

2022-2025 Report Summary

Program Overview

The Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership

Now in its 6th year, the Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership has made significant progress thanks to the dedicated support of our funding partners. Through this collaboration, we have strengthened recruitment and retention efforts, expanded community engagement, and enhanced the overall healthcare capacity of our region.

With continued financial support, we can build on these successes and further address the growing healthcare needs of our community. Over the past years, our partnership has provided measurable results by:

- Supporting Nova Scotia Health recruiters with physician site visits, follow-ups, and participation in local and provincial recruitment events.
- Promoting and representing Yarmouth at national and international recruitment events, showcasing our region as a vibrant, supportive place to live and practice.
- Supporting Dalhousie University in both the Family Medicine Residency, Internal Medicine Fellowship Program, and Southwest Nova Medical Education programs, helping to attract and retain future physicians.
- Working collaboratively with hospital teams to ensure both new and current physicians receive strong onboarding, workplace integration, and family support.
- Advertising physician vacancies through expanded outreach on digital, social media, and targeted recruitment platforms.
- Welcoming medical learners and fostering community connections through mentorship programs, local tours, and networking opportunities.
- Organizing community and networking events that connect healthcare professionals, their families, and community members to strengthen a sense of belonging.
- Assisting physicians and their partners with housing, employment opportunities, and community integration support.
- Promoting inclusivity by celebrating diverse cultures, traditions, and community events that reflect Yarmouth's welcoming spirit.
- Collaborating with local businesses and service providers to enhance the experience of new recruits and medical learners through community-based partnerships.



Program Overview

Additional areas of growth and ongoing impact include:

- Developing new marketing and branding initiatives to position Yarmouth as a top destination for healthcare professionals seeking a balanced lifestyle.
- Creating a structured mentorship and peer support network for new physicians and medical learners to enhance retention.
- Tracking recruitment outcomes and retention rates to measure success and identify improvement areas.
- Launching community health ambassador initiatives to involve residents in welcoming and supporting healthcare workers.
- Partnering with educational institutions and local schools to promote healthcare careers and encourage local youth to pursue medicine.
- Improving digital outreach through an updated website, virtual tours, and social media campaigns to attract a wider audience.
- Facilitating spousal employment connections through partnerships with local employers and workforce development organizations.
- Advocating for infrastructure and service improvements that enhance the quality of life for healthcare professionals and their families.
- Pursuing additional grant opportunities and shared funding models to ensure long-term sustainability of recruitment and retention efforts.
- Highlighting success stories of physicians and learners who have chosen Yarmouth, reinforcing the region's positive reputation.



How many Medical Students visited?

How many Resident Physicians have stayed?

Current Vacancies

Physician Gains/Losses

Site Visit Statistics



NEW PHYSICIAN STARTS

Yarmouth Region (Yarmouth, Digby, Clare)

FM*:

SPECIALISTS*:

4 - Yarmouth

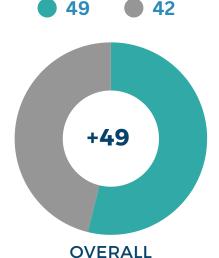
29 - Yarmouth

0 - Barrington/Pub

1 - Clare

*adjusted to count only physicians hired who are still present since <u>January 2023.</u>





NET GAIN: 7

SINCE 2019

Current Vacancies (as of September, 2025):

FM:

SPECIALISTS:

4.7 - Yarmouth

1.1 - Internal Medicine G.I.

