

# Community Navigator Funding Proposal

Medical Professional Recruitment  
Yarmouth



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Medical Professional Recruitment Task Force

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**Yarmouth & Area**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## OVERVIEW

In the Fall of 2018, the Yarmouth & Area Chamber of Commerce (“YACC”) initiated a task force to investigate local doctor recruitment. This initiative was a result of membership feedback on the needs of the business community. The availability of physicians and medical professionals was listed as a major concern, to the extent that it was affecting businesses, quality of life and the ability to attract new people to the area.

As a result of many meetings with community physicians, Doctors Nova Scotia, recruiters, former local recruiters, municipal officials and committees and leaders in government, YACC has concluded that the region would benefit from a full-time Community Navigator as well as help with securing housing for incoming residents, doctors and other medical professionals.

This proposal outlines what this position would entail and includes a request for funding.

## COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR (CN)

Recruiters are already employed at the provincial level; therefore, the role of the Community Navigator would be to assist the recruiters in providing detailed community support and communication. This role would actively look for medical professionals and route newly established connections to the recruiters to follow the appropriate provincial intake streams. This role would be employed by YACC using funding detailed in the next section. We propose that the CN position would work out of the YACC office.



The definitive goal with this position would be to prominently position Yarmouth County on a provincial level, and through community-supported efforts, make it the most advertised, most accessible and most attractive area of the province to practice in. Our areas of concentration would be three-fold:



- 1. Retention of physicians and medical professionals already practicing in Yarmouth County**
- 2. Recruitment of new physicians and medical professionals**
- 3. Engagement with youth showing initiative in medicine (or already in universities) to retain them in the community once graduated**

The CN's roles and responsibilities are detailed below in this proposal. The CN would begin constructing a community portfolio by leveraging the strengths of the area, mainly:

- Hospital culture – Yarmouth Regional Hospital doctors and collegial medical staff take an active interest in training and providing support to residents and International Medical Graduates. The CN should look to connect potential recruits to these doctors and medical professionals to answer questions and become comfortable with the support network available.
- Lifestyle – Yarmouth County, and South-West NS offers an excellent quality of life. In recognition of the area's rural nature, the CN will seek to engage with medical professionals who show an interest in a rural/small town atmosphere. The CN will aim to attract the attention of those people looking for the lifestyle our region has to offer.
- Dalhousie University Family Medicine Residency South West Nova Site – Yarmouth Regional Hospital (as well as some other hospitals in the tri-county area) already offer a training ground for physicians. Doctors that are very well known in their fields practice at this site and Medical Residents are very interested in training under them. The original statistic (or goal) of this program was to retain 25% of the residents. Yarmouth has been able to retain at an average of 46%.



## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR

The CN will be responsible for (but not limited to) the following tasks:

- project the strengths of our community, regional health facilities and existing medical professionals
- establish and maintain connections with local doctors
- track vacant positions as well as positions that may be temporary in nature
- Coordinate activities such that they will compliment existing recruitment and settlement programs
- maintain consistent communications with the provincial recruiters on upcoming site visits
- establish connections with potential medical professionals coming to the area and following up with them
- aid in travel arrangements and site visits for incoming professionals
- establish community connections and information such as:
  - connect families to school officials / touring schools
  - help with housing needs (temporary and permanently)
  - provide community information on extracurricular activities, lifestyle, facilities, infrastructure, environment, culture
- reach out to family members of incoming or visiting medical professionals, provide answers to questions and arrange for alternative activities during hospital tours (where applicable)
- create a database of conferences, newsletters, advertising platforms, etc. to monitor and possibly attend
- arrange events for residents and medical students such as dinners, outings, etc.
- create incentive packages and perks for medical students and provide help for temporary accommodations
- visit local junior and high schools to promote practicing in the region to potential medical students
- visit universities to promote practicing in the region
- make referrals to immigration specialists and settlement programs where necessary
- through the Health and Human Services Committee, develop relationships with local and provincial government officials
- be knowledgeable about the details of the community – what's going on, what activities are scheduled
- tap into the interests of the visiting doctors to ensure they see where the community can meet those interests
- follow up with NSHA on letters of offer, deadlines and response times to potential hires
- implement measures of success benchmarks as outlined below
- prepare quarterly reports to update the board of directors at YACC and prepare external semi-annual reports for funders and the community
- conduct exit interviews with medical professionals leaving the area
- public education on doctor/patient relationships



## PROPOSED BUDGET

YACC proposes the following annual budget for the Community Navigator position:

