



AIMGA NEWSLETTER

Edition 8
June 2023



NEWSLETTER FEATURES

- Deidre and Rossalia's anniversary at AIMGA
- Montana First Nation Site Visit and other past and upcoming events
- An overview of AIMGA's residency matches from 2020-2023

DEIDRE AND ROSSALIA'S ANNIVERSARY AT AIMGA!



Congratulations on Deidre Lake and Rossalia Videlova's work anniversary! We are thrilled to celebrate a milestone within our organization as we commemorate the remarkable 5-year work anniversary of our Executive Director, Deidre Lake and an outstanding 10-year work anniversary of our Advisor and Program Manager, Rossalia Videlova!

Over the 5 years, Deidre's dedication, leadership, and commitment to our mission have propelled AIMGA to new heights. It is safe to say that AIMGA would not be at the stage it is today without her contributions. Under her strategic guidance and unwavering dedication, our organization has blossomed into a vibrant community of empowered healthcare professionals, achieving remarkable growth at every turn. Her exceptional leadership and dedication have helped us build a strong foundation for our community. Deidre's ability to navigate complex challenges and her advocacy for our members have left an impact on our community. Here's to many more years of continued success under Deidre's outstanding leadership.

From the start of AIMGA, Rossalia has been an integral part of our journey, playing a role in shaping our organization into what it is today. Her dedication, expertise, and commitment have been the driving force behind AIMGA's success. Rossalia's incredible work ethic and genuine passion for assisting our members have earned her the admiration and respect of all who have had the pleasure of working with her. Her kindness, compassion, and willingness to go above and beyond to help others have made a lasting impact on our community. Rossalia's guidance and support have been an instrument in the growth and development of countless aspiring IMGs, and AIMGA simply wouldn't be where it is today without her remarkable contributions. Here's to a decade of remarkable achievements and to many more to come!

As we extend our heartfelt congratulations to Deidre and Rossalia on this remarkable achievement, we want to express our deepest gratitude for their outstanding service. Their commitments to AIMGA has been extraordinary, and their contributions have touched the lives of numerous individuals. We are immensely fortunate to have Deidre and Rossalia as a part of our AIMGA team. Long Live AIMGA!

MONTANA FIRST NATION SITE VISIT



Tuesday, May 16th, 2023, n=37 attendees

On Tuesday, May 16th, 37 IMGs from Edmonton and Calgary travelled to Montana First Nation to build on the partnership between AIMGA and the Montana First Nation. During the site visit, IMGs learned more about the Montana First Nation, Indigenous culture, and their healthcare needs. Our members gained invaluable insights through various activities, including enjoying meals together, touring the healthcare facility, discovering food cultivation techniques in the greenhouses, and witnessing a captivating traditional Powwow demonstration. This experience offered a multitude of learning opportunities for our members. For instance, prior to this event, only 29% of attendees rated their awareness of Indigenous populations in Canada as “good” after having completed online modules. However, following the immersive on-site educational day, the impact was substantial. A remarkable 88% of participants who attended the workshop and engaged in the day’s activities indicated a significant improvement in their awareness. Specifically, 41% rated their awareness as good, while an impressive 47% rated it as excellent after attending the workshop. AIMGA will be providing further education and site visits through this cherished partnership. We believe indigenous populations have faced much discrimination across healthcare and our aim is to foster respect and understanding among newcomer IMGs when it comes to First Nations people. Over 70% indicated that their visit significantly changed their perspectives in engaging with Indigenous patients in future.



“This visit offered a great opportunity to observe closely indigenous culture and way of life. I am more aware of the challenges indigenous communities face in various aspects of life. Thank you AIMGA for organizing this visit.”

“I’m glad I joined this event. As an IMG, I felt warmly welcomed and developed a strong motivation to actively participate in enhancing Indigenous health.”

