

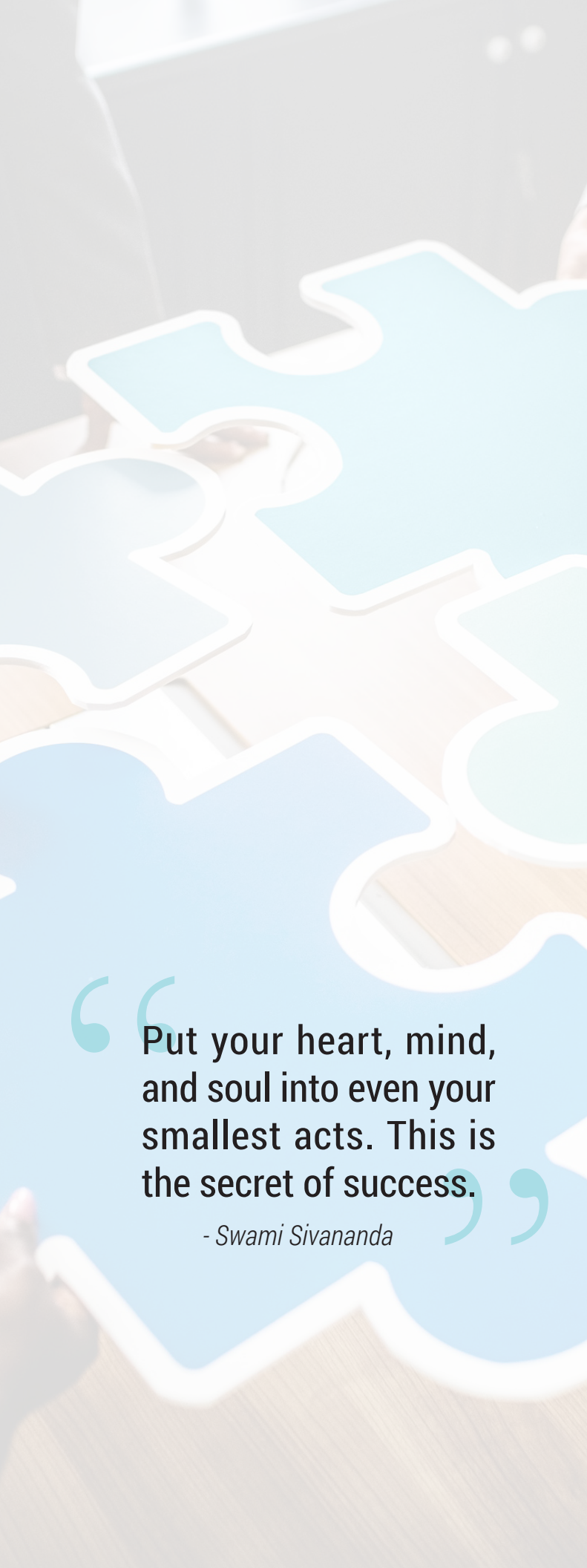


Alberta International Medical Graduates Association

2018 AIMGA ANNUAL REPORT



INSPIRING MINDS & CREATING PATHWAYS



Put your heart, mind,
and soul into even your
smallest acts. This is
the secret of success.

- Swami Sivananda

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mohammad Lasker	Chair
Syed Ahmed	Vice Chair
Sukhi Pritam	Treasurer
Tanvir Turin Chowdhury	Director
Cristina Rosca	Director
Haydar Baban	Director

STAFF

Deidre Lake	Executive Director
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AIMGA CALGARY

Rossalia Videlova	Program Manager
Miroslav Reljic	Employment Coordinator
Cindy Cheung	Communications Coordinator
Mary-Anne Steiner	Program Administrator

AIMGA EDMONTON

Kim Powers	Program Manager
Mahenaz Layton	Program Coordinator
Monica Spencer	Program Administrator

About us

WHO WE ARE

AIMGA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the successful integration of International Medical Graduates (IMGs). We have 750+ members.