Base salary, EI, CPP and group insurance	\$ 65,000
Administration (office space, supplies, phone, etc.)	\$ 16,000
Travel (local)	\$ 5,500
Doctor retention	\$ 25,000
Housing / leases	\$ 40,000
Conferences, marketing & hospitality	\$ 65,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 5,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 222,000</b>

YACC is requesting funding for this position as follows:

Province of Nova Scotia		\$ 77,000
Local governments:		
Town of Yarmouth	\$ 20,000	
Municipality of Argyle	\$ 20,000	
Municipality of Yarmouth	\$ 20,000	
Municipality of Barrington	\$ 20,000	\$ 80,000
Yarmouth Hospital Foundation		\$ 50,000
Corporate and private donations		\$ 10,000
YACC		\$ 5,000
		<b>\$ 222,000</b>

We request a minimum commitment of 3 years (\$552,000 in aggregate), with the first year ending March 31, 2020.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

It is important to establish goals and measurement tools for assessing the effectiveness of this new position. Showing value for money is imperative, even in situations where the outcomes may be difficult to measure effectively. As such, we have established the following framework as a starting point to measure the success of this position:

### **Reduction of job vacancies:**

Measured by tracking medical professional vacancies as of the start of the CN position and monitoring how many positions are filled with the help of the CN. We realize that jobs are being filled now without a CN, but we feel that the average number of vacancies should decrease from year to year as a result of a full time CN focusing on our community.



**Higher retentions:**

Measured by establishing who is already employed locally and how many years they have been here. By averaging the number of people and the number of years they have served the community, we should be able to establish a base line in 2019 that we aim to improve in future years.

**Youth & resident retention:**

By monitoring new entrants into medical training from Yarmouth and how many we retain after graduation, from 2019 onward.

**Emergency room use:**

By assessing how many people currently use the emergency room in place of a family doctor in 2019 and evaluating this number in the future as family physician positions are filled.

**Family physician wait lists:**

Assessing the length of the list for Yarmouth and county in 2019 and comparing this statistic in future years. This list, we realize, does not capture every person without a family doctor, and with an aging population there are more variables than just filling vacant positions, however, this statistic would add value when we look at the overall scorecard.

**Feedback from local physicians and specialists:**

Feedback, on an on-going basis and in exit interviews, from local medical professionals on ease of working in our community, reasons for leaving, barriers to acceptable levels of work-life balance, and other issues as they arise.

**TIMELINE**

We would like to secure and announce funding as soon as June 15th, 2019 and list the CN job at the same time. We would like to have someone in place for July 1st, 2019 with a 3-year employment contract.



## YACC RESPONSIBILITIES

YACC undertakes the following responsibilities:

### **Human resources:**

- advertise the position, interview potential candidates and hire position
- oversee and maintain the full-time position following labour laws
- ensure that regular reporting occurs as scheduled and measures of success are evaluated
- evaluate CN on an annual basis and set goals for the next year

### **Communications:**

- correspond with funders as frequently as requested and release financial details of spending to funders semi-annually

### **Logistics and administration:**

- ensure position has suitable office space and tools (computer, supplies, etc.)
- lend support to the CN on an on-going basis using Chamber resources and synergies as required
- incur necessary insurances for the position such as travel insurance, etc.

### **Housing task force:**

- aid in securing high-quality, consistent housing for incoming medical professionals
- re-invest funds obtained from leasing income into more housing initiatives
- act as liaison between tenant and landlord

### **Further notes on housing:**

It is apparent from on-going efforts that Yarmouth, at present, lacks enough high-end apartments and houses to accommodate incoming professionals. This fact has led to an initial deterrent to persons showing interest in the area. It is one of YACC's goals to help identify pre-existing housing that meets certain standards as well as encourage (or even be involved in) development of additional properties that are particularly suited to short-term locums, longer term Medical Residents and long-term incoming medical professionals. Many medical professionals arriving from other countries need time to establish credit in Canada and having





access to suitable leasing possibilities help establish this credit and give them time to become familiar with the area and choose what location best suits their needs before purchasing property.

The \$40,000 budget would be aimed at securing 2 annual leases on suitable properties to be held and filled exclusively by medical professionals. The funding will be used either to pay the rent or possibly mortgages, if purchasing becomes necessary. Whatever funds can be secured back from the professionals in terms of rent will be used for further housing initiatives, such as providing subsidized locum support, etc. We are hoping to leverage the funding into more than two properties each year.

## CONCLUSION

YACC remains committed to this initiative. All persons interviewed concur that this position is valuable and necessary to address the on-going shortages in medical personnel in the area. As a community, we look forward to enhancing provincial recruitment efforts and capitalizing on the strengths of our regional health centre to increase medical services to the residents of Yarmouth and surrounding areas.