



CEHPEA
CENTRE FOR THE EVALUATION OF HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS EDUCATED ABROAD



ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

Creating a “Gold Standard” for Canada

Assessment and Education Programs for Internationally Educated Health Professionals



Table of Contents

Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors1

Message from the Executive Director2

Message from the Director of Health Professional Affairs ...4

Creating a Gold Standard for Assessment and Training in Canada6

Assessment and Educational Programs8

- Written and Clinical Exams8
 - Assessing readiness for entry-level training10
 - Ontario’s unique comprehensive clinical examination (CE1)11
 - Standardized Patient Program11
 - Examinations for physicians seeking advanced-level training12
 - Assessing IMGs for new physician assistant role in Ontario13
- Education Programs14
 - Pre-Residency Program helps prepare IMGs for Family Medicine training14
 - Launching the Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada Program for specialists15
 - Integration Program helps IMGs transition to new physician assistant role17

Board of Directors18

Executive Team19

Program Leads19



Vision To facilitate access to a health care career to Internationally Educated Health Professionals who want to reside and practice in Ontario, through the provision of evaluation and orientation services.

Mission To be an integral part of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's health strategy by providing ongoing evaluation and orientation programs for Internationally Educated Health Professionals based on the needs of Ontario's health care system and applicants.

Message from the Board Chair

The Ontario government's vision for CEHPEA – that it would become a gold standard for assessment and training – has become a reality.

It was only two years ago that the Centre for the Evaluation of Health Professionals Educated Abroad (CEHPEA) was launched as a brand new not-for-profit corporation. As founding Chair of the Board of Directors, it has been a great pleasure to witness CEHPEA's unfolding and growth and the many accomplishments it has achieved in a very short time. Several factors contributed to this success.

The Ontario government is to be commended for creating the HealthForceOntario strategy to address the shortage of health human resources and as part of that strategy, its commitment to expand and enhance services for internationally trained health professionals. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care had a vision for CEHPEA – that it would become a gold standard for assessment and training, making it easier for these professionals to gain entry into training and practice in Ontario.

It is a testament to CEHPEA's executive team and staff that they have been able to make that vision a reality. CEHPEA offers a robust, open assessment of health professionals to determine their ability to practice in Ontario as well as several training and orientation programs. Staff members have worked very hard, within tight timelines, to respond quickly to meet the needs in a constantly changing environment.

The next factor contributing to CEHPEA's success is the caliber of my colleagues on our board. As a board, we have been entrusted with ultimate accountability for the organization, representing our stakeholders and ensuring fiscal oversight, transparency and public trust. I would like to thank our board members for the commitment, diligence and passion they have brought to this governance mandate.

It is particularly rewarding that we have been increasingly collaborating and consulting with our stakeholders, which include the provincial and federal government, medical schools and colleges, physicians, nurses and allied health professionals. Your input has been invaluable as we evolve and grow to serve internationally trained health



professionals. We look forward to continuing that collaboration in the future as we work together to increase the number of health professionals in this province and ultimately, improve access to patient care services.

Margaret Nelligan

Message from the Executive Director



We continue to grow in leaps and bounds – offering more services and streamlining the process.

It is a great pleasure to update you on new developments at CEHPEA during our second year of operation. Thanks to the support of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM), the outstanding leadership of our Board of Directors and the expertise of our partners and staff, CEHPEA has become the largest assessment centre of its kind in Canada.

Although we were pleased with our progress during year one of our operational start up, we continue to grow in leaps and bounds - offering many more services and at the same time, creating a more streamlined and transparent assessment process.

When we started out, assessments and examinations for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) were our core business. But as the Ministry's strategy for addressing health human resource challenges in this province evolved, so have we. We pride ourselves on our ability to adapt, respond and deliver as new needs emerge in this rapidly changing environment.

In 2008/09 CEHPEA increased the number of clinical and written examinations for Family Medicine and specialty streams to 739. Our educational programs doubled in the last year, with higher enrollment in our Pre-Residency Program (PRP) for IMGs accepted into Family Medicine residencies. Based on the popularity and success of the PRP, and at the request of Program Directors at Faculties of Medicine at Ontario Universities, we created the Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada Program for specialist streams. Already, 13 IMGs have been through the program and another 128 are expected. As well, we developed and led a four-month integration program for IMGs interested in applying for the new Physician Assistant role in Ontario. So far, 42 IMGs have participated and more are expected as the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care expands the Physician Assistant Pilot Project.

Another exciting initiative in 2008-09 was the development of CEHPEA's Standardized Patient Program, including

CEHPEA has become the largest assessment centre of its kind in Canada.



recruiting and training individuals to pose as patients as part of our General Comprehensive Clinical Examination. Created by our in-house patient simulation experts, the program provides a resource that is not readily available in Ontario.

In order to accommodate the dramatic increase in examinations and education programs, in the past year we acquired additional space, with more conference rooms and expanded to 54 clinical examination rooms equipped with medical examination tables and diagnostic equipment.

Although initially our examinations and programs focused on physicians, we are actively working to expand our services to other professions, starting with Physician Assistants. We have also been working with other provinces and territories to create a national assessment system for internationally educated health professionals.

We look forward to the many new initiatives that are underway for next year, as we respond to the changing needs of the people of Ontario, the health system and the health professionals that we serve.