CORE VALUES

Being responsive to the needs of our members, working together, having a professional and friendly attitude, delivering quality programs. Essentially, we keep our members' best interests at the heart of what we do.

VISION & PURPOSE

Improve healthcare through the re-engagement of IMGs into the Canadian healthcare system. Our goal is to equip IMGs with the information, skills, and tools they require to make informed decisions about their future careers and to integrate successfully.

AGM Agenda

2:00PM: Networking & Mingling

3:00PM: Entertainment (Afrocuban)

3:15PM: Keynote Speaker

3:30PM: Annual General Meeting

- Board Chair Welcome
- Financial Report
- Executive Director Report on future directions
- Announcement of New Directors
- Volunteer Appreciation & Gifts

4:00PM: Entertainment (Mambo Salon)

- Raffle Draws

4:25PM: Entertainment (Jazz) & Closing

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

On behalf of my fellow Directors, I would like to take a moment to thank and to welcome our members, distinguished guests, funders, employees, and volunteers.

I am honored to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Alberta International Medical Graduates Association and to have the unique opportunity to learn from the challenges, knowledge, and achievements of our International Medical Graduates.

This past year has gone by very quickly. Many of our members have achieved a lot in their pursuit of a medical career in the Canadian healthcare system during this last year. Congratulations to those who are on the pathway to becoming licensed through either the PRA route or through having obtained a seat in a residency program - your efforts have been rewarded! And to those who have successfully passed exams, every milestone is another step towards becoming a physician in the Canadian healthcare system.

This year the Board of Directors was honored to recruit Deidre Lake as the new Executive Director and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I am proud to welcome Deidre, who will lead her team of staff and volunteers who have demonstrated their dedication to our mission to preserving and promoting the dignity of AIMGA. We believe her experiences and credentials are a great match for what our organization needs in order to meet the challenges which await us in the future. I would also like to thank Rossalia Videlova for her efforts and dedication as an Interim Executive Director during the transitional period.

AIMGA has been growing remarkably; our membership has increased to more than 750 members. The growth of our general membership has been holding up financially and has benefited from the funds made possible from our governments – federal and provincial. As a result, we have been able to offer more programs and services. More connections are being made and we are striving to make AIMGA more visible and stronger. The programs

offered included new member orientation, various study groups, BLS, professional language skills, IELTS preparation courses, observership placements, career enhancement training, workshops, and our OSCE and MMI preparation courses. With Deidre's vision and input from our Board of Directors, we are working on the progression of the association and to making it better so our members have the skills and tools to achieve their dreams. Looking ahead, we are working with our funders to offer MCAP Online. We know this program has had a high success rate and has helped many of our members to get into residency programs. Also, we are pleased to inform you that we have received additional funds for our Career Transition Program from the Government of Alberta which will allow us to provide seats to all of our members.

AIMGA would not exist without the support of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). I would like to extend my heartiest gratitude to our primary funder for their continuous support and contributions that make our services and programs possible for our members. I also commend our highly professional and engaged staff members, who are focused on providing remarkable client services. Our successes would not have been possible without their immense support and excellent work.

Finally, I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to each of our Directors for their support and contribution to AIMGA over the past year. I would particularly like to recognize those who have retired from the Board: Alina Kaznacheyeva and Luis Araujo. I anticipate another productive and rewarding year!

Regards,

Mohammad Lasker
Chair, AIMGA Board of Directors

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

On behalf of AIMGA, it is my honour to welcome you to *Inspiring Minds and Creating Pathways* Annual General Meeting.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge our funders. Without the support of the Governments of Canada and Alberta we would not be able to provide the programs and services we do for our membership. Secondly, I'd like to thank the Board of Directors for having selected me as the Executive Director to lead the Alberta International Medical Graduate Association. While my career path has afforded me many wonderful opportunities to innovate, to lead, to contribute and most importantly to learn - one trait has remained constant in all that I've done and that has been to support the economic integration of newcomers to Canada.