AIMGA'S VISIT TO ANTI-RACIST ARRAY & STRATEGIC PLAN LAUNCH



Tuesday, May 9th 2023, n=8 attendees

AIMGA celebrated the City of Calgary's Strategic plan launch on Tuesday, May 9th from 11:00am-12:00pm. IMGs visited the display together and got a presentation from the City of Calgary's Anti-Racism Program Coordinator. It was a wonderful networking and educational opportunity to have coffee together, connect with other IMGs, AIMGA staff, and other community partners to discuss anti-racism focus areas and how they align with AIMGA's own initiatives. This event allowed us to rally together to come up with some ways that we can promote a racially-just Calgary, starting with our own organization. Attendees enjoyed themselves and this event sparked conversations about future work that still needs to be done. After the event, one IMG said, "Going forward, I believe all IMGs should be educated on anti-racism strategies upon arrival". This event has forged a relationship between IMGs and the City of Calgary's Anti-Racism Action Committee and has already begun to fuel talks about additional training and educational opportunities for AIMGA members to learn more about how to advocate and foster inclusiveness.

IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION AND UPDATES: HEARING FROM THE EXPERTS



Friday, May 19th 2023, n=73 attendees

In alignment with our "Living Well with AIMGA" newsletter on immunization (April volume), as well as in preparation for AIMGA's upcoming booster campaign, this event was offered to our members to learn more about the latest information on COVID boosters and other vaccinations. The Health and Wellness Team hosted local experts, including Dr. Elaina Castillo (University of Calgary), Dr. Jia Hu (19 To Zero), and Dr. Annalee Coakley (Mosaic Refugee Health Clinic) during this event to share their expertise and findings. Some of the topics touched upon were: booster vaccines, vaccines and pregnancy, routine vs non-routine vaccines, and other important must-knows in this field.

Click here to the Newsletter: <https://aimga.ca/healthhub/newsletter/april-newsletter/>

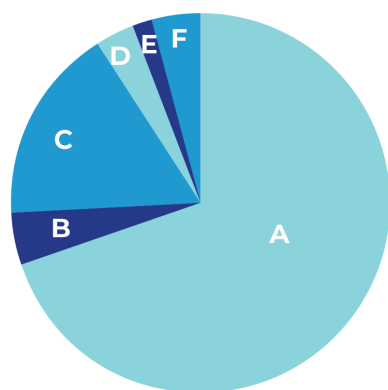


"Looking forward to more presentations like that. It was a good learning session!"

MEMBER STATS

AIMGA has 2,000+ active members across Canada

Canadian Provinces



N=2,026

A: Alberta: 43.48% (881)

B: Saskatchewan: 2.71% (55)

C: Ontario: 10.37% (210)

D: British Columbia: 2.02% (41)

E: Quebec: 1% (20)

F: Manitoba: 2.57% (52)

AIMGA has been attracting members pre-arrival. Total number of pre-arrivals: 203

Top 10 Countries of Origin



103 Total Countries

1 602 Nigeria	2 286 Pakistan	3 206 India	4 85 Canada	5 62 Egypt
6 60 Iran	7 57 Bangladesh	8 47 Philippines	9 37 China	10 36 Sudan

Top 10 Specialties



1 1156 Family Medicine / GP	2 122 Internal Medicine	3 88 Obstetrics	4 86 Pediatrics	5 47 Public Health
6 45 Surgery	7 43 Anaesthesia	8 35 Radiology	9 29 Ophthalmology	10 26 Psychiatry

CAREER TRANSITION PROGRAM - FALL 2023



The Career Transition Program (CTP) for IMGs has been made possible with funds from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to assist IMGs who are considering an alternative pathway into the Canadian health care system as a short or long-term career goal.

The focus of the Career Transition Program is to:

- Increase IMGs overall knowledge and awareness of alternative career pathways through a series of employment-related workshops,
- Provide IMGs with the tools necessary to manage their own career path;
- Provide IMGs with an opportunity to meet with fellow IMGs already in alternative careers and to obtain practical advice and feedback from employment coaches and mentors.

Interested applicants must:

- Be an AIMGA member in good standing
- Be able to complete 80% of the program, which is equivalent to two absences
- Be committed to seeking employment or enrolling in an education program related to their alternative career path within the next six months.

The new CTP program will be open to Canadian citizens as well as Permanent Residents in September 2023. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact, Edna Ramirez Cerino at edna@aimga.ca or 587-391-9453

“Grateful for all the help and support AIMGA has provided. From the support with exams to residency preparation to the CTP program to help prepare for life beyond licensure. AIMGA has made me feel supported all the way. They made embracing Canada as my home much easier. Thank you AIMGA and sponsors for your tireless efforts!”

