

BRIEFING NOTES

DATE: May 14, 2019

PREPARED FOR: The Township of Esquimalt

PURPOSE: ☒ Discussion ☐ Consultation ☐ Information ☐ Decision

THE BACKGROUND: Given the present and rising need to attract new physicians to the South Island, in an effort to bridge the staggeringly large patient attachment gap and keep pace with the high physician retirement rate, the South Island Division of Family Practice is seeking the support of the Township of Esquimalt. The current lack of suitable clinic space to house these health providers, within an attractive team-based model of care environment, is an impediment to recruitment.

The 2007 National Physician Survey in Canada, which focused specifically on recruitment and retention, provides a comprehensive look at the way physicians selected their current work location. The top reasons, in order of priority, included: availability of a practice opportunity, appealing location, family reasons and availability of medical/support system resources. Financial and recruitment incentives ranked eighth overall. The 2007 National

Physicians Survey asked medical students to respond to factors that would be most important to having a satisfying and successful medical practice. The number one answer for all undergraduate medical students, receiving 59.7% of the vote was the ability to achieve work life balance. The number one answer for second year family medicine residents, receiving 51.7% of the vote, also confirmed the priority for work life balance.

The Senate Committee on Population Health noted, the healthcare system accounts for 25 percent of the health outcomes while socio-economic factors account for 50 percent of health outcomes. Municipalities play a key role in building, maintain and promoting aspects of social determinants.

While it is obvious that physicians play a vital role in maintaining a vibrant healthcare system, they also play a role in maintaining a vibrant regional economy, which makes significant contributions to health in communities and regions. Lauzon and McCordic (2013) in Windsor Ontario estimated that the direct impact on every \$1 invested in physician recruitment nets a \$200 (198.54) economic benefit to the local economy.

COLLECTIVE GOAL: To recruit and retain family physicians who are the right 'fit' for both the clinic environment and/or physician cohort they wish to join, but also for the geographic area and what that represents for the physicians' work, life and wellness needs, and that of their family. This in turn directly impacts the community/patient population of Esquimalt in that proper compatibility will, over time, translate into long-term physician retention, smoother succession planning and patient attachment, as well as improving overall physician resiliency to cater to the needs of the population. Clearly the SIDFP has a mandate for physician recruitment and the Township of Esquimalt has a mandate for economic development and community viability. Given the convergence of these mandates, together our efforts will result in greater success than working independently.

OUR ASK: We ask the Township of Esquimalt to consider the suggested supports the South Island Division of Family Practice is requesting. The Division has conducted countless engagement sessions with physicians practicing across the various geographies in Greater Victoria and their feedback on what is 'needed', is reflected in this ask.

Strategic Alignment

- Align the establishment of the emerging Primary Care Networks with community strategic plans, to reflect the values and aspirations of the community, i.e. quicker access to high quality public healthcare providers within the Township.
- Participate in ongoing collaborative tables with local partners to set priorities and align strategies
- Assist in promoting the designation of “communities of need” for Esquimalt. While this designation has no direct funding allocated from the Ministry of Health, it is our hope that we will begin to use this designation as new funding envelopes emerge.

New Physician Engagement

The Division operates a Red Carpet Recruitment Strategy, by which we view each physician visit to the locality as a welcome for the physician’s entire family, and whereby the full complement of community resources available should be made known, in addition to the professional opportunities on offer for the physician.

- Partner with the Division in efforts to promote the community as a place where physicians can reap the rewards of a fulfilling work-life balance, while successfully supporting community healthcare needs.
- Partner with the Division in efforts to promote the community as a place where the physicians’ families can realize the rewards of living, working or going to school, recreating and thriving in a healthy and vibrant community.
- Dedicate a ‘community ambassador’ or liaison within the Township to bolster physician recruitment efforts and provide a direct link with SIDFP recruitment staff.
- Support the community ambassador/liason to meet with prospective new physicians when the Division takes physicians on red carpet community clinic tours, and provide information, as necessary, in respect of community services, schooling resources, residential developments (such as temporary housing for new to the community physicians/locums), etc.
- Encourage partnership with local business owners and social organizations to contribute to visits. This may include gift baskets, preferred rates for admissions to events/activities or accommodations.

New Business Ownership Grants/Loans

- Consider options for offering start-up grants/loans for physicians or community led primary care organizations who wish to establish practices within the Township of Esquimalt (*i.e. through not for profit societies/other*).

Development Planning Support

Esquimalt would benefit greatly if short term (next 6 months) and medium to long term (i.e. 1-2 years +) clinic space options could made available.

- Accelerate development plans that have a covenant or commitment to primary care physician work space.
- Offer tailored support to physicians in obtaining business licenses, to ensure that the clinic, i.e. ‘the business’ is permitted to carry out business on the property the physician wishes to lease or buy.
- Facilitate the process for physicians with respect to new space permits / rezoning, where necessary.
- Consider tax breaks (extension of the Permissive Tax Exemption policy) for physicians within the Township of Esquimalt, to incentivise physicians to consider this township over another.

Community Planning/Public Health Access

- Collaboration between the Township of Esquimalt, the Division and the Health Authority will be key in determining how to support families experiencing vulnerabilities related to the *Social Determinants of Health* (e.g. poverty, housing, family stress).
- Consider the accessibility of new clinics for patients - proximity to transit stops, designated mobility parking and drop off zones, promoting volunteer driver networks, etc.

Public Relations

- Support the establishment of the emerging Primary Care Networks and/or new FP arrivals by imbedding the message of this positive transformation in primary care within the community, through applicable communication mediums, i.e. web and other media, community events and/or forums, etc.