

IDENTIFYING THE NEED

In some cases, the need for a physician may not be obvious at first and is not necessarily a simple replacement of the services provided by the departing physician. Some questions to consider when identifying your need:

- What physician services and coverage do you need provided?
- Is the need in one community only or does it include support / outreach to nearby rural communities?
- Use this opportunity to plan for short and long term service and coverage needs; is this a good time to make changes to how services are delivered and by whom?
- Does this position align with Interior Health's Physician Resource Plan? Do you know how to find this out, and how to recommend a change to the Plan if necessary?
- Good forums for discussion with Interior Health and the physicians in your community are your local Chief of Staff office and/or Division of Family Practice. They may bring applicable discussion topics forward to other groups such as the Local Medical Advisory Committee.

WHEN DO I START RECRUITING?

Ideally, recruitment planning begins as soon as you anticipate that there will be a future change in the physician complement in your community or an increase in need due to expanding population, aging population, etc. For example, conversations to Identify the Need can begin as soon as a physician begins talking about retiring in the next 1 to 2 years, and definitely when the physician announces his/her retirement date.

WHAT DOES "FULL TIME" MEAN?

The definition of "part time" or "full time" is unique to the physician group's practice and the services required in the community. It is relative to other physicians in the community or practice group and should consider the overall coverage needs and what the other physicians in the group are providing.

You should anticipate both short-term and long-term needs. For example will another physician in the group want to reduce his/her hours in the near future as he/she approaches retirement or parenthood?

When advertising for the vacant position, a robust practice description (see below for more details) is what supports the "part time" or "full time" requirement. This includes the number of physicians in the practice group, service locations and hours of coverage at each location, on-call requirements, and any other factors describing the amount of service required. Be as specific as you can, and keep in mind that a full time position can be described as FTE (Full Time Equivalent), percentage, or total hours per week,

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month, or year. Practice descriptions can change over time, so it is important to review the description even if it has been previously done.

WHY IS THERE A NEED?

Providing the “story” of your community’s vacancy to candidates during the recruitment process can support recruitment by reducing uncertainty about the position. It is important to describe why the vacancy exists in a way that candidates will understand. (e.g. retirement after 20 years in this practice)

ABOUT THE PRACTICE

DEFINING THE PRACTICE

The details of the position or medical practice should be determined before recruitment efforts begin. This includes the following types of factors:

- Description of clinical services provided (for some types of Specialists, this may include identifying specific procedures that will be performed)
- Service locations such as clinic, hospital and any others
- Scheduled access to specialty equipment or operating room (if relevant)
- On-call schedule
- Vacation coverage amongst the practice group
- Work-hour flexibility
- Working relationships with inter-disciplinary team members
- Working relationships with other physician groups (e.g. participation in collaborative care)
- Access to eligible physician compensation programs (e.g. Rural Locum Program, Rural Retention, Medical On Call Availability Program)
- Clinic overhead arrangements or office agreements including responsibility for management of clinic staff

For all Specialist Physician positions, a Physician Impact Analysis with Interior Health is required to ensure the physician practice description complements the rest of the medical team in the present as well as for the long-term. The practice description is written after the Physician Impact Analysis has been completed and approved by Interior Health. Please contact your Executive Medical Director to determine if a Physician Impact Analysis is required and to provide support through the process.

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PRACTICE DESCRIPTION DETAILS

Writing a clear and accurate practice description is an important first step to recruiting the candidate best suited to your community's identified need. It should outline the clinical service delivery details of the practice and summarize the skills and abilities that are required for the position.

The most important section of the practice description is the "Practice details" section because it provides a snapshot of the role and the practice. Given how competitive the physician market is, it is critical to describe the positive aspects of the practice such as highly collegial group, interdisciplinary team approach, new equipment, electronic medical record, etc. so that potential candidates can accurately picture what it would be like to work in your practice.

An accurate practice description is important to attract the right potential candidates, ensure that they understand the responsibilities of the role, and make certain that precise and appealing information is included in the job posting, ad and marketing campaign.

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION COMPENSATION

Compensation information is another important detail to provide in the practice description. When you can provide accurate and realistic compensation information upfront to potential candidates, it could save you significant time and effort over the recruitment process with candidates who are not a match with your practice from the financial perspective.

Compensation information included in the job posting could be summarized as a range, an approximate dollar value or could be a specific dollar value if the compensation is contract-based. Where fee for service is the compensation model, we have demonstrated success when we have separately provided potential candidates with a detailed compensation projection in one-page or less that matches up the service requirements of the position with the compensation per service. This type of projection provides a significant amount of assurance to potential candidates that they will be able to meet their target level of compensation within your practice and community. If the position has potential for growth, it is important to identify this opportunity since some candidates may be looking for this.

In designated rural communities where physicians are eligible for additional compensation and support on an annual basis through Rural Programs, these should be identified within the Compensation section of the posting since this can enhance the attractiveness of the position. This may include a set number of days support through the Rural Locum Program and additional financial incentives such as Rural Retention % Premium and Flat Fee, and Rural Continuing Medical Education (RCME) Fund, as well as others.

If there are any additional one-time financial incentives to facilitate recruitment, including this information can enhance the number of candidates interested in the position.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The majority of physicians consider the lifestyle opportunities in a new community in their decision to move to that community. Therefore, the marketing of the lifestyle opportunities available in your BC Interior community plays a critical role in the overall marketing of your physician vacancy. Keep in mind that many candidates who are searching physician vacancy postings are not currently living in BC and therefore do not know the great things about living in your area.

In addition to promoting their practice, physicians can be fantastic community ambassadors. Consider why you and your family choose to live, work, and stay in your community, and be ready to share your experiences with candidates and their families.

Communities that get actively involved in “selling” their advantages, and who maintain communication with both their recruiting physicians and Interior Health (e.g. Local Health Administrators), are often more successful in their long-term physician recruitment efforts.

To find out how your community can be an active partner in physician recruitment, explore our ideas under Section 4 “Getting Started”, in the Community Engagement Manual posted on www.betterhere.ca.