

March 23, 2020

To : Prime Minister of Canada, Premiers of every province, Ministers of Health, Presidents of Universities and Deans of Medical Schools, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, Council of Family Physicians of Canada, federal and provincial Chief Medical Officers.

Cc: major Canadian media outlets across Canada

RE: Increase Medical Residency funding and reduce barriers to Medical Licensing now to address COVID-19

With strong leadership we can act quickly to help Canada's healthcare system to respond to the escalating COVID-19 Crisis and to build our resilience for the future. Canada has over 2,000 medical graduates who have graduated from Canadian medical schools, or graduated from international medical schools (many being fully qualified physicians in their country of origin) and passed the Medical Council of Canada examinations which prove they have the knowledge, medical-decision making skills and clinical skills of a Canadian medical school graduate. These graduates have not received residency positions in 2020 and are available immediately to move into post-graduate training jobs as medical residents. We also have many Canadians who studied abroad who are working as fully licensed physicians in other countries, who could practice in Canada now. We need to safely remove barriers to their registration. Here is how we can immediately bring more qualified doctors into the Canadian health care system:

- ✓ Increase First Year Medical Residency positions.
 - Immediately release a special CaRMS match to increase the number of PGY-1 residency positions to currently unmatched medical graduates from Canadian and international medical schools from the 2020 match.
 - Do not allow any new foreign visa trainees into Canada , effective immediately.

- Fund new PGY-1 residency positions for these Canadian citizens and permanent residents from emergency federal and provincial funds, to (1) replace scheduled PGY-1 visa-trainees who will no longer be able to safely enter Canada for their residency position, and (2) increase the number of PGY-1 residency positions currently funded by the provinces.
- ✓ Increase registration of Immigrant Physicians.
 - Work with provincial colleges of physicians and surgeons to grant temporary provisional licenses to immigrant physicians who are fully qualified in their country of origin.
- ✓ Bring home fully qualified Canadian doctors.
 - Work with provincial colleges of physicians and surgeons to bring back Canadian physicians currently practicing in recognised jurisdictions, including the UK, Ireland, Australia and the United States, by removing registration barriers, especially in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, and Emergency Medicine which are stretched and under-resourced because of the COVID pandemic.

Sincerely yours,

Rosemary Pawliuk

President of Society for Canadians Studying Medicine Abroad

Tel: (604) 541-4747

E-Mail: socasma@outlook.com

www.socasma.com

For media interviews in French: Carole Lafrenière (613) 807-0776