

City throws cash at new doctors

BY JANET GIBSON

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The city has moved five steps closer to its goal of getting primary health care for every resident. It announced on June 9 that five medical residents will practise family medicine in Sudbury for a minimum of four years. Two will start work in January 2009 and the other three in 2010.

In return, the city will give each one \$10,000 a year. The incentive, called a return of service agreement, is one of the strategies the city uses to attract doctors to the city, said physician recruitment co-ordinator Ryan Humeniuk.

The residents – Dr. Virginie Marchadier, Dr. Melanie Squarzolo, Dr. Suman Koka, Dr. Liisa Lefvasseur and Dr. Katie Gasparini – are training in the Family Medicine Residents of the Canadian Shield program run by the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

Currently, the city is short 24 family physicians, Humeniuk said, adding 18 physicians will retire over the next four years.

“We want to bring a string of new, young physicians into the community,” he said.

Because of the demand for housing, the city is talking to a local developer who wants to build a medical learner residence. The other incentives are:

For students, there is the Community Ambassadors Medical Students Bursary Fund. The city gives \$5,000 to five medical students in southern Ontario but were born in Sudbury or are based here.

The students must show an interest in practising in Sudbury and promote the city to their classmates.

Students also have access to the City of Greater Sudbury Medical Student Bursary Fund. The city gives \$20,000 to one third or fourth year Northern Ontario School of Medicine student who agrees to practise in Sudbury for two years after he or she finishes their residency.

For family practitioners, the city gives a lump sum of \$15,000 to family physicians who agree to practise in an outlying community within Greater Sudbury for four years.

The recipient must not have practised in Sudbury for four years. They’ll also get \$5,000 if they accept hospital privileges.

The city gives a lump sum of \$10,000 to family physicians



City of Greater Sudbury physician recruitment co-ordinator Ryan Humeniuk holds a copy of the brochure outlining financial incentives available to physicians who want to practise in Sudbury.

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who commit to serving for four years with one of the four City of Lakes Family Health Teams. The physician must not have practised in Sudbury for four years.

As well, they must take on new patients and accept hospital privileges.

A one-time payment of \$5,000 is given to new, full-time family physicians who agree to maintain privileges and be on call at Sudbury Regional Hospital for four years.

“We encourage physicians to take hospital privileges,” Humeniuk said. That way, if a patient goes into the hospital, they can see their own doctor.

For specialists, the city gives \$5,000 to new, full-time specialists who agree to maintain privileges and be on call at Sudbury Regional Hospital for four years. Humeniuk noted the hospital recruits the specialists.

Other incentives include an Underserved Area Program in which The Ministry of Health gives up to \$10,000 a year for four years to family physicians and psychiatrists who commit to practising in Sudbury, which is classified as an underserved area.

As well, the Ministry gives up to \$20,000 over four years to specialists who relocate here. A second grant of \$20,000 is paid over four years to those who provide at least 12 days of outreach service a year.

The Ministry also reimburses medical students for tuition fees. Those who go on to practise in Sudbury for at least three years will get \$10,000 a year for a maximum of four years.

The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce gives 15 physicians \$1,000 a year for moving expenses – a gift donated by Xstrata Nickel.

Chamber members give physicians \$10,000 in goods and services including furniture, paging systems and accounting services.

Sudbury Regional Hospital gives \$2,500 to new physicians or specialists who agree to accept hospital privileges.