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY ON AIMGA MEMBERS WHO WORKED AS CONTACT TRACERS FOR ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES

Co-authors: Nashit Chowdhury and Deidre Lake



Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic warranted a sudden need for more skilled healthcare professionals to combat the various issues that affected Albertans in multiple ways. One critical role that needed skilled and culturally competent healthcare professionals is the contact tracer position with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to track those with potential exposure to COVID-19 and advise them to quarantine and follow the recommended public health measures to limit the transmission. International Medical Graduates (IMGs) members of AIMGA have played a critical role to support AHS in addressing the need. About 80 AIMGA members were hired as contact tracers across the pandemic for varying durations. We wanted to conduct follow up with the IMGs who worked in this role to see whether or not they were able to leverage this position into another health-related role within AHS or elsewhere. This article highlights our findings. As we reach almost the end of the pandemic many of the IMGs in those positions have moved to other positions and some have been applying to ones. Others are either studying for their licensure or have enrolled in a program.

Methods:

A short online survey questionnaire was created with questions regarding their previous and current employment status, job titles, and wages and open-ended questions regarding their experience with the contact tracing job and support needed from AIMGA in the current situation. The survey was sent to the 76 AIMGA members we know have worked as contact tracers during the pandemic. We received 71 (93.42%) responses. We merged the data with our Career Transition Program (CTP) participants' data to see whether there was any difference between the CTP participants and others. We provided descriptive statistics for relevant measures. We also summarized the responses to the open-ended questions.

Results:

a. Analysis of the quantitative measures:

A total of 71 IMGs responded to the survey. The majority of participants (83.10%, n=59) worked as contact tracers full-time, while a few worked part-time (1.41%, n=1) or casually (15.49%, n=11). Nearly half of the participants (47.17%, n=25) worked as contact tracers as their first job in Canada. Regarding the current employment status, 54.93% (n=39) were employed, 12.68% (n=9) were students, and 32.39% (n=23) were unemployed (see figure 1). Among the students, seven mentioned being enrolled in a post-graduate diploma or master's program and three indicated solely preparing for licensing exams.

Was the position of contact tracer your first healthcare job in Canada? (Figure 1)