Anne Marie Crescenzi

If you would like to obtain a copy of CEHPEA's audited financial statements for 2008-2009 please send your request to info@cehpea.ca

Ontario Champions International Medical Graduates

Internationally educated doctors are an essential way to supplement Ontario's supply of doctors. Ontario has been making significant investments in International Medical Graduates (IMGs), making Ontario the leader in Canada when it comes to providing individuals the supports and assessments they need to get into practice in Ontario.

Not only has the government dramatically increased the number of residency positions available for IMGs, it has also made it easier for IMGs to access information and services. In earlier years, the process for IMGs was cumbersome and confusing. It was very hard for them to know where and how to get the information they needed. As part of the HealthForceOntario strategy, the government has provided the funding and infrastructure to enable all parts of the system to successfully work together, resulting in a streamlined process for IMGs that is much easier to access, more transparent, objective and independent.

Message from the Director of Health Professional Affairs



We are privileged to play a key role in the province's efforts to increase access to medical professionals.

Responding to critical shortages of health care professionals in communities across the province, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care developed a comprehensive strategy to keep and attract health care providers, including expanded opportunities for internationally trained health professionals.

Supporting this expansion, CEHPEA plays a dual role – assessing International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to ensure that they meet the Canadian standards for training and practice, as well as providing educational programs that orient IMGs to training and practice in Canada.

While other provinces primarily focus on assessments of fully-trained physicians, Ontario (through CEHPEA) provides assessments of IMGs across the entire spectrum of readiness, ranging from candidates with no postgraduate experience, to those with partial training, to physicians that have medical practice experience in another country.

It is extremely gratifying that CEHPEA's assessments have earned a reputation for unquestionable credibility. All exams created by CEHPEA are constructed and validated by our own experts, working in collaboration with medical education experts from Ontario's universities. Throughout, we have always had rigorous processes in place to evaluate and ensure the accuracy and validity of the testing processes and the calculation of results.

Although we have focused on assessments of physicians, we are branching out to other health professions. In the past year, for example, we developed the assessment standards for IMGs applying to become Physician Assistants (PAs) – a new role in Ontario. Our medical experts recommended the competency level for IMGs applying for PA positions, based on the General Comprehensive Clinical Examination scores, and created the province's first assessment and selection process.

In addition to our examinations, we have created and led educational programs to orient internationally educated health professionals to training and practice in Canada. Our academic staff members are all highly qualified education



professionals with many years of experience in evaluation, curriculum development and delivery. As a result of their skills and in partnership with Program Directors from Faculties of Medicine in Ontario, we currently offer the Pre-Residency Program for candidates entering the Family Medicine stream, the Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada for specialists and an Integration Program for IMGs selected for training as Physician Assistants.

We have been privileged to play a key role in the province's efforts to increase access to medical professionals. As our activities continue to expand in the future, we will continue to ensure the highest standards for all of our assessment and education programs.

Murray Urowitz, MD, FACP, FRCP (C)

Increasing the Number of Physicians in Ontario

Over 1,100 training and assessment positions were offered to IMGs between 2003 and 2008

Ontario absorbs more IMGs than all other provinces combined. In 2008, 224 positions were offered to IMGs, 88 in Family Medicine

Ontario offers more than 200 IMG training and assessment positions annually, more than the rest of the country combined

Ontario has essentially added the capacity equal to a new medical school. IMGs are better able to make the most of their abilities and Ontarians benefit by having increased access to care

CEHPEA's assessments have earned a reputation for unquestionable credibility.



Creating a Gold Standard for Assessment and Training in Canada



The Centre for the Evaluation of Health Professionals Educated Abroad (CEHPEA) is the only organization in Ontario that provides assessment, evaluation and training programs for internationally educated health professionals. With state-of-the-art examination and education facilities in downtown Toronto, CEHPEA is the largest assessment centre of its kind in Canada.

It plays a key role in the province's HealthForceOntario strategy that is addressing the shortage of health human resources, including physicians and other health professionals. And CEHPEA is part of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's overall strategy to expand and enhance services provided to internationally educated health professionals.

Building on the success of the former International Medical Graduates Ontario (IMG-O), CEHPEA was launched in April 2007 as a new, not-for-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors. According to Jeff Goodyear, Director, Health Human Resources Policy Branch at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, CEHPEA was set up to create a gold standard for assessment and training in Canada.

"CEHPEA is a great asset to the system. Its leadership team has always been enthusiastic about responding to changing needs," says Goodyear. "It is an organization that provides excellent services that are top-of-class. Any question about the legitimacy of the process is gone."

When the government increased residency positions for Family Medicine and other specialties, CEHPEA responded quickly by dramatically increasing the number and frequency of exams. It expanded its examinations and programs for Family Medicine and specialties and has been actively developing programs for other professions, starting with the newly created Physician Assistant Integration Program.

"CEHPEA has focused on what it does best – building a world-class centre for rigorous and objective assessment," says Dr. Joshua Tepper, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Human Resources at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. "More and more we have been able to leverage CEHPEA's expertise. For example, its role in the Physician Assistant Integration Program has been incredibly helpful and we are looking to expand to other health care professions educated abroad."



"CEHPEA is one of a handful of 'crown jewels' across Canada that will benefit the country as a whole."

Dr. Joshua Tepper

Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Human Resources, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care



"Ontario's assessment system for internationally educated health professionals is very advanced. As a result, Ontario is able to play a leadership role at the national level through, CEHPEA."