When I stepped into my role, I felt prepared as I've been working with International Medical Graduates since 2004. However, I also felt uncertain. While most things seem to get easier with time, one could argue the pathway to licensure for IMGs has become harder. I'm not known to shy away from a challenge and thus here I am. In the past six months, I've been hard at work at AIMGA to put the necessary foundation in place upon which to build. We've rebranded the agency with a new logo. We're looking for new space. We're launching a new website in 2019 which will allow us to tailor our services based on the needs of our membership and to provide the evidence we need to seek funds and to report outcomes. As an association, we all have a role in contributing to the recognition of the skills and knowledge IMGs bring with them to Canada.

In my first few months, I asked a lot of questions. We've moved away from a first come, first-serve model to our programs and services to putting the right person, in the right seat, at the right time to ensure we are utilizing resources effectively and providing relevant services based on where our members are in their integration and licensure process. We've also been working collectively to improve upon

the quality and delivery of our programs and services based on your feedback and the innovative ideas we have in mind to meet the needs of our members.

We've welcomed new staff members to the AIMGA team. While we are a small team, we certainly are a strong team. I'm truly grateful for our team's commitment and dedication and have always believed, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." It is our combined effort and skill set, I have the confidence to push forward.

It is our aim to provide our membership with accurate information so members can make informed decisions regarding their career paths, to provide quality programs and services to equip members with the skills and knowledge needed to set forth on their path, and to provide encouragement when needed as we recognize this journey is not an easy one. In brief, we are seeking funds to implement MCAP Online Plus, expanding our Career Transition Program, collaborating with AHS and the CPSA regarding our observership placements, and continuing to offer lectures, workshops, and networking sessions. Also, we are working to implement a new research and community engagement strategy in partnership with employers and stakeholders.

In the next year, I look forward to inspiring the minds of our members and to creating pathways into the healthcare system as the integration of IMGs into the healthcare system is something I'm passionate about.