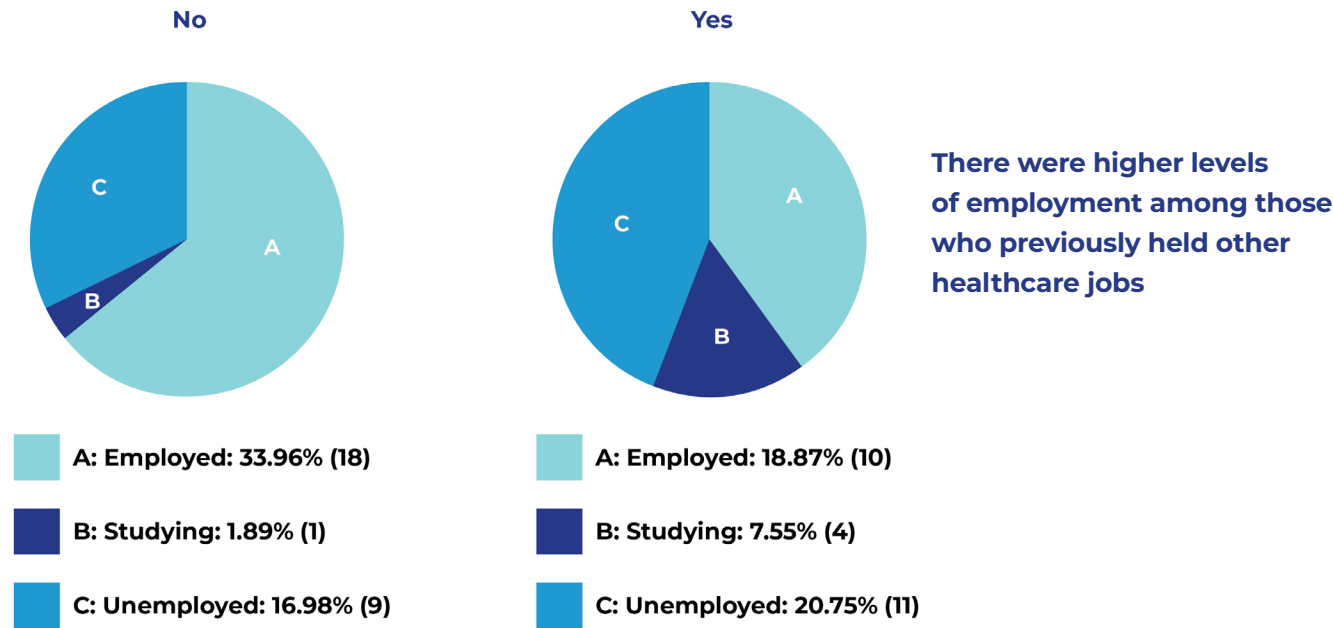


Figure 1. Current employment status

Among those who had a previous job before getting the contact tracer job in Canada, 33.96% (n=18) were currently employed, 1.89% (n=1) were students, and 16.98% (n=9) were unemployed. For those who had the contact tracer job as their first job in Canada, 18.87% (n=10) were currently employed, 7.55% (n=4) were students, and 20.75% (n=11) were unemployed.

Did you complete the CTP Program prior to obtaining this position? (Figure 2)

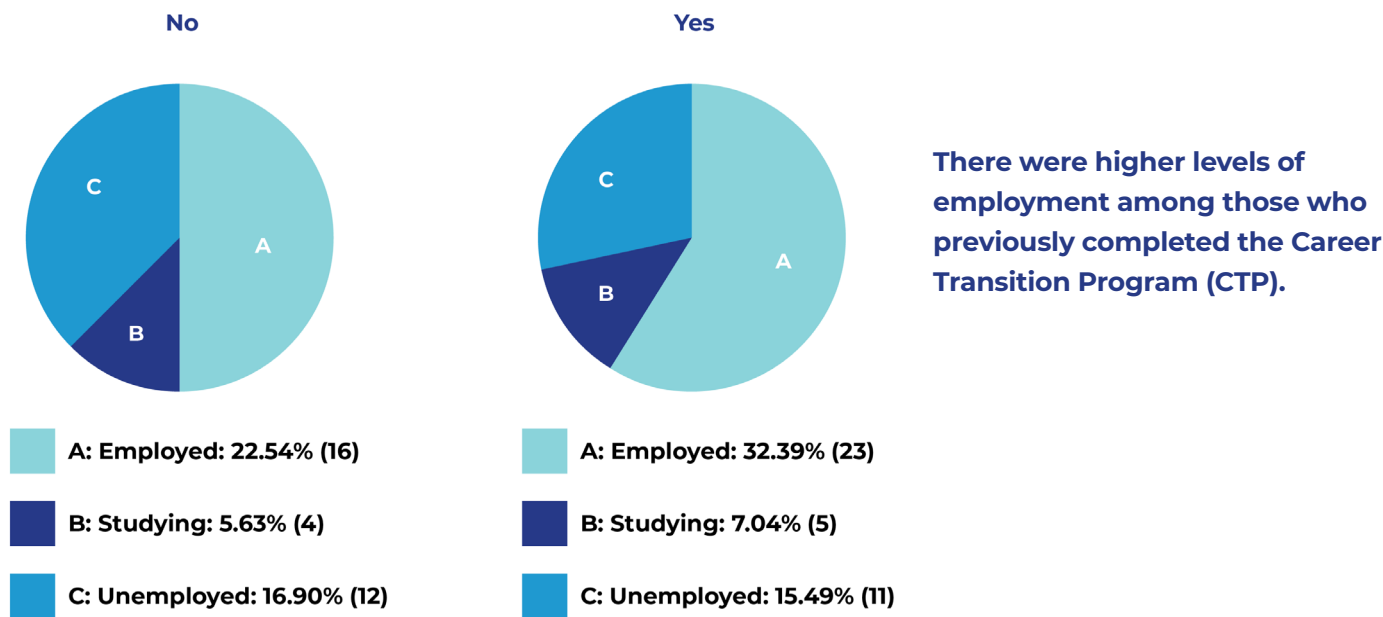


Figure 2. Comparison of employment status among those who completed CTP vs those who did not

In terms of completion of the CTP program, 32.39% (n=23) of those who had previously completed the program were currently employed, 7.04% (n=5) were students, and 15.49% (n=11) were unemployed. For those who did not complete the CTP program, 22.54% (n=16) were currently employed, 5.63% (n=4) were students, and 16.90% (n=12) were unemployed (see figure 2).