Jeff Goodyear

Director, Health Human Resources Policy Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care



CEHPEA has focused on what it does best – building a world-class centre for rigorous and objective assessment.

Facts and Figures

Top 10 countries of citizenship of IMGs applying to CEHPEA

Country of Citizenship	2007/08	2008/09
Canada	37.67%	33.22%
India	7.87%	10.86%
Egypt	10.95%	10.07%
Iran	6.50%	7.08%
Iraq	2.91%	5.82%
Pakistan	4.96%	5.51%
Sri Lanka	2.56%	2.99%
Nigeria	2.22%	2.51%
Libya	1.88%	1.73%
Romania	2.05%	1.73%

Age distributions of IMG candidates applying to CEHPEA

Age	2007/08	2008/09
< 29	3.76%	6.14%
30 - 39	43.32%	45.82%
40 - 49	38.35%	35.27%
> 50	14.55%	12.75%



Top 10 countries where CEHPEA applicants received their medical undergraduate degree

Country of Citizenship	2007/08	2008/09
India	11.30%	13.54%
Egypt	15.92%	13.38%
Pakistan	11.47%	11.33%
Iran	8.90%	9.92%
Iraq	3.76%	6.14%
Bangladesh	4.10%	3.93%
Romania	4.79%	3.30%
Nigeria	3.08%	3.14%
West Indies (all schools)	4.00%	2.83%
UK & Australia	1.36%	1.73%

Assessment and Educational Programs

Helping Internationally Educated Health Professionals Train and Practice in Ontario



CEHPEA's overall goal is to facilitate entry to training and practice for internationally educated health care professionals. In its start-up years, CEHPEA focused on creating extensive services for physicians and is actively working to expand its services to other professions, starting with Physician Assistants – a newly created role in Ontario.

CEHPEA plays a dual role - assessing International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to ensure that they meet Canadian standards for training and practice, as well as providing orientation programs.

While other provinces mostly focus on assessment of fully-trained physicians, Ontario (through CEHPEA) provides assessments of IMGs across the entire spectrum of readiness, ranging from candidates with no postgraduate experience, to those with partial training, to physicians that have medical practice experience in another country. Although CEHPEA does not have final say in the selection process, once IMGs are accepted into residency programs, CEHPEA provides education and orientation programs.

Written and Clinical Examinations – *Leveling the playing field for international medical graduates*

Ontario leads the country in the number of positions available for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) with approximately 200 training and assessment positions available annually. Even so, the process is extremely competitive with approximately 479 people applying for those positions.

Through large-scale written and clinical exams, CEHPEA provides assessment for professional practice for internationally educated health professionals in Ontario. CEHPEA's standardized evaluations help to level the playing field for IMG candidates. The exams ensure that IMGs meet the standards for Canadian training and practice, they allow

them to compare their clinical competencies with those of Canadian medical graduates and they improve their chances of obtaining residency positions.

Ensuring Accuracy and Validity of Examinations and Results

Exams created by CEHPEA are constructed and validated by its own experts working in collaboration with medical education experts from Ontario's universities. As part of the validation, Canadian Medical Graduates at the same level as the IMGs are included in the examination as a control group.

From the beginning, IMG-O and then CEHPEA, brought on board Arthur Rothman, an internationally recognized expert in assessment and evaluation, to evaluate and ensure the accuracy and validity of the testing processes and the calculation of results. He likens it to being a "forensic auditor," replicating the process to mitigate the possibility of error.



“On an ongoing basis, CEHPEA takes an exceptional amount of care to ensure the validity and accuracy of its examinations and results. In addition, the testing facilities are outstanding and the in-house experts are superb.”

Arthur Rothman, EdD, Statistician and Curriculum Consultant

Total Number of Examinations Performed in 2008-2009

Establishing CEHPEA has led to a more streamlined and transparent assessment process in Ontario. In total, 739 examinations were performed in 2008-2009 *Descriptions of these assessments are provided in the following pages.

Family Medicine Stream Clinical Exam 1	Specialist Stream Clinical Exam 2	Specialist Stream Specialist Written Exam
29-Apr-08	19-Sep-08 – Anesthesia	18-Sep-08 – Anesthesia
26-May-08	17-Oct-08 – Psychiatry	06-Oct-08 – Pathology (Anatomical and General)
19-Jun-08	21-Oct-08 – Internal Medicine	15-Oct-08 – Psychiatry
13-Aug-08	24-Oct-08 – Pathology	16-Oct-08 – Internal Medicine
26-Aug-08	25-Oct-08 – Orthopedic Surgery	04-Nov-08 – Pediatrics
04-Sep-08	05-Nov-08 – Otolaryngology	08-Nov-08 – Orthopedic Surgery
16-Sep-08	05-Nov-08 – Pediatrics	13-Nov-08 – Dermatology
02-Oct-08	14-Nov-08 – Dermatology	20-Nov-08 – General Surgery
	21-Nov-08 – General Surgery	04-Dec-08 – Obstetrics and Gynecology
	05-Dec-08 – Obstetrics and Gynecology	02-Apr-09 – Ophthalmology
	27-Mar-09 – Ophthalmology	
Total 479	Total 148	Total 112

Offering World-Class Examination Facilities

CEHPEA's unique facilities have been designed to accommodate large-scale written and clinical examinations. The state-of-the-art examination and education centre is a 38,430 square foot facility in downtown Toronto. Special features include two floors linked by an internal staircase, large training rooms, clinical examination rooms, a sequestering area and a security monitoring and recording system.

