morethanmedicine.ca**



Printed examples like this above, along with online versions, help attract talented people to these communities.

Resources:

Visit the Toolkit Page to Download Local Resources
<https://recruitment.nshealth.ca/toolkit>

New Glasgow Case Study

A Day in the Life: Site Visit

In 2019, New Glasgow welcomed an internal medicine physician, his wife, and two daughters for a site visit. The visit started with a tour of Aberdeen Hospital from a local physician while the area's community navigator brought the physician's wife and children to Perfect Diversity, a local pottery studio.

Aware of the physician and his family's Arabic culture, the committee members invited them to a local halal restaurant where the owners also spoke Arabic. Both parties – the physician and the committee members – describe the encounter as a very special moment of connection in rural Nova Scotia.

“Their hospitality touched our hearts.”

After lunch, the physician met with another local doctor of the same faith. They visited the mosque in Trenton for prayer, along with other members of the Muslim community. They spent the rest of the afternoon visiting local parks, beaches, schools, and a golf course before they were welcomed to the home of a local physician for a catered dinner. Several guests attended including other physicians and their families. The hosts included cultural food and drink to make the family feel comfortable and at home. Following the meal, the family were provided an opportunity to share evening prayer. The family spent the rest of their weekend enjoying local amenities like the New Glasgow Farmer's Market, where they were able to spend the \$25 “market bucks” that were included in their welcome package. The package also included a gift for the physician's children: autographed books by a local author, coloring books, and crayons.



Creating a Website

Establishing an online presence is an effective way to spread the word about your community and the great life physicians and their families can have in Nova Scotia.

Remember, all job postings are managed and kept up to date by NSH's recruitment team on the provincial site,

<http://www.morethanmedicine.ca>

To ensure you have the latest information, it's best to link directly to that page for the job opportunities.

When establishing your website, think of it as a virtual tour guide.

It can include:

- Government of Nova Scotia websites
- Links to amenities, recreational activities, museums, parks, shopping, etc.
- Instructions on how to register children for school
- Provincial details (e.g. sites to renew passports and drivers licenses, etc.)
- Tourism sites
- Photos and videos of physicians, their families, and other community members working and living in the community
- NSH content (More than Medicine+, job opportunities, etc.)
- Links to social media pages
- Facility descriptions
- FAQ and Q&A forms
- Contact information

Tips & Tricks

You can link to opportunities that are only listed for your town or zone by using the site's search feature on the left column to drill down to your local listing and then copying the link in the address bar for use on your own site.

Resources:

Doctors Cape Breton

<https://doctorscapebreton.com/>

Healthy Pictou County

<https://healthypictoucounty.ca/>

NOW Lunenburg County

<https://www.nowlunenburgcounty.com/>



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Social Media



Develop and execute a social media plan to distribute components of your promotional material strategically and creatively. The goal of your committee is to showcase all the amazing opportunities your area has to offer.

Using platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn are great ways to share profile stories, images, videos, and job postings. Also, paid digital advertising is cost-effective to target specific groups of people and promote your region. You might try to recruit someone to your Recruitment and Retention committee with marketing experience to help inform your strategy.

Social media does not have to be a daily activity but it is important to set a schedule and arrange future content so you can update regularly.

NSH often provides recruitment updates and stakeholder updates that are a great source for content and you can find them on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @healthns.

It is also helpful to carefully select the content you share from others to ensure there is nothing controversial attached to their accounts.



Some things you can consider:

- Appoint a member of your community recruitment and retention committee as the social media leader
- Define your goals: what will you post? (e.g., job postings, good news stories, upcoming events)
- Set a posting schedule and pre-write content
- Determine your platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- Determine if you will pay to boost content or target physicians
- Host a training session on how to use each platform and determine who will have access

Other ideas to extend your reach on social media:

- Sponsor a job posting every other month and target physicians in Canada, US, and UK
- Have an accurate list of vacancies and advertise them regularly (talk to your NSH physician recruitment consultant)
- Share facility descriptions