



# Health Human Resources Action Plan

## *Progress Report - April 2023*

The Government of Saskatchewan has selected Erin Brady as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Saskatchewan Healthcare Recruitment Agency (SHRA). She will take on the role of CEO starting May 23, 2023. Erin has extensive experience working in the health sector, including Saskatchewan Health Quality Council and saskdocs.

The SHRA was established in 2022 as an independent Treasury Board Crown Corporation. The SHRA is responsible for recruiting doctors, nurses and other priority healthcare professionals from within Saskatchewan, across North America and overseas. The Agency will work with partners to create and implement innovative short and long-term strategies and programs that support the recruitment and retention of health professionals in the province.

The agency will coordinate and collaborate around health human resource planning with healthcare employers such as the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, the Affiliates, as well as other stakeholders such as Saskatchewan communities and municipalities.

### ***HHR Progress Report Highlights***

Work is ongoing on multiple initiatives of the Saskatchewan's Health Human Resources (HHR) Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain more health care workers.

Seventeen Continuing Care Assistants (CCAs) and two Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLAs) from the Philippines have arrived to the province. Saskatchewan's recruitment missions to Philippines have delivered a high success rate, with conditional job offers made to nearly 400 Registered Nurses (RNs), 21 CCAs and two MLAs. More than one third of the RNs are moving through the RN Pathway, which includes language, bridging education and licensing.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) is actively connecting with nursing students and recent graduates to promote employment opportunities. Since December 2022, the SHA has hired 186 Grad Nurses from the province and across Canada. A further 129 conditional job offers have been made to nursing students who will be graduating this spring.

The Ministry of Health continues to offer incentives between \$30,000 and \$50,000 to recruit in nine high priority classifications in rural and remote Saskatchewan, in exchange for a three-year return-of-service. Since launching last fall, the program has seen success with a total of 105 incentive packages approved in a variety of professions and locations.

Progress also continues toward the target of recruiting 250 new and enhanced permanent full-time positions to stabilize staffing in rural and remote areas, with nearly 120 positions now filled.

The Final Clinical Placement Bursary offered to students in health disciplines has seen high uptake, with 168 bursaries approved and paid out in 2022-23, the highest since 2014-15. Applications are now closed for this program. Updates will be available on the government website soon.

Additional progress is being made on each of the four pillars of Saskatchewan's HHR Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain more health care workers. In addition to the highlights above, further progress includes:

## RECRUIT

### Health Recruitment and Retention Navigators

- Health Recruitment and Retention Navigators have responded to more than 4,600 inquiries from internationally educated health professionals from abroad.
- Health Navigators provide assistance to potential international candidates looking to relocate to Saskatchewan and support them through the necessary steps to obtain licensure, connect to career opportunities and provide up to date information and resources.
- A Healthcare Navigator Services webpage was launched in early March to assist Internationally Educated Health Professionals and has had over 1,200 views. The navigator team can be reached by email at [hhr@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:hhr@health.gov.sk.ca).

### Unlicensed Internationally Educated Health Care Professionals residing in Saskatchewan/Canada

- The SHA has extended conditional offers to nine Saskatchewan-based internationally-educated RNs who are now currently participating in the bridging education program.

### Ukrainian Newcomers

- The SHA has hired 14 Ukrainian newcomers into the health care workforce.

## TRAIN

### Training Pathways for High School Students

- SHA health student events:
  - » Job Shadow opportunities are available for high school students (Grade 12) or adults considering a career in health care. The SHA has hosted 35 job shadow requests since February.
  - » Various volunteer opportunities are offered to students older than 14 across the province. This provides young people with a chance to experience health care settings which may help them consider a future role in health care.

## INCENTIVIZE

### Rural and Remote Recruitment Incentive

- This incentive is available to new employees in nine high priority classifications in rural and remote areas. For a complete listing of eligibility criteria and eligible locations, visit [saskatchewan.ca/HHR](https://saskatchewan.ca/HHR).

## RETAIN

### Rural Physician Incentive Program

- Effective April 1, 2023 an enhanced Rural Physician Incentive Program is being offered to help retain family physicians practising, or returning to practise, in rural Saskatchewan. The total incentive is now up to \$200,000 over five years, more than four times the amount that was previously offered.
- The program has had a high response, nearly tripling the number of applications that would be received in an average year. Of the applications received so far, 96 have been determined eligible. Applications are still being reviewed.

Details on health care opportunities, how to access them and more information on the province's HHR Action Plan are available at [saskatchewan.ca/HHR](https://saskatchewan.ca/HHR).