Additional space was acquired in the past year to accommodate the dramatic increase in exams and education programs provided by CEHPEA. The expansion means that CEHPEA now has more conference space and 54 clinical examination rooms equipped with medical examination tables and diagnostic equipment.



Assessing Physicians' Readiness for Entry-Level Training

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) can apply directly for entry-level, postgraduate training positions through the matching service administered by the Canadian Residency Matching Services (CaRMS). IMGs qualifying for this level of training are required to complete a full residency in order to meet the registration requirements to practice in Ontario.

CEHPEA provides optional evaluation services for IMGs applying to the entry-level to help them strengthen their portfolio and be more competitive in the CaRMS match. While CEHPEA's General Comprehensive Clinical Examination (CE1) is not required for candidates applying for the first year of postgraduate training in Family Medicine or specialty residency programs (PGY1 level assessment),

most University Residency Programs have indicated that preference is given to candidates that have completed the exam. Initially CEHPEA held one CE1 exam a year, but demand has grown to such an extent that it is now offered eight times per year.

As Coordinator for the Family Medicine residency admission process in Ontario, Dr. Marcus Law oversees approximately 69 IMGs entering Family Medicine residency each year. The backgrounds of the IMGs seeking residency are diverse and varied. Some may be students abroad with limited experience, while others may have been practicing physicians for many years. The application process is extremely competitive with more than 1,000 applicants for those 69 positions. He believes the CE1 exams provide a good tool for assessing and selecting the best candidates for Ontario.



"There is quite a bit of variability among International Medical Graduates, regardless of the countries where they have trained. While IMGs are required to take written exams, the clinical exams conducted by CEHPEA are as close as you can get to observing clinical practice. CEHPEA examinations have rigorous credibility and provide as objective a standard as you will find in the country."

Brad Sinclair, Executive Director of the HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency

The Comprehensive Clinical Examination (CE1)

CEHPEA's CE1 exam, which is unique to Ontario, evaluates each candidate's general knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour. The skills evaluated can include history taking, physical examinations, data interpretation, clinical problem solving, diagnosis, management skills, ethics, safety, interviewing and communication.

The CE1 is an objective, structured clinical exam (OSCE) consisting of 12 stations depicting various clinical scenarios. Here is an example: "Jason Green has come to your office complaining of significant neck pain following a car accident that occurred three days ago." The candidate has seven minutes to take a focused history and physical examination of the patient while telling the examiner what he or she is doing and describing findings. At the seven minute mark, the candidate has three minutes to answer the examiner's questions.

The objectivity of the CE1 is achieved by using standardized guidelines for the administration of the examination, the use of trained physician examiners, standardized patients and consistent scoring sheets.

"CEHPEA has one of the most rigorous clinical evaluation programs in Canada," says Dr. Preston Tran, a Family Medicine/Emergency physician at St. Joseph's Health Centre in Toronto and one of the physician examiners for the exam. "While the mandatory written exams can determine the depth of clinical knowledge, the clinical exams provide the opportunity to observe how the candidates interact with patients, along with their social and communication skills. It helps us identify the best candidates to ensure Ontario has access to the best doctors available."

CEHPEA's Standardized Patient Program

Simulation Experts Create a Unique Provincial Resource

Patient simulations are critical to the success of the CE1 exam. Previously an external firm supplied actors for the exam, but this year CEHPEA developed its own Standardized Patient Program, including recruiting and training actors to pose as patients. Actors receive overall training to ensure consistency, fairness and accuracy. It is quite an undertaking as for each exam up to 48 actors may be needed – but the physicians think it is well worth the effort.

"CEHPEA's standardized clinical exam is very helpful to Program Directors as we make decisions about the best candidates. It tests clinical skills and places a huge emphasis on communications, management and professional skills."

Dr. Marcus Law, Chief Examiner for CE1 and Coordinator of the Family Medicine Residency Admission Process for Ontario