0.4 - Weymouth

1.0 - Ophthalmology

5.7 - Barrington/Pub/Argyle

1.0 - Child Adolescent Psychiatry

1.0 - Pediatrics

7.0 Emergency Medicine

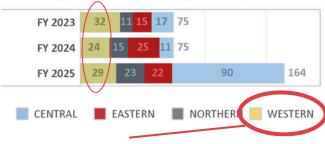
1.0 General Surgery





FROM NSH Recruiter Report:

Year-over-Year Comparison (Completed Site Visits April - November



Important to note that this is for the entire Western Zone

% SIGNED 134 Site visits in 2023: 16 % SIGNED Site visits in 2024: 107 15* *NOT INCLUDING PARTNERS ON **DOUBLE VISIT (22 TOTAL)** % SIGNED Site visits in 2025: • 4 • 11 (SO FAR) *TWO SITE VISITS WERE PRAP WHICH INCLUDED 7 PHYSICIANS, WHICH **ARE INCLUDED IN THIS TOTAL**



CONFERENCES

14 CONFERENCES (SINCE JAN 2023)

2024: 2023: 2025: APRIL: **APRIL:**

-Rural & Remote (Edmonton) -Rural & Remote (Ontario)

-OHPR (Truro NS) -OHPR (Truro NS)

MAY: **SEPTEMBER:** - Navigators Conference (Halifax NS)

- FMREW (Digby, NS) - Can Women in Medicine (Halifax NS) **NOVEMBER:**

- Congrès mondial acadien (Yarmouth, NS) - FMF (Montreal)

SEPTEMBER:

- FMREW (Halifax, NS)

NOVEMBER:

- Mini Rural & Remote (PEI)

APRIL:

-Rural & Remote (Winnipeg)

June:

-Com-Nav (Halifax)

SEPTEMBER:

-FMRES (New Brunswick)





MEDICAL LEARNERS

Student Rotations & Electives

2023:

Students: 37 Rural Week: 12

Credit Union Stays:

Locums: 18 Students: 12 2024:

Students: 52 Rural Week: 16

Credit Union Stays:

Locums: 13 Students: 31 2025:

Students: 52 (up to Nov.)

Rural Week: 17

Credit Union Stays:

Locums*: 5

Students: 37 (up to Nov.)

*less locums this year as we used the locum unit for the newly arriving SA docs

OF RETAINED RESIDENTS



10 RESIDENTS WHO GRADUATED (2023-2025) THROUGH SW NOVA RESIDENCY HAVE SIGNED TO STAY OR ARE CURRENTLY DOING LOCUM IN YARMOUTH & AREA.



Program Outcomes: Small Projects

In addition to our major recruitment and retention efforts, the Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership continues to invest in a variety of small but meaningful projects that strengthen community connections and create a welcoming environment for physicians, resident physicians, medical learners, and their families. These initiatives help demonstrate that Yarmouth and the surrounding communities genuinely value and support their healthcare professionals.

Through these initiatives, we have focused on building consistency, inclusivity, and a strong regional identity by:

- Developing Consistent Branding across Southwest Nova: The creation of a unified brand identity, including a new "Practice in Southwest Nova Scotia" logo, ensures a cohesive and professional presentation at events and online. This branding fosters a sense of regional pride and belonging among healthcare professionals.
- Producing High-Quality Printed and Promotional Resources: We have printed and distributed a variety of professional materials, including business cards, welcome folders, greeting cards, banners, and event backdrops to enhance visibility and strengthen our presence at recruitment and community events.
- Creating Comprehensive Information & Welcome Packages: Welcome Bags are
 assembled and distributed to visiting and new medical learners, physicians, and their
 families. These include locally sourced gifts and information from community partners,
 demonstrating that our region recognizes and appreciates their contributions. Local
 businesses play an active role by contributing goods and promotional items, reinforcing a
 shared sense of community support.