Regards,

Deidre Lake
Executive Director

AIMGA Members



AIMGA Board



Deidre Lake Executive Director

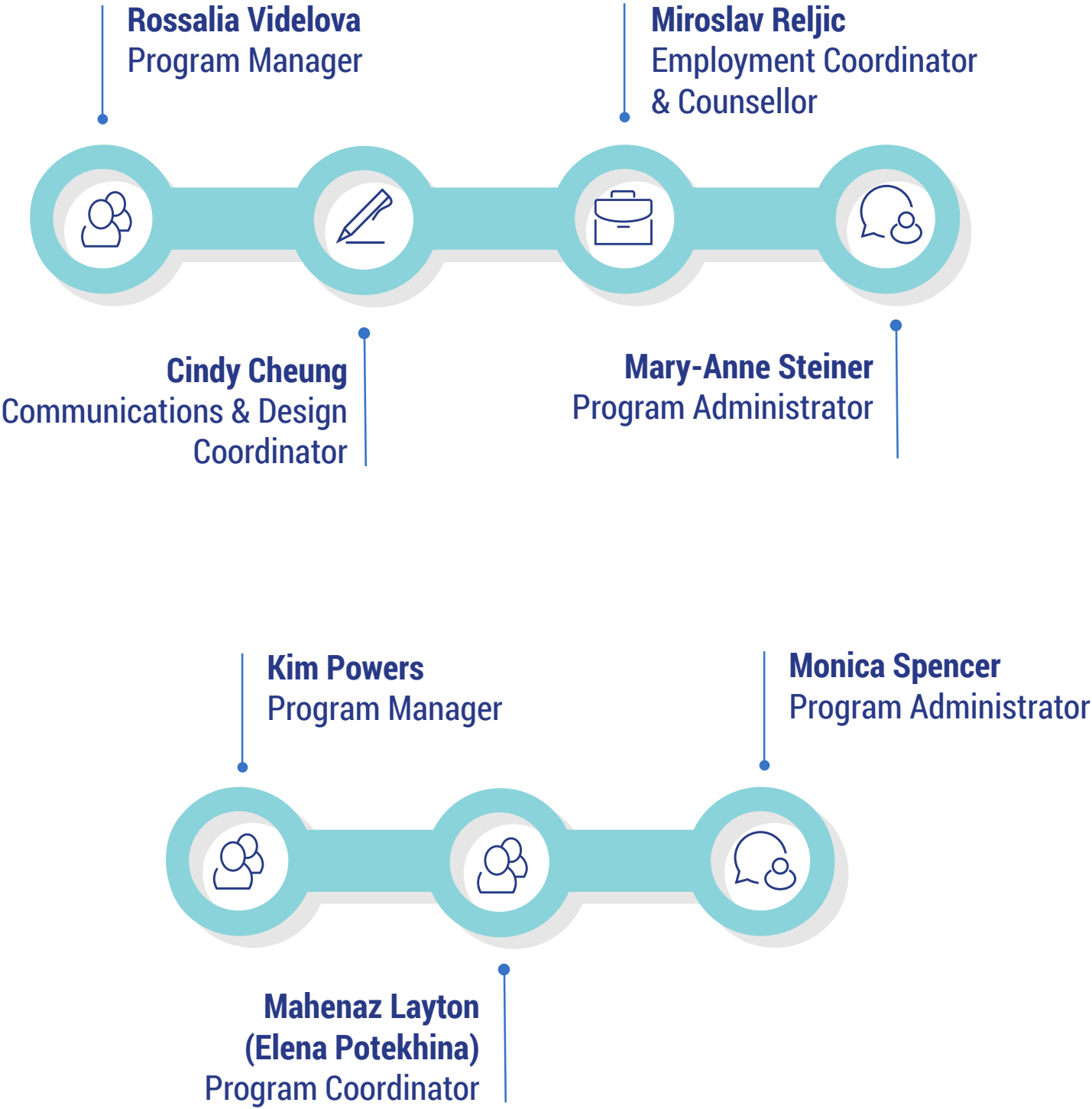


AIMGA CALGARY

AIMGA EDMONTON

“We take pride in your successes and truly believe that your success is our success.”

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES AND COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

How can IMGs contribute to Community Health in Canada?

Immigration has been playing a significant role in Canada's changing demographic composition throughout time. Canada is well known for its friendly and systematic immigration and refugee policy and consistently receives a substantial number of immigrants every year. Though many of the immigrants arrive in Canada with similar or better health status than the general Canadian population (a phenomenon known as "healthy immigrant effect"), it has also been reported that the health conditions of immigrants deteriorate steeply over time. Several factors were attributed towards this worsening of health after their landing to a very new country and the resettlement process. Those factors include discrimination (both actual and perceived), cultural differences (difficulty in adapting to a new lifestyle, resettlement struggle, dietary changes, etc.), environmental factors (climate adaptation, weather-influenced daily living, lack of access to proper housing, etc.), and healthcare system-related factors (especially if the Canadian healthcare system is different

from the healthcare system in the country of origin). It's quite important that the immigrants and the Canadian healthcare system work together in the efforts to overcome their issues.

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) are immigrant physicians who have completed their medical education and/or training outside of Canada and the United States. IMGs come from all around the world and can provide tremendous value in terms of health and well-being to their communities. IMGs are highly skilled in their respective professions and are truly knowledgeable in health issues due to their vast experience and training from their countries of origin. Contributions by IMGs to the immigrant communities should be recognized, not overlooked. Amongst many benefits granted by IMGs in immigrant communities that are crucial to the overall community health status, IMGs can provide general health education to the community, peer support on disease management, and act as a bridge between immigrant patients and Canadian healthcare providers.