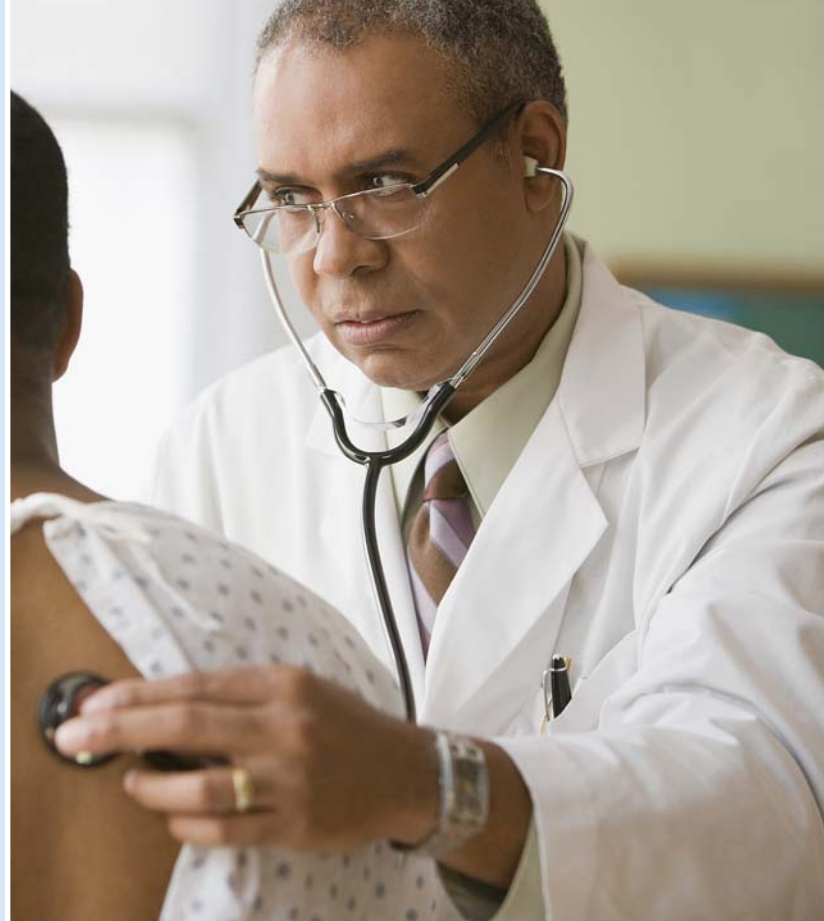


Examinations for Experienced Physicians Seeking Advanced-Level Training in Ontario

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who have experience as physicians in other countries may be able to apply for advanced-level training and practice ready assessment:

Advanced-Level Training (PGY2) refers to the second year or more advanced years of postgraduate training in a specialty area. IMGs entering at this level have been assessed as requiring between one and four years of training in order to meet the registration requirements to practice in Ontario.

Practice Ready Assessment (PRA) allows physicians, with previous practice experience in another country, to undergo a six-month assessment in a supervised clinical setting to determine their need for further training or to confirm their readiness to enter directly into practice. Upon successful completion of the PRA, they are considered practice ready and can apply for registration to practice medicine in Ontario.



In 2008/09, CEHPEA conducted the following mandatory examinations for entry to the PGY2 or Practice Ready Assessment training positions: the Specialty Written Examination (SWE) and the Specialty Clinical Examination (CE2).

The Clinical Examination 1 was required by Ontario Universities' Program Directors for all candidates registering for SWE and CE2 for the following specialties at the PGY2 or PRA level for the 2008/09 cycle:

- Anesthesia
- Pathology (Anatomical and General)
- General Surgery
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Otolaryngology

Streamlining the Process for Advanced-Level Assessments

Dr. Mark Levine is one of six Program Leads affiliated with CEHPEA. He is an Anesthesiologist at the Hospital for Sick Kids, Program Director, Department of Anesthesia, University of Toronto and the provincial lead for anesthesia. "It is a great partnership. The physicians have the content expertise and CEHPEA has staff with general expertise in assessments and

examinations and they constantly validate their method."

As Program Director, Dr. Levine oversees everything about the anesthesia residency at University of Toronto – from the selection process (reviewing files and interviews) to selecting the right educational program and clinical assignments for each candidate, to evaluating performance. The goal is to ready residents for independent practice and for examinations through the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Previously each medical school handled its own IMG applications and interviews for advanced entry positions, but last year, CEHPEA took on that role at a provincial level including prescreening, assessments and scheduling interviews. They centralized and standardized the process. As a result, Program Directors and applicants were able to meet at CEHPEA's offices, avoiding multiple applications, processes and interviews across the province.

"CEHPEA did a great job of coordinating the whole process, making it much more convenient and streamlined for everyone involved," says Dr. Levine.

Assessing IMGs for New Physician Assistant Role in Ontario

Health care delivery in Ontario is changing. Interprofessional care teams are growing, providers are collaborating more closely and new team-based roles are being introduced in new settings. These new roles – like the Physician Assistant (PA) and others – are expected to alleviate some of the pressure on our health force, reduce wait times and improve patient care.

While PAs have worked for decades in the United States, the Canadian Forces and elsewhere, the PA is a newcomer to the Ontario health care system. The PA role was introduced in 2007 through a series of demonstration projects in hospitals, community health centres and diabetes care and long-term care settings across the province.

At the outset there were no civilian education programs for PAs in Canada. The PAs in the project were recruited from the following sources:

- Retired graduates of the Canadian Forces Physician Assistant Education Program
- PAs who were educated and certified in the U.S.

According to Jane Seltzer, Manager of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Allied Health Human Resources Policy and Planning Unit, because there were relatively few Canadian PAs, recruiting PAs from other jurisdictions and avenues was an innovative way to ensure that Ontario had the PAs required for the demonstration projects. The Ontario government recognized that some International Medical Graduates (IMGs) possessed the competencies required to

"I was able to provide patient and family education and support which contributes to enhanced patient satisfaction. I believe this role will grow and PAs will certainly become an integral part of the health system in Ontario."

Waheed-ur Rehman

Physician Assistant, Royal Victoria Hospital, Barrie, Ontario (Summer 2008)

"Building on the work by the former IMG-O, CEHPEA has been incredibly important in the success of the PA Project. It essentially led the process for selecting and integrating IMGs into their new role. When we asked CEHPEA staff members to get involved, they quickly stepped up to the plate and delivered high-quality services. We wouldn't have been able to do it without them."

Jane Seltzer

Manager of the MOHLTC's Allied Health Human Resources Policy and Planning Unit

What is a Physician Assistant?

The Physician Assistant (PA) is a health care provider who works under the supervision of a registered physician. Depending on the scope of practice of the supervising physician and individual PA competencies, PAs may:

- Interview patients and take medical histories
- Perform physical examinations
- Provide counseling on preventive health care
- Perform other tasks that the physician deems the PA qualified to complete

practice as PAs and would be interested in applying their knowledge and skills to this new role and career path.