Program Outcomes: Small Projects

- Distributing Printed Guides and Cultural Resources:
 - Printed 250 copies of the WREN Western Nova Scotia Welcome Guide and a Health Guide for Newcomers to ensure new residents and medical professionals have easy access to key local and healthcare information.
 - Provided Cultural Appreciation Baskets that celebrate diversity and recognize the unique backgrounds of our healthcare professionals and learners.
- Hosting Social and Networking Events: Regular social events, mixers, and community
 gatherings offer opportunities for healthcare professionals and their families to connect
 outside the workplace. These gatherings foster friendships, encourage collaboration, and
 build a supportive professional network.
- Quarterly Welcome Lunches: Our quarterly luncheons provide a warm, informal
 environment to introduce new physicians, residents, and learners to local healthcare
 teams and community members. These events have become a cornerstone of our
 retention efforts, helping newcomers feel valued and supported from day one.
- Cultural Appreciation & Inclusivity Efforts: By acknowledging and celebrating the cultural
 diversity of our medical professionals, we continue to promote inclusivity and belonging.
 Initiatives like cultural baskets, holiday greetings, and shared celebrations reflect our
 commitment to fostering a respectful and welcoming environment for everyone.
- Community Representation & Local Pride: We've invested in eye-catching and regionally themed materials such as "Yarmouth" lobster socks, Nova Scotia tartan scarves, and other branded items that showcase our unique coastal culture. These touches help reinforce regional identity and serve as memorable tokens for visiting professionals.

The smallest initiatives often make the greatest difference for those who care for us all.



Program Outcomes: Medium Projects

Beyond our ongoing day-to-day outreach efforts, the Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership continues to invest in medium-sized initiatives that address the practical, social, and professional needs of physicians, medical learners, and their families. These projects have proven to make a significant difference in ensuring smooth transitions, building lasting connections, and fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Transportation Support: Many physicians and learners arrive in our region without immediate access to a vehicle, particularly those relocating from other provinces or abroad. To help ease this transition, we provide temporary transportation assistance, arranging rides, connecting with community volunteers, or supporting short-term rental solutions. This ensures that new arrivals can access their worksites, accommodations, and essential community services during their first weeks in Yarmouth.

Appreciation Efforts: We recognize and value the ongoing commitment of our local healthcare professionals. Through appreciation deliveries, such as dropping off coffee, snacks, or locally sourced treats at clinics and the hospital. We express gratitude and boost morale among physicians and healthcare teams. These gestures, while small in scale, have a big impact on community spirit and help reinforce the message that our doctors and staff are deeply appreciated.

Doctor's Lounge Improvements: A comfortable, functional, and welcoming environment for physicians is essential. We've supported Doctor's Lounge enhancements at the hospital to improve the atmosphere and usability of these shared spaces. Upgrades include basic dining furniture, refreshed décor, and practical amenities that encourage relaxation, collaboration, and informal peer connection during busy shifts.



Program Outcomes: Medium Projects

Medical Student Engagement: Our partnership continues to build bridges with medical students by being the first point of contact when they require accommodations near the hospital, through community events, by supporting Dalhousie's Rural Week program, and informational sessions through keeping communication open. These efforts provide students with a firsthand look at the advantages of living and practicing in Yarmouth. By fostering early relationships, we strengthen our pipeline for future recruitment while supporting learners in their professional growth.

Physician Focus Sessions & Project Feedback: To ensure our initiatives remain relevant and effective, we regularly host Physician Focus Sessions to gather direct feedback from those working in our region. These sessions help identify gaps, improve ongoing projects, and spark new ideas. They also give physicians a voice in shaping the community and professional environment they are part of; an important component of retention.

Local High School Engagement: We continue to plant the seeds for long-term sustainability by engaging with local high schools to inspire youth to pursue careers in healthcare. Through presentations, mentorship opportunities, and community health days, we help students envision a future in medicine, nursing, and other health professions, ideally leading them back to serve their home community in the years ahead.

Inclusivity & Diversity Initiatives: Diversity strengthens our healthcare community. Through social events, cultural celebrations, and inclusive items or symbols, we highlight and honor the diverse backgrounds of our physicians, learners, and their families. These efforts help foster cross-cultural understanding and create a welcoming environment for professionals from all over the world.



Program Outcomes: Medium Projects



Onboarding Process Improvements: We have streamlined our onboarding process to ensure new physicians and learners receive seamless support upon arrival. This includes assisting with travel logistics, securing short- or long-term accommodations, and providing practical orientation materials. By connecting newcomers quickly with housing, community supports, and key contacts, we reduce stress and help them settle into their new roles efficiently.