ACTING AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN IMMIGRANT PATIENTS AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Most immigrants speak a different language than their physicians. In addition, health literacy acts as a barrier for many immigrants when accessing healthcare. They are often confused on how to describe their symptoms due to the gap in language. This in turn causes lower shared decision making between the immigrant patients and healthcare providers. Nonetheless, IMGs can often act as a bridge or connector between the immigrant patients and their healthcare providers. Immigrant members of the community often find themselves discussing their general concerns and symptoms to IMGs in social settings prior to visiting the doctor. This allows the IMGs to provide background knowledge on the possible issues, providing a sense of comfort in the immigrant patients. IMGs are also able to equip the immigrants with proper medical terminology such that there is less of a communication gap between the immigrant patient and the physician. This further facilitates the immigrant patients' access to satisfactory healthcare.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS FOR HEALTH LITERACY

With training and attending medical schools in their native countries, IMGs are highly educated in the field of health and medicine. Due to the health profession being a regulated occupation in Canada, their professional accreditation is often not recognized for a direct entry. However, with their extensive knowledge attained prior to immigrating, IMGs are able to play a key role as reliable and knowledgeable educators of their immigrant communities. Through social circles and gatherings, IMGs can spread knowledge on relevant health-related issues to increase awareness within the community. Understanding the credibility of these IMGs, immigrants often feel reassured by the knowledge and information provided to them by IMGs. This in-depth understanding of health and medicine helps immigrant members of the community to identify active health issues, which they can later discuss further with their family physicians.

PEER SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON DISEASE MANAGEMENT

It is important for the members of the immigrant community to find support in different aspects of this new life in an estranged country. Support and information enables immigrants to fully experience and take advantage of the services provided to them. For daily health and well-being concerns, IMGs can act as a support system for most immigrants. For diseases such as diabetes, IMGs are able to provide their knowledge on how to manage the disease and live a healthy lifestyle. IMGs are also able to advise on minor details of immigrants' daily living that may have a massive positive

impact on the management of the disease. Due to the feeling of security and amity between the immigrant members of the community and IMGs, a mutual health accountability is often created. This peer support acts as a crucial step in the lives of immigrants as it triggers multiple actions towards positive living and well-being.

HEALTH & WELLNESS ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY

Community health advocates are persons who take a stance on specific issues of healthcare, and then they mobilize to influence the public as well as system attitudes on those issues. Community health advocacy is a vital role that IMGs can play by becoming advocates of their communities around the issues related to health and wellness. This will enable the IMGs to work with the community members so that the approaches and the issues are based on the needs and goals of community members themselves. IMGs will need to use research, lobbying, and diplomacy skills to pursue community goals, and they are quite capable to build those skills with proper capacity building initiatives.

CITIZEN RESEARCHER IN HEALTH & WELLNESS RESEARCH

Citizen researchers contribute their time, effort, and resources in knowledge creation as an active collaborative partner with academic researchers of different disciplines. The citizen researcher need not to have any formal research background, but the IMGs have an exclusive understanding of health and wellness which uniquely qualifies them for citizen researcher roles. Research is becoming more community engaged and initiatives are becoming more and more ambitious and diverse. This opens up opportunities for citizen researchers to contribute meaningfully. Apart from the knowledge creation activities, IMGs can play an active role in integrated knowledge translation or knowledge mobilization towards the community members and become an active part of the community engagement initiatives of academic institutions, government establishments, or community-based organizations.

Overall, IMGs are a critical part in the health and well-being of immigrants in their communities. IMGs can unquestionably help fill the missing gaps that can be found in immigrant communities between healthcare providers and immigrant patients. Even though their prior training and credibility are often unacknowledged by the system, their efforts can help shape the future of immigrant healthcare by contributing their time and talents to community health.