CEHPEA was asked to develop the assessment standards for IMGs applying to become PAs in Ontario. CEHPEA's medical experts recommended the competency level for PAs, based on the General Comprehensive Clinical Examination (CE1) scores and created the assessment and selection process. CEHPEA led the IMG selection process including: ranking (based on exam scores, recency of practice and nature of experience) and standardized interviews. Successful candidates were then interviewed and selected by the demonstration sites.

IMGs that were chosen participated in a four-month Integration Program that was developed and given by CEHPEA and 39 became PAs in the demonstration projects.





Education Programs

Easing the transition for internationally educated health professionals

CEHPEA plays an important role in providing orientation and training programs to help internationally educated health professionals make the transition to practice in Ontario. In 2007, CEHPEA launched a Pre-Residency Program for Family Medicine Residents that was so successful, Program Directors from Ontario Universities asked that a similar program be created for specialty streams. The Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada was created this year and already 13 IMGs have been through the program with another 128 expected. As well, CEHPEA developed and led a four-month Integration Program for IMGs interested in applying for the new Physician Assistant role in Ontario. So far, 42 IMGs have participated and more are expected as the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care expands the Physician Assistant Pilot Project.

Pre-Residency Program Helps Prepare IMGs for Family Medicine Training

As Ontario increased the number of International Medical Graduate (IMG) resident positions, Program Directors from Faculties of Medicine across the province realized that a significant number of IMGs seemed to be struggling and had difficulty with the transition into training.

“We found that people that had ‘grown up’ in the Canadian medical education system were better prepared for residency programs, because the patient care philosophy had been modeled for them as they worked with others,” says Dr. David Tannenbaum, the former Director for Postgraduate Education for the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Toronto.

Responding to this need CEHPEA asked Dr. Tannenbaum and Dr. Anita Rachlis to co-chair a steering committee that designed and implemented one of the foremost preparatory programs in North America for Family Medicine residents.

“Family Medicine has a lot to do with good communication,” says Tannenbaum. “In Ontario, we have a very sophisticated relationship between patients and their family doctors. It is very much a partnership with lots of discussion, patient input and negotiation as we work on a solution. A family doctor cannot be effective without understanding the philosophy regarding communication.”

The program has modules on difficult topics such as family violence, breaking bad news and active listening. There are educational sessions as well as patient simulations. Phase I is six to eight weeks of classroom seminars and simulations and Phase II is seven-weeks of on-site clinical rotations at the sites where the residents have been assigned for their two-year residency program. They are paired up with mentors (residents that are already in the program) to observe the life of a resident and are given an orientation to all the areas in which they will work.

The Pre-Residency Program (PRP) for Family Medicine, which was launched in 2007, has been very well received in



“Family Medicine has a lot to do with good communication. In Ontario, we have a very sophisticated relationship between patients and their family doctors. It is very much a partnership with lots of discussion, patient input and negotiation as we work on a solution. A family doctor cannot be effective without understanding the philosophy regarding communication.”

Dr. David Tannenbaum

Former Director, Post Graduate Education, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto

medical circles across Canada and around the world and is now a mandatory orientation program for all IMGs who are accepted in an Ontario Family Medicine residency program.

As a Site Director of Family Medicine Residency at Toronto East General Hospital, Dr. Marcus Law has seen first-hand the transformation of IMGs who did not have the communication skills and understanding of the Canadian system.

“PRP really has accelerated the understanding of the Canadian system and contributed to successful residencies,” says Dr. Law. “It helps to put the IMGs on the same playing field as the Canadian graduates and eases the transition.”

Launching the Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada Program for Specialists

Given the success of the Pre-Residency Program (PRP) for Family Medicine, Program Directors asked CEHPEA to create a similar program for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) accepted into residency positions for other specialties. The Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada Program was created by Dr. Sheldon Mintz, CEHPEA’s Director of Educational Programs and Arthur Rothman, EdD, Statistician and Curriculum Consultant, who pulled out relevant components from the PRP and added new modules that would be helpful to new specialists in training. The five-week program, which was created and launched this year, is now a mandatory orientation program for all IMGs who are accepted into an Ontario specialty residency program. Already, 13 IMGs have been through the program and feedback from Program Directors has been very positive.

“It is a very useful program,” says Dr. Mark Levine, Anesthesiologist, Hospital for Sick Kids and Program Director, Department of Anesthesia, University of Toronto. “IMG skills and experience can be quite variable, depending on where they come from and years of practice. This helps to orient them to our system.”

Pre-Residency Program for Family Medicine



Candidate Experience – Dr. Deema Abdul Hadi

Dr. Abdul Hadi was born in Jordan, lived in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and graduated from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. She immigrated to Canada in 2006 and completed CEHPEA’s PRP for Family Medicine

in April 2009. Phase II of the PRP was a 7-week placement at Mount Sinai Hospital, part of the orientation to the residency program and she is now completing her residency at the hospital. Dr. Abdul Hadi hopes to set up a family medical practice in a mid-sized community in Ontario.

“CEHPEA’s Pre-Residency Program was well organized and there was valuable feedback at all levels... peer to peer, instructor to student and students were asked for input every step of the way on content and format.