Settlement Support Package: For physicians relocating from outside Canada, we make sure to provide a Settlement Support Package, this could be in the form of essentials such as groceries, household basics, short-term accommodations due to the current lack of affordable rental accommodations near the hospital. These personalized touches are deeply appreciated and help new arrivals feel cared for as they begin adjusting to their new home and community.





Program Outcomes: Major Projects

Celebrating Excellence and Expanding Our Reach

As part of our ongoing mission to attract, retain, and celebrate medical professionals in Southwest Nova Scotia, the Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership continues to lead several large-scale projects that create lasting impact.

These initiatives strengthen our reputation as a welcoming, forward-thinking region and ensure our physicians feel genuinely appreciated and supported by the communities they serve.

Annual Physician Appreciation Event

Each year, our Annual Physician Appreciation Event has become one of the most anticipated gatherings for physicians, residents, and healthcare partners across Southwest Nova. This signature event is more than a celebration, it's a heartfelt expression of community gratitude. It brings together local physicians, community leaders, and supporters to recognize the dedication, compassion, and skill of our local physicians.

Key highlights include:

- Peer-to-Peer Recognition: Physicians nominate and celebrate one another in various award categories, recognizing excellence in patient care, mentorship, collaboration, and community involvement.
- Community Connection: Local businesses and residents contribute through sponsorships, gifts, and participation, reinforcing the bond between physicians and the community they serve.
- Celebration of Excellence: The event creates a positive, uplifting atmosphere that boosts morale and strengthens collegial ties among medical professionals across the region.

This gathering has evolved into a cherished tradition, a reflection of how deeply our region values its healthcare professionals and the essential role they play in the wellbeing of our communities.



octors recognized by colleagues and community during event in armouth

he Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership recently hosted s second annual Southwest Nova Physician Appreciation Reception & ...

Saltwire Network / Mar 6

Program Outcomes: Major Projects

Recruitment Videos & Digital Expansion

To remain competitive in the evolving landscape of healthcare recruitment, we have invested in modern, visually compelling tools to reach a global audience.

We produced four high-quality recruitment videos that highlight:

- The professional opportunities available to physicians in Southwest Nova Scotia;
- The natural beauty and quality of life that make the Yarmouth region an exceptional place to live;
- Personal testimonials from local physicians and community members that showcase genuine stories of connection and fulfillment.

These videos help prospective physicians see firsthand what makes practicing here so rewarding, both personally and professionally.

In tandem, we are revamping our website: <u>www.yarmouthdoctors.ca</u> to improve accessibility, visual appeal, and international reach.

The updated platform will serve as a central hub for:

- · Sharing physician success stories;
- · Highlighting available positions and local opportunities;
- Providing relocation resources and settlement information;
- · Connecting directly with interested candidates both nationally and abroad.

The goal is to ensure that when physicians around the world look for a new home and practice, Southwest Nova stands out as a region where they can care for communities, and be cared for in return.









SWOT analysis - ASBB Consulting

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

How are we doing?

How do the physicians feel about our support?

Are we making a difference?

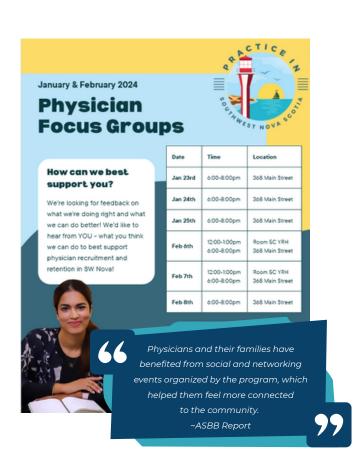
Testimonials

What are we lacking?

Where can we improve?

What are we missing?





Physician Focus Groups

In collaboration with ASBB Consulting, we conducted a series of focus groups and 1-on-1 sessions for residents, physicians, and partners in Clare, Yarmouth & Barrington.

