

November 21, 2022

Delivered by E-mail

Mr. Craig Copeland, Mayor
City of Cold Lake
5513 48th Avenue
Cold Lake, AB T9M 1A1

Dear Mayor Copeland:

Thank you again for reaching out to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta in November 2021, sharing your community's concerns about physician recruitment and retention. As I mentioned in my original response, CPSA continually seeks out ways to improve our processes, and we have recently announced a new pilot project to accelerate registration of internationally-trained physicians. The goal of this pilot is to evaluate whether certain internationally trained medical graduates (IMGs) may begin independently practicing in their identified communities faster, while still ensuring patient safety is the top priority. The pilot is expected to launch in early 2023.

As I shared in my previous letter, CPSA's Practice Readiness Assessment (PRA) is the final step to independent practice in Alberta for those who do not have complete Canadian credentials. Once an IMG has met eligibility criteria and secured a sponsorship through Alberta Health Services, they can move on to the PRA. Currently, the PRA consists of two parts—the first being a three-month Preliminary Clinical Assessment where the candidate works under direct observation in the medical practice of a CPSA-approved assessor, and the second being a three-month Supervised Practice Assessment where the candidate is working independently in their identified community and providing medical services to Albertans.

The new pilot project will waive the first three-month requirement for IMGs that have comparable training to that obtained in Canadian universities, as identified by experts in postgraduate medical training. Other requirements, such as clinical review exams, will also be waived for those eligible for the pilot program. To evaluate and ensure patients are receiving safe, high-quality care, safeguards (such as enhanced assessments and practice reviews over the first three years of practice) will be in place once the physician has successfully completed the Supervised Practice Assessment.

We understand how important access to safe, high-quality and community-based health care is to Albertans. We also recognize the challenges many communities face recruiting and retaining physicians, and are committed to doing our part to expedite the practice of internationally-trained physicians in Alberta.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael Caffaro
Assistant Registrar – Registration
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta

CC: Hon. Jason Copping, Minister of Health
Mr. David Hanson, MLA Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul
Mauro Chies, Interim President & CEO, Alberta Health Services
Rural Municipalities of Alberta
City of Cold Lake, C/O CAO
Cold Lake City Council, C/O Ms. Cindy Reimer