

January 17, 2022

**Resolution 2022-01:** Support for the Expansion of NOSM to address the urgent need for physicians in Northern Ontario.

Background:

There is a desperate shortage of physicians and health care professionals in Northwestern Ontario. The global pandemic has put a microscope on the inadequacies and vulnerabilities present in the health care system in northern communities with limited access to physicians and specialists. Northwestern Ontario is a vast geographic region, and many smaller communities are not equipped with their own hospitals or trained professionals. Therefore, residents from many municipalities must travel long distances to access health care services. Procuring and retaining skilled physicians that can respond to the unique and multifaceted health care needs of Northern communities is of vital importance and will translate to lives saved.

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM), along with Lakehead and Laurentian universities, developed a unique and successful curriculum that resulted in highly trained physicians and specialists. A large portion of students complete their training in rural communities in Northwestern Ontario and many choose to stay and develop their practice. NOSM has proven highly successful at providing doctors for Northern Ontario.

Recommendation:

WHEREAS that the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association recognizes the urgent need for physicians in Northern Ontario as it is experiencing a shortage of trained physicians and specialist physicians;

AND WHEREAS one in eight Northern residents do not have access to a family doctor and many must travel long distances to access health care services representing the failure of health care in Northern Ontario;

AND WHEREAS communities in Northern Ontario require access to equitable health care, especially underserved rural, Indigenous, and Francophone communities;

AND WHEREAS the expansion of physician training at NOSM is a way to encourage more physicians to come and work in Northern communities and care must be taken to encourage newly trained physicians to stay and contribute to the health care crisis in the North;

AND WHEREAS although highly successful at providing doctors for Northern Ontario, NOSM has fewer health care professionals' spots than the rest of Ontario medical schools and it would take at minimum, five NOSM graduating classes at sixty-four physicians per year to address the current shortage.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT with the announcement of NOSM becoming a free-standing University, the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association requests that the Provincial Government and

the Ontario Medical Association immediately expand NOSM's capacity to meet the needs of Northern Ontario, with added MD positions, Residency positions (PGY 1, 3, and 4) and clinical teaching funding to the Northern Ontario Academic Medicine Association.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, Minister of Colleges and Universities Jill Dunlop, Minister of Health Christine Elliot, MPP Victor Fedeli, The Leaders of the Opposition Parties, Ontario Medical Association, Northern School of Medicine, Northern Ontario Academic Medicine Association, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM), all Clerks and CAOs of NOMA.

Moved By: Wendy Brunetta

Seconded By: Rick Dumas

CARRIED



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President

Cc: Hon. Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities  
Hon. Christine Elliot, Minister of Health  
Hon. Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation & Trade  
Hon. Steven Del Duca, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party  
Hon. Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Ontario NDP Party  
Ontario Medical Association  
Northern School of Medicine  
Northern Ontario Academic Medicine Association  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities  
All Clerks and CAOs of NOMA