We had a lecture by a pharmacist who explained what resources were available and oriented us to the Ontario Public Drug Benefits and Formulary, which was extremely helpful. We got a lot of information about how to tap into the vast resources available to residents, including a trip to the University of Toronto library to understand how to access extensive on-line resources.

One of the biggest benefits of the PRP program is the people that you meet. The fact that you get to meet other IMGs is amazing. Not only is there a lot of sharing of medical information, but also I met a lot of good people, made a lot of great friends and that has created a wonderful support network as we started our residency.”





Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada for Specialists

Candidate Experience – Dr. Salma Ketabi

Dr. Salma Ketabi worked in Iran as an anesthesiologist for five and a half years prior to immigrating to Canada in 2006. Dr. Ketabi completed CEHPEA's Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada (OTPC) Program in March 2009 and started her six-month Practice Ready Assessment in July at Toronto East General Hospital. She will be rotating through four hospitals where she will get experience in sub-specialties such as pediatrics, women's health and intensive care.

"The way we approach patients in Iran is very different than in Canada. In Iran, it is more physician oriented, meaning the physician decides on the course of treatment and the patient accepts it. In Canada, the approach is more patient oriented and it is more of a partnership.

While I was confident in my practice skills, it was important to me to develop my approach as a practitioner to reflect the Canadian culture. I passed the Clinical examinations at CEHPEA (CE1 and CE2) but I still wanted feedback.

The OTPC Program provided the feedback that I needed. The clinical simulations were the most helpful and most important part of the program. We received feedback from the instructors, our classmates and most helpful...from the patients themselves (actors).

We were taught how to approach patients, practiced and then got feedback. The combination made us more skilled in communications and it was a very good experience."



Total Number of People Participating in CEHPEA's Education Programs

Program	2007-2008 Fiscal Year	2008-2009 Fiscal Year
Pre-Residency Program	80	126
Orientation to Training and Practice in Canada	0	13
Physician Assistant Integration Program	42	0

Celebrating Physician Assistants

CEHPEA organized the first Physician Assistant (PA) Professional Development Day, which was hosted by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in December 2008 for PAs across the province.

“All the PAs are in a new profession in Ontario and it provided them with an opportunity to share their experiences and build their professional network and support,” says Jane Seltzer, Manager of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s Allied Health Human Resources Policy and Planning Unit.



“The Physician Assistant Pilot Project has been a great experience for me. I not only learned a lot but I also had an opportunity to share my knowledge and skills with other health care professionals.”

Jehan Zaib

Physician Assistant, Sault Area Hospital (Summer 2008)

Integration Program Helps IMGs Transition to New Physician Assistant Role

While Physician Assistants (PAs) have worked for decades in the United States, the Canadian Forces and elsewhere, the PA is a newcomer to the Ontario health care system. Partnering with the Ontario Hospital Association, the Ontario Medical Association and the Association of Ontario Health Centres, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care introduced the PA role in 2007. Over 60 PAs are now working in hospitals, community health centres and diabetes care and long-term care settings across the province.

When opportunities opened up for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to pursue PA positions, CEHPEA led the assessment process as well as the creation of a four-month comprehensive Integration Program which is required for IMGs prior to starting clinical practice as a PA.

The Integration Program, which was developed by Dr. Murray Urowitz, CEHPEA’s Director of Health Professional Affairs, and Arthur Rothman, Curriculum Consultant, has two parts:

- Two months didactic education: six week classroom session, one week written examination and Advanced

Cardiac Life Support course, and one week orientation and administration.

- A two-month clinical rotation at the site of employment

Arthur Rothman and Dr. Murray Urowitz liaised with the Ministry, PAs, and PA educators to develop the orientation to this new role in Ontario. The Integration Program orients IMGs to the health care system and to the specific clinical roles and responsibilities for practice in the PA role.

Two “cohorts” of IMGs have been through the program (and are now working as PAs in hospitals and community health clinics) and a third is being organized (for IMG stream PAs who will be working in family health teams and emergency departments).

“We have been able to leverage CEHPEA’s expertise to assist in this new area,” says Jane Seltzer, Manager of the Health and Long-Term Care Allied Health Human Resources Policy and Planning Unit at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. “Their help with the IMG component of the Physician Assistant Program has been invaluable.”

CEHPEA's Board of Directors

CEHPEA is governed by an independent Board of Directors that is responsible for overseeing the organization's performance and accountability. The board is comprised of representatives of three key stakeholder groups: professional educators, professional regulatory bodies and the general public.

Margaret Nelligan, Chair

Margaret Nelligan has been a partner since 1989 with Aird & Berlis LLP, Barristers and Solicitors. She is a former Practice Group Leader of the firm's Corporate Finance Group, as well as a member of the Energy, Mergers and Acquisitions and Private Equity and Venture Capital Teams.

Ms. Nelligan practises in the areas of corporate and securities law, including investments for financial institutions and pension plans, mergers and acquisitions, restructurings, public financings, acquisition financings, private placements, proxy solicitations, corporate reorganizations and general corporate work. She is a member of the Securities Advisory Council of the Ontario Securities Commission and is an Adjunct Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School. Ms. Nelligan has also been selected for the Women in the Lead directory, featuring women whose professional expertise and experience recommend them as candidates for corporate board appointments. She acts as counsel to one of Canada's largest gas distribution utilities, one of Canada's largest pension plans, as well as numerous public and private industrial companies. Margaret regularly advises the boards of directors of public companies on corporate governance and other matters. Margaret is a director of Horizon Utilities Corporation, Ontario's third largest electricity distributor.

