

## Pillar 2

### Attract



To ensure a sustainable health system for the future, focused efforts will be made to maintain Alberta's competitiveness, including wage and tax advantages, to attract and recruit the right health care workers from Canada and abroad.

#### Pillar Objectives

##### 2.1

Increase opportunities for internationally educated health care workers

##### 2.2

Attract and recruit health care workers to rural, remote, and underserved areas

##### 2.3

Provide fair and competitive compensation



#### Actions to Date

##### **Increased compensation for essential clinical workers:**

Alberta's government has announced significant increases in compensation for key workers, including:

- Average increase in physician compensation of 4.3% over three years
- 4.25% pay increases over four years for nurses
- Pay increases of 4.25% over four years for workers under the Health Sciences Association of Alberta collective agreement
- \$22 million investment in standardization and improved compensation for certified health care aides.

**Recruitment incentives for in-demand physicians:** AHS has increased physician recruitment incentives up to \$100,000 for critical positions.

**Career pathways for international medical graduates:** The new Alberta Clinical and Surgical Assistant Program provides an alternative career path for international medical graduates.

**Targeted international recruitment campaigns:** AHS has an active and ongoing international recruitment campaign targeting health care workers from the US, UK, Jamaica, Philippines, India, South Africa, and Australia.

**Rural Capacity Investment Funds:** Government established Rural Capacity Investment Funds through recent collective agreements, designed to support rural retention, recruitment, and relocation initiatives.

**Streamlined credential recognition:** Alberta brought in the *Fair Registration Practices Act* to collaboratively work with Alberta's regulatory bodies to optimize the registration and credential assessment processes for workers from outside of Alberta.

**Nurse navigators and consolidated information portal for internationally educated nurses:** A new online platform consolidates information on licensing and provides dedicated 'navigators' to help nurses from other countries go through the process of having their credentials evaluated and recognized in Alberta.

**Bridging programs for internationally educated nurses:** The Ministry of Advanced Education is spending \$3.5 million in 2022-23 to expand educational opportunities for internationally educated nurses so they can more quickly begin providing care in Alberta.

**Nurse practitioner collective bargaining:** AHS is working with the Alberta Union of Nurse Practitioners to establish a collective agreement that will provide more stability and competitive compensation.

**Agreement with the Philippines to streamline nurse recruitment:** In October 2022, the Alberta government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Philippines to streamline the process for recruiting registered nurses and licensed practical nurses trained in that country to come here.

**EMS staffing changes to meet service demands:** The province provided a one-year exemption from current staffing requirements to allow emergency medical responders to staff more ambulances and work alongside other paramedics to respond to more types of calls.



#### Future Actions

**Dedicated immigration pathways:** Alberta will explore options to develop a dedicated and simplified pathway within the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program for international in-demand health care workers.

**AHS provincial recruitment initiatives:** As part of its comprehensive AHS health workforce strategy, AHS will build on existing work to develop and implement recruitment-specific actions to help grow the number of workers in Alberta, primarily in acute care and in rural areas.

**Focused EMS recruitment strategies:** The AHS provincial workforce strategy will have focused actions to enhance its approach to recruiting new EMS workers to minimize geographic disparities.

**Targeted rural physician recruitment support:** Alberta Health and the Alberta Medical Association will work together to identify new strategies to support recruitment and retention of physicians practising in underserved and rural areas.

**Reduced barriers for recognition of credentials from other provinces:** The province will proclaim and implement regulations for the *Labour Mobility Act* to standardize and streamline credential recognition processes.

**Streamlined process for assessing international medical graduates:** Alberta Health will work with the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta to explore new licensing routes for eligible graduates of international medical schools.

**Reduced barriers to entry for nurses from other countries:** The Ministry of Skilled Trades and Professions is working with the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta to fund and pilot a new approach for assessing the qualifications of internationally educated nurses.

**Improved recruitment and screening for internationally educated nurses:** Alberta Health will work with AHS to ensure the mechanisms and tools are in place to be deliberate, targeted, and successful in international recruitment efforts, with a specific focus on internationally educated nurses.

**Building community capacity:** The province will provide funding to communities through the Alberta Settlement and Integration program to build their capacity to welcome and retain newcomers.