Job Type	Job Titles	
Full/partially licensed clinical positions	Clinical Assistant	7
	Resident Physician	6
	Family Physician	6
	Community Pediatrician	1
	Clinical Consultant	1
	Total	21
Alternative jobs (Research)	Research Assistant	2
	Total	2
Alternative jobs (Technical)	Sleep Clinician	1
	Medical Device Reprocessing Technician	1
	Diagnostic Sonographer	1
	Total	3
Alternative careers (Other)	Service Worker/Contract job	2
	Physician Assistant	2
	Medical Coder/Underwriter	2
	Infection Control Practitioner	2
	Healthcare Aide	2
	Holistic nutritional consultant, Reiki Master	1
	Brand Ambassador	1
	Ability Management Consultant	1
	Total	13

Figure 3. Areas of employment for those currently employed

The current job types of the participants include fully/partially licensed physician (53.85%, n=21), alternative jobs in research (5.13%, n=2), alternative jobs in a technical field (7.69%, n=3), and other alternative careers such as medical office assistant, infection control practitioners, etc. (33.33%, n=13) (see figure 3). The median hourly wages for those in the fully/partially licensed physician job type was \$28.50 (ranges from \$24 to \$33), \$25 for alternative research jobs (range not applicable), \$25.50 for technical jobs (ranges from \$25 to \$26), and \$21.43 for other alternative careers (ranges from \$16 to \$54.55).

b. Analysis of the open-ended questions

Participants expressed their gratitude for AIMGA's CTP and how it helped them prepare for employment in the Canadian job market, particularly with AHS including the contact tracer and the following employment positions.

“AIMGA prepared me to effectively maximize the opportunity to work as a contact tracer via the CTP program. I’m certain the skills learned through the CTP program and my previous role as an AHS contact tracer will make me an asset in my next job. I plan to book a session with one of the AIMGA advisors to assist me with my job search. Thank you”

“AIMGA played an important role in my career transition by providing CTP and supporting throughout my professional journey in Canada.”

“Thank you AIMGA for CTP Program and all the support.”

Other testimonials also mentioned how various supports from AIMGA helped those secure employment.

“Thank you for the great support AIMGA provided, in helping us get the opportunity to work at AHS as Case Investigators and Contact Tracers. It was a great work experience and allowed me to learn new skills that have been very useful for new job opportunities.”

“I really appreciate the opportunity given to me through AIMGA to work as a contact tracer. I gained a wealth of experience which I put into use in my present job, it was quite a privilege to work at the forefront of the fight against COVID. Thank you AIMGA!!”

“I am always thankful to AIMGA for its guidance and mentorship for helping me understand and navigate North American work culture.”

A couple of participants expressed their satisfaction with the contact tracer positions and showed interest to continue working for AHS.

“I would like to work again with AHS, as in any position. AHS was the best place to work at. I was laid off in August 2021.”

“AHS contact tracing job provided me financial stability in a time of crisis.”

Other responses included a desire to provide follow-up supports to members seeking employment and future referrals to potential employment opportunities as many felt they wouldn't have been considered for the position had it not been for AIMGA's community partnership with AHS at this time.

Discussion:

The results indicate that working as a contact tracer for AHS during the pandemic might have provided better employment opportunities for IMGs in Canada. However, a considerable number of IMGs remain unemployed, even after this experience with AHS. It is noteworthy that 47.17% of participants worked as contact tracers as their first job in Canada, indicating the importance of this opportunity for newly arrived IMGs to enter the Canadian healthcare system.

IMGs who were employed reported a wide range of positions from licensure to alternative career pathways. The wage substantially varied in the alternative career positions (\$16-\$54.50). The higher paying positions included those requiring specific skillsets such as Infection Control Practitioner, Sonographer, Research Assistant, etc.

