

March 22, 2018

Press Release: OMSA supports the *Careers in Medicine Advisory Committee Act, 2018*

To become a practicing physician in Ontario, medical students must first complete postgraduate medical training as a resident. Residency offers graduates of medical school the opportunity to practice medicine under the direct supervision of an attending physician to become clinical experts in a field of medicine. In their final year of medical school, students apply for residency positions in a process known as “the match.” Historically, 10 to 20 graduates in Canada have gone unmatched each year. However, that number has risen dramatically since 2011, rising to 46 in 2016 and 68 in 2017 and is projected to reach 141 in 2021. 25 residency positions were also eliminated in Ontario in 2015 further increasing the rate of unmatched students. In 2017, there were 35 unmatched medical students in Ontario alone; given that the cost of medical education is highly subsidized by Ontario taxpayers, unmatched graduates represent significant unrealized provincial investment.

Without postgraduate training, medical school graduates cannot be certified to practice independently, leaving many of these students with limited professional options, high debt burdens, and enormous risks to their mental well-being. Tackling the increasing number of unmatched graduates requires urgent action by many healthcare stakeholders, including the provincial government.

This year, medical students in Ontario overwhelmingly voted for the Ontario Medical Students Association (OMSA) to advocate for improved physician services planning for our annual Lobby Day. Consequently, OMSA supports the establishment of an advocacy committee to consult organizations, including OMSA, to develop recommendations ensuring that graduates of Ontario medical schools are matched to a residency program, so they are poised to serve Ontarians’ health needs. OMSA also supports developing recommendations for a Canada-wide strategy to match graduates of Canadian medical schools to a residency program.

The number of unmatched medical graduates in Ontario is rising at an alarming rate and is consequently contributing to physician shortages across the province. OMSA implores the Government of Ontario to create a physician workforce that meets Ontario’s needs, is transparent in its physician services planning to enable medical students’ informed decision-making, and that ensures an adequate number of residency spots for every single Ontario medical graduate.

For more information on OMSA’s advocacy efforts, please visit www.omsa.ca/en/advocacy-priorities or contact representation@omsa.ca.

Sincerely,



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