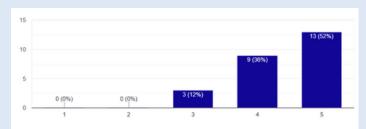
We followed this with a digital anonymous survey to provide an opportunity for participants to share any thoughts they may have been uncomfortable sharing in a group setting.

• 36 participants

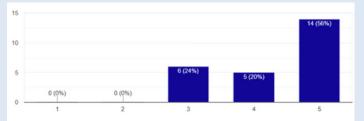


Survey

The survey consisted of 7 questions (a mixture of quantitative and qualitative)



88% of survey respondents reported that the Community Navigator Program is performing at or beyond expectation (5 = better than expected)



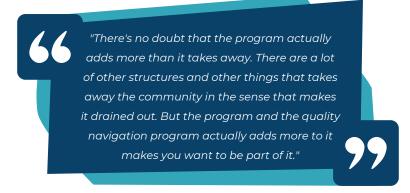
76% of survey respondents reported that the Community Navigator Program increase their sense of community and belonging in the region (5 = better than expected)





STRENGTHS

- Enhanced Community Engagement: Provision of tickets and financial support positively impacted residents' participation in community events, fostering a greater sense of involvement and connectivity.
- Local Support for Practical Needs: The program effectively assists physicians with practical needs such as finding housing or daycare, contributing to a smoother transition for new physicians settling into the area.
- Reduced Workload and Increased Focus on Patient Care:
 Physicians' workload has been successfully reduced through program support, allowing them to dedicate more time and attention to patient care.
- Enhanced Social Connection and Networking: Social and networking events organized by the program have contributed to a sense of community and professional camaraderie among physicians, residents, and their families.







WEAKNESSES

- Limited Integration into the Community: Residents appreciate the current events, there is an opportunity to further enhance integration into the broader community by encouraging more engagement beyond their immediate social circles.
- Seasonal Event Availability: Residents propose increasing winter activities to foster community engagement and alleviate seasonal isolation.
- Inclusion: Balancing attention between Yarmouth, Barrington, Passage and Clare enhances inclusivity and representation in program initiatives.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Enhanced Community Integration: Embrace the opportunity to enhance community integration through initiatives that promote inclusive engagement and foster meaningful interactions among residents.
- Expanded Event Diversity: Enhance inclusivity and participation by broadening event options to accommodate diverse interests and preferences, while also introducing a variety of seasonal activities.
- Improved Communication and Engagement: Enhance engagement and connection by implementing direct notification systems for all program participants, including partners, to establish wider communication channels.
- Inclusion: Promote inclusivity and representation in program initiatives by fostering a balanced approach that supports all regions equally, including areas outside of Yarmouth.





THREATS

- Geographical Challenges: Improving accessibility to major airports and resources would positively impacts both work and personal life, increasing connectivity and access for physicians.
- Healthcare Structural Challenges: The challenges associated with practicing in a rural setting could pose significant obstacles in terms of recruiting and retaining physicians.
- Aging Demographics: An aging workforce for physicians imply an acute future need for retaining and recruiting physicians in the future.





Program Impact: Testimonials

"Living in a community where you have been welcomed, appreciated and supported. Not to say that we may not have had a similar experience elsewhere but having this experience in this locality, why take the risk of losing all this wonderful blessings by moving elsewhere!"

-Family Doctor, Barrington

"We are surrounded by beautiful beaches, and the people are always so friendly and appreciative. I feel grateful every day when I drive to work, knowing I get to care for the people in the community that raised me. That sense of purpose and connection has significantly improved my job satisfaction and personal well-being.

There are also various community events that I enjoy participating in, which help strengthen that sense of balance and belonging. Practicing here has been incredibly rewarding both professionally and personally." -Family Doctor, Yarmouth Region

"We truly appreciate your support. It really does take a village to come together and make these meaningful events and wellness initiatives possible for our Residents [physicians]."