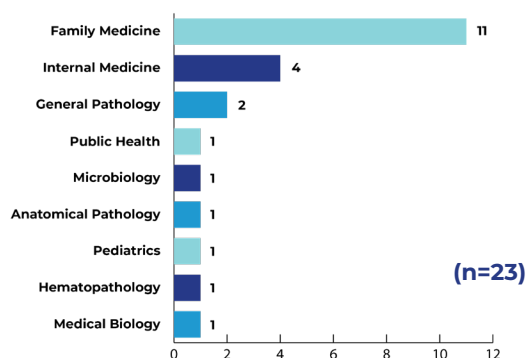
Interestingly, the study found that IMGs who completed the CTP were more likely to be employed compared to those who did not complete the program. This suggests that the CTP program might have helped IMGs to understand the Canadian work environment and navigate the Canadian healthcare labour market and to leverage the opportunity as opposed to those who did not take part in the CTP program. This understanding is further supported by the testimonials provided by some participants who participated in the CTP programs.

AN OVERVIEW OF RESIDENCY MATCHES FROM 2020-2023

2020 (N=23)

23 residency matches; self-reported

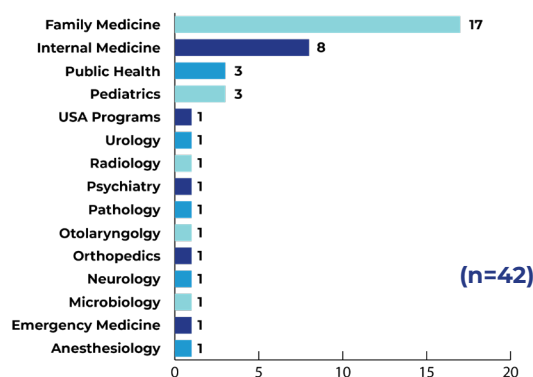
Alberta	14
Ontario	5
British Columbia	2
Quebec	1
Nova Scotia	1



2021 (N=42)

42 residency matches; self-reported

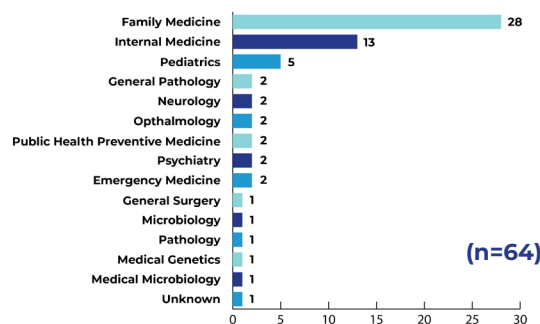
Alberta	14
Ontario	15
Manitoba	3
Saskatchewan	2
Quebec	1
USA	6
Unknown	1



2022 (N=64)

64 residency matches; self-reported

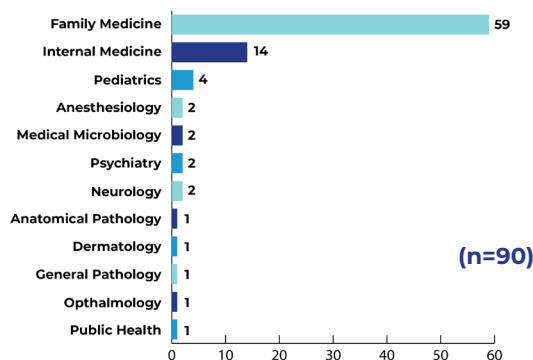
Alberta	32
Ontario	16
Manitoba	3
Saskatchewan	7
British Columbia	1
USA	4
Unknown	1



2023 (N=90)

