



Health Human Resources Action Plan

Progress Report - December 2022

Saskatchewan continues to see steady, progressive results on its ambitious Health Human Resources (HHR) Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain health-care professionals.

A total of 161 job offers have been made to Filipino health-care workers to join Saskatchewan's health-care system: 138 to Registered Nurses, 21 Continuing Care Assistants (CCAs) and two to Medical Lab Assistants. One CCA has already started in Moose Jaw.

Saskatchewan's targeted health-care recruitment mission to the Philippines led by Health Minister Paul Merriman returned home with successful results. Conditional employment offers were made by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) to 129 qualified candidates from in-person interviews. This includes 128 Registered Nurses and one Continuing Care Assistant. Additional job interviews have been conducted virtually with Filipino Registered Nurses with another 10 conditional offers being extended.

Progress also continues in implementing new full-time positions and enhancing vacant part-time positions to full-time in nine high-priority classifications in rural and remote locations experiencing service disruptions. Through this initiative, the SHA has hired 84 positions. As of December 9, 24 more positions are in the hiring process and 55 are posted. Approximately 75% of these positions have been filled by casual, temporary or part-time staff.

To provide more opportunities for health-care professionals, eligibility has recently been expanded for the Saskatchewan Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive of up to \$50,000 for a three year return-in-service agreement. This incentive is available to new employees in nine high priority positions in rural and remote areas, including SHA employees who have completed an education program in one of these priority classifications.

As of late November, the Ministry of Health has received over 600 applications from internationally educated health-care workers within Saskatchewan and Canada. Options are being considered for bridging and educational programs for these candidates.

To improve job offers and connections for Saskatchewan nursing graduates, the SHA recently launched a new Grad Nurse Expression of Interest initiative that matches graduates with an area based on skills and preferences. All Saskatchewan nursing students received this communication from the SHA through their respective colleges and/or through in-person recruitment events. So far, 52 students have submitted their expression of interest and 22 accepted conditional offers. The SHA is currently following up with the remaining applicants to extend further conditional offers.

Work continues under each of the four pillars of the Action Plan.

Recruit

Recruitment of health-care professionals from the Philippines:

- As of December 13, a total of 161 job offers have been made to Filipino health-care workers to join Saskatchewan's health-care system. This includes:
 - » Conditional offers of employment to 138 Registered Nurses following in-person interviews in Manila as well as a small number of virtual interviews. More interviews are scheduled in the weeks ahead.
 - » 21 offers of employment have been extended by the SHA to Continuing Care Assistants (one from the mission and 20 prior), and two to Medical Lab Assistants. One CCA has already started in Moose Jaw.

Philippines mission:

- Four concurrent programs took place in Manila during the five-day mission: Minister's government-to-government meetings; the Saskatchewan delegation promoting working, living and immigrating to Saskatchewan as a health-care worker; SHA assessment and hiring activities; and post-secondary education engagement.
- The SHA extended conditional offers to 129 qualified candidates (128 Registered Nurses and one Continuing Care Assistant) following in-person interviews.

- Ten in-person information sessions were delivered to over 1200 Filipino health-care workers over five days focused on licensing and regulatory process, immigration process, relocation supports and showcasing Saskatchewan. Participants traveled from all areas of the country to attend the sessions.

Health System Navigators:

- [Health system navigators](#) are now available to support all international health-care workers with seeking health care career opportunities. They can be contacted by email at HHR@health.gov.sk.ca for assistance.
- The navigators will continue to assist and provide follow-up information to prospective health-care candidates identified by the Philippine mission.

Ukrainian newcomers:

- The SHA has participated in several job fairs throughout the past several months to provide information and answer questions from newcomers seeking employment in the provincial health system.

Advertising campaign:

- The advertising campaign featuring health-care professionals who have built a successful career in Saskatchewan will continue into the winter with additional testimonials to promote available opportunities and attract health-care workers.

Train

Unlicensed Internationally Trained Health-Care Professionals (IEHPs) residing in Saskatchewan/Canada:

- As of November 29, the Ministry of Health has received a total of 611 applications from internationally educated health-care workers: 510 from Saskatchewan and 101 from other provinces. Options are being considered for bridging and educational programs so these candidates can enter the workforce.
- A webinar for unlicensed IEHPs (nurses) in Saskatchewan was hosted early December and attracted about 40 participants.

Additional learning opportunities in rural Saskatchewan:

- Southeast College, the SHA and the Assiniboia Union Hospital have announced a partnership to offer a 33 week, full-time Continuing Care Assistant program starting in March 2023.

Connections with Indigenous Technical Institutes (SIIT):

- Funding has been provided to SIIT to provide an additional 20 seats in a program of Health Care Aid in Prince Albert.

Incentivize

Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive:

- Eligibility has been expanded to provide more opportunities for health care professionals for the up to \$50,000 incentive for a three-year return-in-service agreement. This incentive is available to new employees in nine high priority positions in rural and remote areas. For a complete listing of eligibility criteria, visit saskatchewan.ca/HHR.
- Melfort has been added to the list of eligible communities, now totaling 50.

Final Clinical Placement Bursary:

- As of December 13, the Ministry of Health approved 121 bursaries for students in an eligible health discipline.

Improve job offers and connections for nursing graduates:

- The SHA recently launched a new [Grad Nurse Expression of Interest initiative](#) that matches graduates with an area based on skills and preferences. All Saskatchewan nursing students received this communication from the SHA through their respective colleges and/or through in-person recruitment events.
- So far, 52 students have submitted their expression of interest and 22 accepted conditional offers. The SHA is currently following up with the remaining applicants to extend further conditional offers.
- Meet & Greet events for 3rd and 4th year nursing students were held early December in Saskatoon and Regina. Further follow up following the events is underway with more events being planned in the New Year.

Retain

New Full-Time and Enhanced Part-Time to Full-Time Permanent Positions:

- As of December 9, of the 163 positions posted in nine high-priority classifications in rural and remote locations experiencing service disruptions, the SHA has hired 84 positions and is in the process of hiring another 24.
- Approximately 75% of the new positions have been filled by former casual or part-time staff.

First Nations and Métis Recruitment and Retention:

- Engagement sessions with a number of First Nations/Métis were held in late November and the first part of December. Additional sessions are scheduled for January.

Saskatchewan's HHR Action Plan, announced in September, will invest over \$60 million and add more than 1,000 health professionals into the health system over the next few years. Details on health-care opportunities, how to access them and more information on province's Health Human Resources Action Plan are available at saskatchewan.ca/HHR.