-Southwest Nova FM Residency Team

"The people here are so friendly and grateful, and that gratitude goes a long way in making the work feel meaningful. I trained in various places in the U.S. and in other provinces, and I can honestly say that I've never met more kind, genuine people than I have here"

-Family Doctor, Barrington

"Thank you for your sustained and thoughtful work on physician retention.

Personally, I find your work really creates a strong sense of being wanted and appreciated by the community." -Family Doctor, Yarmouth Region

"The wonderful thing about the available supports both professionally and personally for new physicians coming to this area is how well-organized it all is, even if you do not ask for it, that support will come looking for you!" -Preceptor, Southwest Nova



Looking Forward: The Next Three Years

A Vision for Sustainable Growth and Continued Partnership

With the ongoing support of our valued funding partners, the Yarmouth Region Medical Professional Recruitment Partnership will continue to build on the strong foundation we've established over the past six years. Our initiatives, big and small, have made tangible improvements in recruitment, retention, and community integration. Yet, we know that continued investment is key to ensuring long-term success and sustainability.

Over the next three years, our focus will be on deepening relationships, expanding outreach, and strengthening the supports that make the Yarmouth Region an attractive and welcoming home for healthcare professionals and their families.

Our Three-Year Priorities and Vision

- Continue strengthening relationships with physicians, medical learners, and healthcare teams to ensure ongoing collaboration and open communication.
- Expand recruitment outreach by traveling within Canada and internationally, in collaboration with Nova Scotia Health's Recruitment Team, to promote opportunities in the Yarmouth Region.
- Target new prospects and emerging demographics through strategic advertising in new markets, both nationally and abroad.
- Engage with the new Dalhousie Medical Site in Cape Breton to showcase our proactive outreach and demonstrate to learners that Yarmouth is a supportive, community-driven region eager to welcome them.
- Inspire local youth to pursue healthcare careers by expanding engagement programs with local high schools and education partners.
- Make practicing Family Medicine in the Yarmouth Region an easy, attractive, and smart decision for new Resident graduates through improved onboarding, mentorship, and lifestyle supports.
- Support growth in essential community infrastructure. Including childcare, housing, transportation, and medical office spaces, to ensure physicians and their families have the resources they need to thrive.



Looking Forward: The Next Three Years

From Our Ongoing Projects

Small Projects - Strengthening the Sense of Belonging

- By continuing to invest in community engagement, branding, and welcoming initiatives, we will enhance inclusivity, visibility, and retention.
- Expand welcome and cultural appreciation efforts.
- Enhance our regional brand at recruitment and community events.
- Increase collaboration with local businesses to strengthen the sense of community.
- Ensure every physician and learner feels recognized, valued, and supported.

Medium Projects - Addressing Real-Life Needs

- Our mid-scale projects will continue to focus on improving the practical and social aspects of relocation and settlement.
- · Broaden transportation and settlement assistance for new arrivals.
- · Continue enhancing physician wellness spaces such as the Doctor's Lounge.
- · Grow mentorship and engagement with students and residents.
- · Expand inclusivity initiatives and ensure smooth onboarding for new professionals.
- Big Projects Celebrating Excellence and Expanding Reach

Large-scale Initiatives

Like the Annual Physician Appreciation Event and our digital recruitment-support campaigns will remain key pillars of our strategy.

- Expand the Annual Appreciation Event to include new award categories and broader community participation.
- Update and internationalize <u>yarmouthdoctors.ca</u> for greater reach and accessibility.
- Translate and promote recruitment materials to reach physicians worldwide.
- Continue producing compelling, story-driven videos that highlight our community's strengths and sense of belonging.



Looking Forward: The Next Three Years

Our Shared Commitment

Together, we have built a strong foundation, one that connects physicians with their community, provides them with the tools and supports to succeed, and positions Yarmouth as a destination of choice for healthcare professionals.

With your continued financial partnership, the next three years will be about growth, innovation, and sustainability, ensuring that every physician who chooses to call Southwest Nova home knows that this community truly values them, supports them, and celebrates their vital contribution to the health and future of our region.