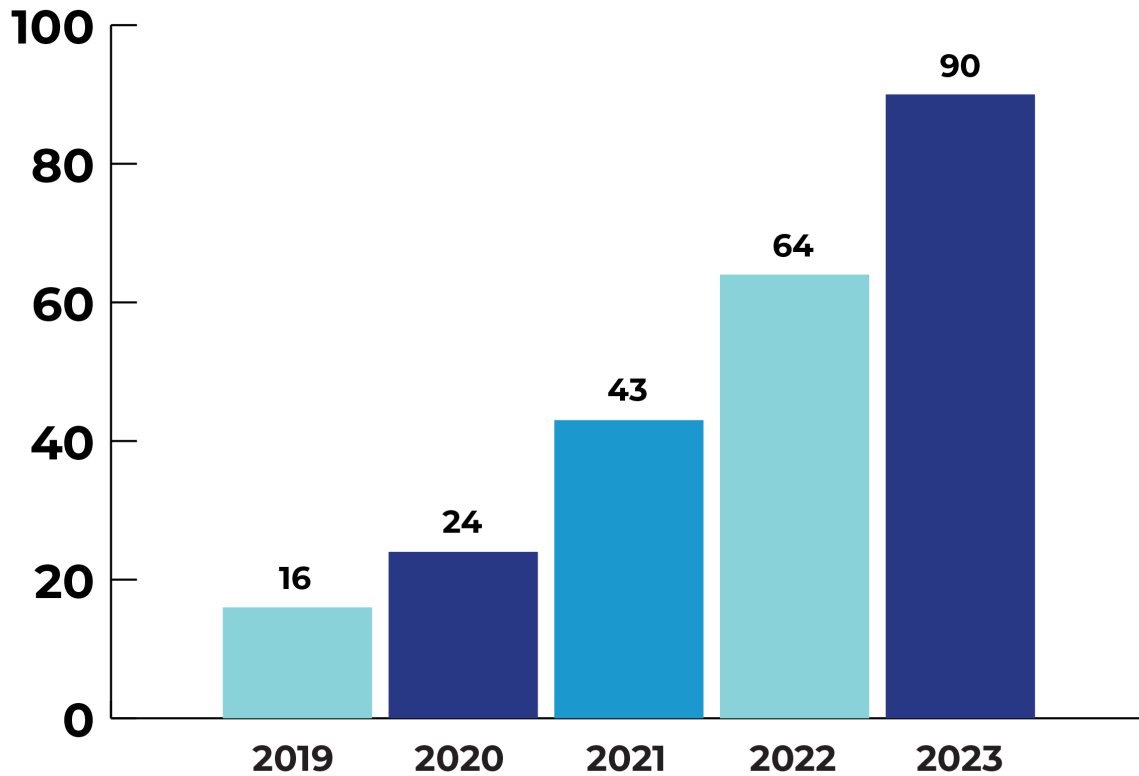
90 residency matches; self-reported

Alberta	48
Ontario	21
Manitoba	6
Saskatchewan	5
British Columbia	6
Nova Scotia	3
USA	1