Ms. Nelligan received her LL.B. (Hons., Dean's List), University of Windsor in 1984 and a B.A. (Hons.), History, University of Western Ontario in 1981.

She is a member of the Canadian Association of Law Teachers Canada's Venture Capital & Private Equity Association (CVCA), the Ontario Energy Association, the Ontario Energy Network, the Women's Executive Network, Women in Capital Markets, and Women in Food Industry Management.

Anne Coghlan

Anne Coghlan is the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the College of Nurses of Ontario. The College is the regulatory body for Registered Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses in the province.

Ms. Coghlan has over 20 years of leadership experience in varied professional practice, management, regulatory and educational roles. She obtained both her Baccalaureate and Master of Science in Nursing degrees from the University of

Toronto and started her nursing career at the Hospital for Sick Children as a staff nurse and Paediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist. Ms. Coghlan introduced the roles of Director of Professional Practice and Chief of Nursing Practice at Markham Stouffville Hospital in the early 1990s. She has also held faculty positions in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Toronto and Ryerson's School of Nursing. Prior to joining the College of Nurses in May 2000, she was a Principal in the health care practice of Ernst & Young Consulting Services.

Currently, Ms. Coghlan is President of the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario. She also holds an appointment as Adjunct Professor in the Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto. Her professional interests include leadership in knowledge-based organizations, the public accountability of self-regulated professionals and the impact of globalization on regulatory policy.

Dr. Rocco Gerace

Rocco Gerace is the Registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, appointed in May 2002. From 1997-2002, Dr. Gerace served on the College's Council as the University of Western Ontario representative. He was elected President of Council in November 2000, for a one-year term.

Prior to his appointment as Registrar, Dr. Gerace was an attending staff physician in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the London Health Sciences Centre. He was also a consulting staff member at the Poison Information Centre at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Dr. Gerace graduated from the University of Western Ontario in 1972. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in Emergency Medicine and a diplomat of the American Board of Emergency Medicine. Dr. Gerace is also certified in Medical Toxicology from the American Board of Emergency Medicine.

Dr. Gerace is a professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Western Ontario, and was formerly Chair of the Division of Emergency Medicine. He also held a cross-appointment in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology.

Dr. Gerace is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto. He is a member and past president of the Medical Council of Canada.

Dr. Ken Harris

Ken Harris is currently the Director, Office of Education at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and Professor Emeritus, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Western Ontario. Prior to his move to Ottawa he had served as Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education at the University of Western Ontario as well as being the Director of the Education Research and Resource Unit. He also served as Chair, Postgraduate Management Committee of the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine.

Prior to his appointment as Associate Dean, Dr. Harris was Chair of the Division of Vascular Surgery, London Health Sciences Centre, and Chair of the Department of Surgery, UWO. He has also held positions of Chief of the Department of Surgery at the London Health Sciences Centre and with St. Joseph's Health Care London.

Since 2006, Dr. Harris has served as Chair of the Postgraduate Education Committee of the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine. He is also a member of the Accreditation Committee of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, on the Board of Directors of the Fowler-Kennedy Sports Medicine Clinic and a member of the Interprofessional Education Working Group of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Dr. Harris graduated from Queen's University in 1977. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in General Surgery and Vascular Surgery. In 2007 he was awarded the Vicky Blair Vascular Surgery Fellowship and is the recipient of the James IV Association of Surgeons Travelling Fellowship, BCOE Teaching Award and USC Teaching Honour Role.

Dr. Elena Sourovtsseva

Elena Sourovtsseva is a hospitalist with the Niagara Health System, a position that she has held since 2006. For the past several years, she has volunteered her services to help Canadian families to adopt children abroad. Dr. Sourovtsseva is an active member of the Canadian Foundation for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, organizing and leading humanitarian missions to Russia to help children and orphans with congenital and traumatic facial deformities to have hope for the future.

Prior to joining the Niagara Health System, she completed all Canadian and American medical license exams while working as a Physician Leadership consultant at Sunnybrook & Women's hospital in Toronto. In 2004, Dr. Sourovtsseva entered a full Family Medicine residency program at the University of Western Ontario, which she completed in 2006. At the same time, she was actively involved with many volunteer organizations and activities and was an Executive Member of Professional Associations of Internes and Residents of Ontario (PAIRO), advocating on behalf of residents and specifically, International Medical Graduates (IMGs). As a member of the Board of Directors of CEHPEA, Dr. Sourovtsseva hopes to continue to advocate for IMGs and other immigrated health professionals.

Dr. Sourovtsseva has an Honours Bachelor of Commerce and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of Windsor. Prior to immigrating to Canada in 1999, she practiced as a pediatrician in Russia and completed her PhD. Her PhD research explored the pathogenesis of hemolytic-uremic syndrome and the role of coagulation abnormalities in its pathogenesis. The work led to 23 publications and therapeutic changes that contributed to a dramatic reduction in mortality rates for this disease in Russia.

CEHPEA Executive Team

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Executive Director

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Dr. Sheldon Mintz
Director, Educational Programs

Marla Nayer
Director, Assessment Operations

Dr. Murray Urowitz
Director, Health Professional Affairs

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Dermatology, University of Toronto

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General Surgery, Queens University

Dr. Parveen Wasi
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Dr. Daniel Borschneck
Orthopedic Surgery, Queens University

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