



FOR RELEASE
March 4, 2013

Ministerial statement on international medical graduates

WHITEHORSE—Health and Social Services Minister Doug Graham has issued the following statement on the use of international medical graduates in Yukon.

Access to appropriate health care remains a challenge for Yukon as it does across Canada. We believe that it also presents us with an opportunity to respond differently.

As Health and Social Services minister, my key focus is to ensure sustainable, accessible health care throughout Yukon. This is a challenge as we are competing for limited health and social service human resources with other Canadian jurisdictions as well as internationally.

I would hope that same focus—ensuring appropriate access—is the goal of all providers and stakeholders within the Yukon health and social service system including looking outside the box for innovative options that will increase appropriate access, quality, and efficiency. Access also includes our commitment to recruit internationally-trained medical graduates.

Many international medical graduates are Canadian students who are pursuing their medical studies outside of Canada; according to statistics from a Canadian Residency Matching Service report in 2010 there were approximately 3,500 students.

Other jurisdictions in Canada continue to actively embrace international medical graduates from around the world. Indeed, these physicians are sought out by other jurisdictions as medical practitioners and serve the public.

As a government, we are responsible for making sure that health care is available to all our citizens. We will use all practitioners—international medical graduates, nurse practitioners, expanded scope nurses and licensed practical nurses, as well as other health professionals—to ensure that Yukon residents receive the right care at the right time and in the right place.

International medical graduates have a role in our health care delivery system, not just in rural Yukon but throughout the territory, including Whitehorse, as we move toward a seamless, patient-centred model of service. We already have longstanding experience with internationally-trained medical practitioners who have made their homes here, which we can build on.

The Yukon Medical Council is the licensing and regulating body for medical care practice and physicians in the territory. Currently all international medical graduates must take a three-month assessment program in Alberta before they can be issued a provisional licence in Yukon. The council could follow the lead set by Alberta and B.C. which requires international medical graduates from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and England to take only a two-week assessment course to determine their practice readiness.

I am calling on the Yukon Medical Council to support the goal and need of sustainable increased access and the use of all providers to their full scope of practice. This includes the council's broad support for recruitment and licensing of internationally-trained medical graduates.

Contact:
Matthew Grant
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
matthew.grant@gov.yk.ca

News Release #13-043



Stay up to date with the latest Yukon government news by subscribing to our RSS feed here:
<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/rss.html>. Or follow us on Twitter @yukongov.