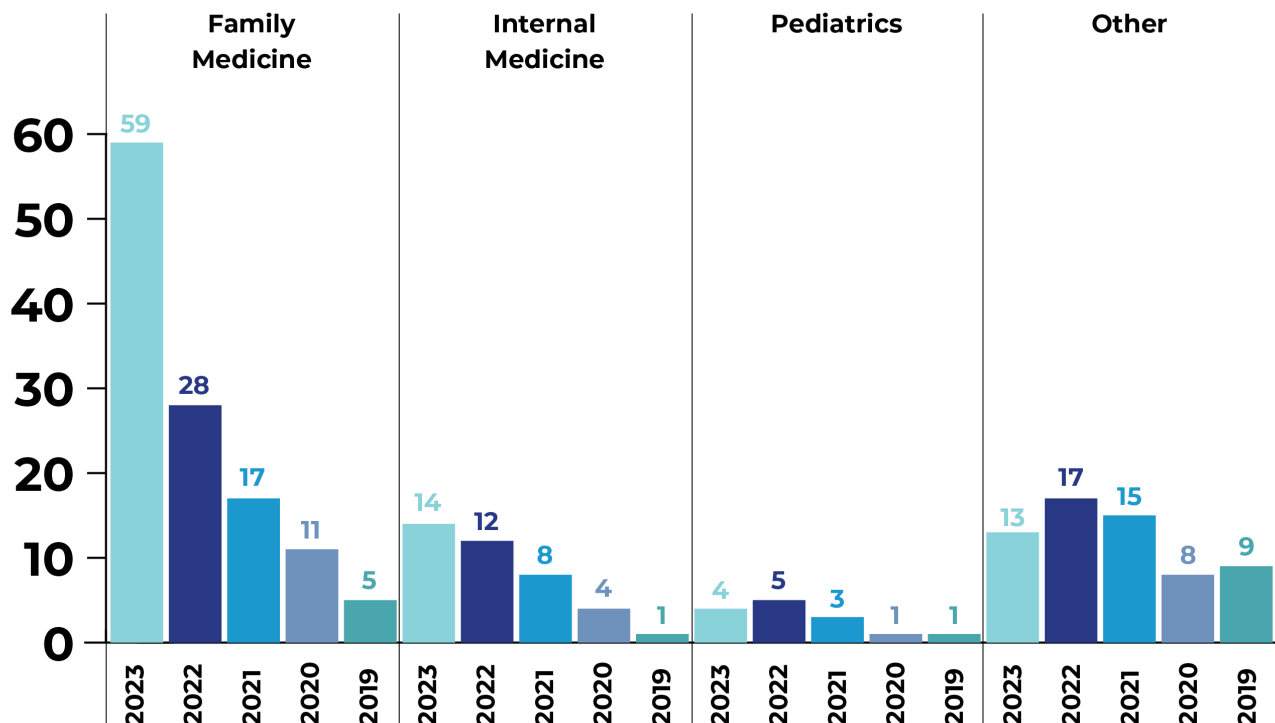


Residency Match Comparison 2019 to 2023: Overall

Self-reported Data: Numbers may be higher than shown



Residency Match Comparison 2019 to 2023: Specialty



UPCOMING EVENTS

Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services Training

Offered to professionals working with victims of sexual violence to facilitate more services for recent victims.

[Click here for more information!](#)

Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA) Alberta Annual Conference 2023

Saturday, June 24, 2023 | Cost will vary

Registration Deadline: May 31, 2023

This is the second annual conference hosted by APPNA Alberta Chapter. The conference is open to all physicians from North America and across the globe. Attendees will participate in one-day event which features accredited continuing-medical-education (CME) sessions, tailored to meet family physicians as well as specialists. The CME program is the key highlight of this conference and is designed carefully to meet the educational needs of the attending physicians. The program will provide the most recent and updated information on common medical conditions as well as educational sessions surrounding physician leadership in medicine and better patient-physician communication.

[Click here for more information!](#)

NEWCOMER RESOURCE

Welcome to Canada:

Moving to Canada is an exciting opportunity, but also a great challenge. The publications on this page can help you find what to expect in your first few weeks of coming to Canada.

[Click here to visit the website!](#)

AIMGA ANNOUNCEMENTS

NAC OSCE Preparation Programs

Our NAC OSCE Preparation Programs start the week of June. We are adding additional classes to accommodate those on the waitlist.

To register, please send proof of NAC OSCE registration to **Roman** at roman@aimga.ca. He will email details regarding additional classes.

Patient Navigator Program

This program is designed to bridge international medical graduates (IMGs) into the area of patient navigation, health promotion, health facilitation, and community.

Applications are being accepted. Program starts in September. **Contact Edna** at edna@aimga.ca for details.

Clinical Engagement Program

AIMGA is pleased to offer its Clinical Engagement Series facilitated by Dr. Peter Hamilton. These sessions will provide an opportunity to engage in clinical discussions and increase knowledge.

[Click here to register!](#)

Keeping 'In the Know' with IMG Experts in Dermatology

June 8, 2023 | 6:30pm-8:00pm

In this session, you will hear from expert IMGs who have successfully pursued Dermatology in the Canadian context. They'll discuss the various skin conditions and latest information around dermatology.

[Click here to register!](#)

AIMGA Edmonton Office

AIMGA's Edmonton office is moving to the 10th floor effective July 1, 2023.

New Member Orientation

Part 1: June 6 | 6:00-7:00pm

Part 2: June 13 | 6:00-7:30pm

Part 3: June 20 | 6:00-7:30pm

Part 4: June 27 | 6:00-7:00pm

[Click here to register!](#)



The right **person** in the right **seat** at the right **time**. We are here to assist at every step in the licensure process from application to integration.

OFFICE LOCATIONS:

AIMGA CALGARY

Crescent Centre
Suite 202, 1409 Edmonton Trail NE
Calgary, AB T2E 3K8

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www.aimga.ca

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