*By Mr. Mashrur Kazi & Dr. Turin Tanvir Chowdhury
Immigrant and Refugee Health & Wellness Interest Group,
Department of Family Medicine, Cumming School of Medicine,
University of Calgary*

AIMGA SUCCESSES 2017–2018

Total Clients

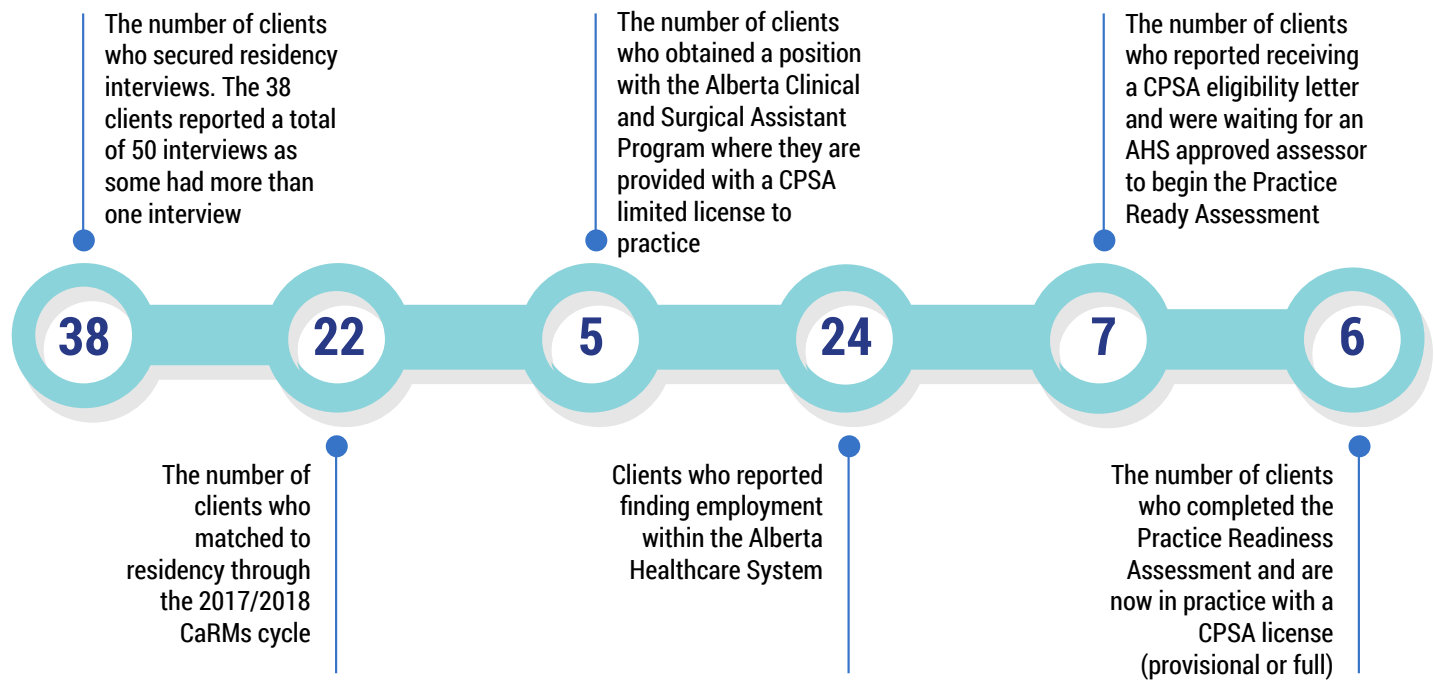
918

New Clients

150

Returning

768

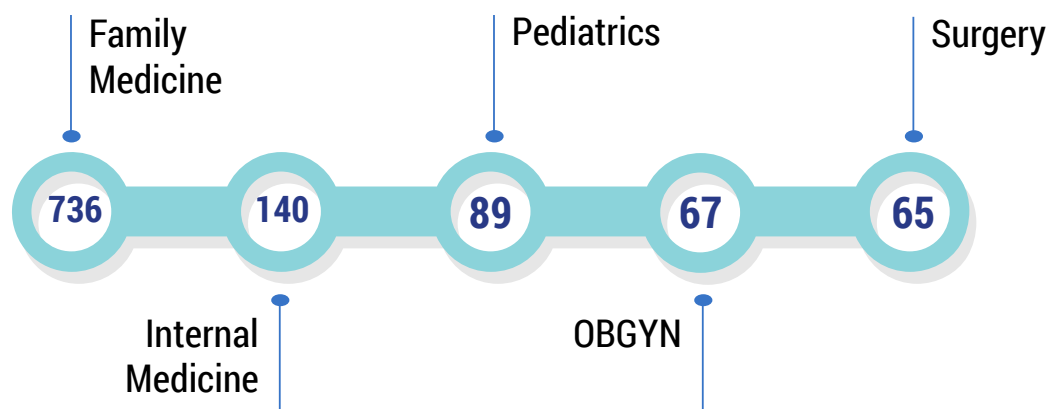


OUR MEMBERS

Top 10 Countries of Birth

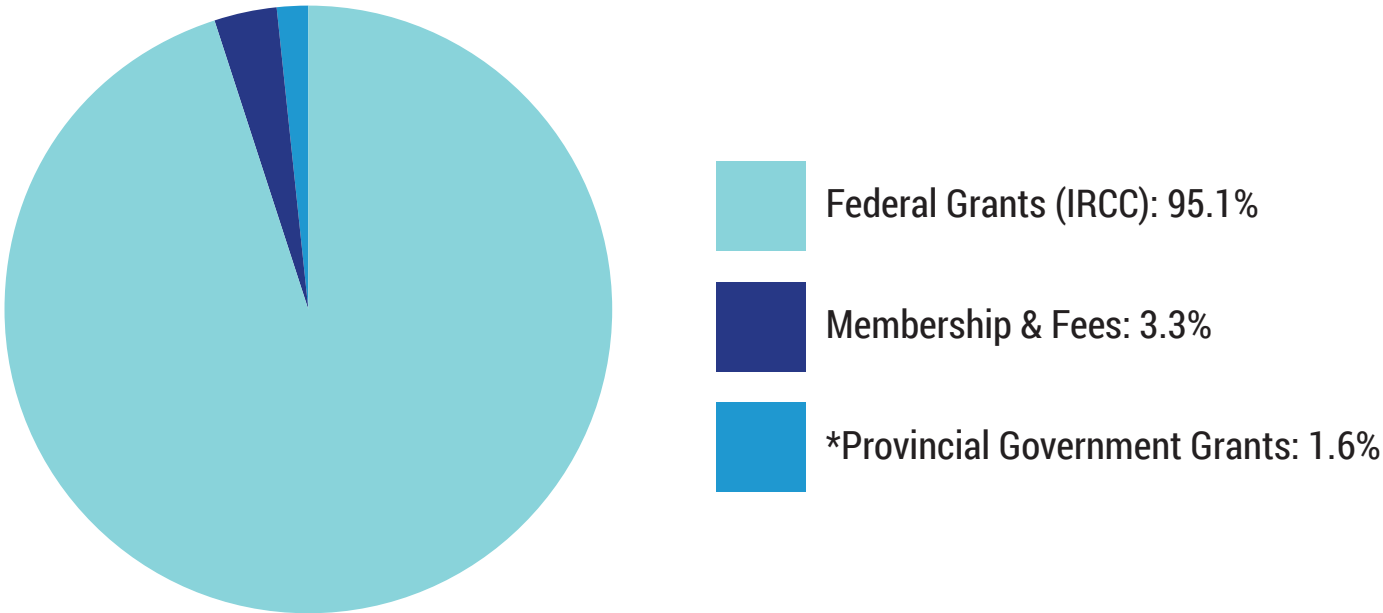


Top 5 Specialties



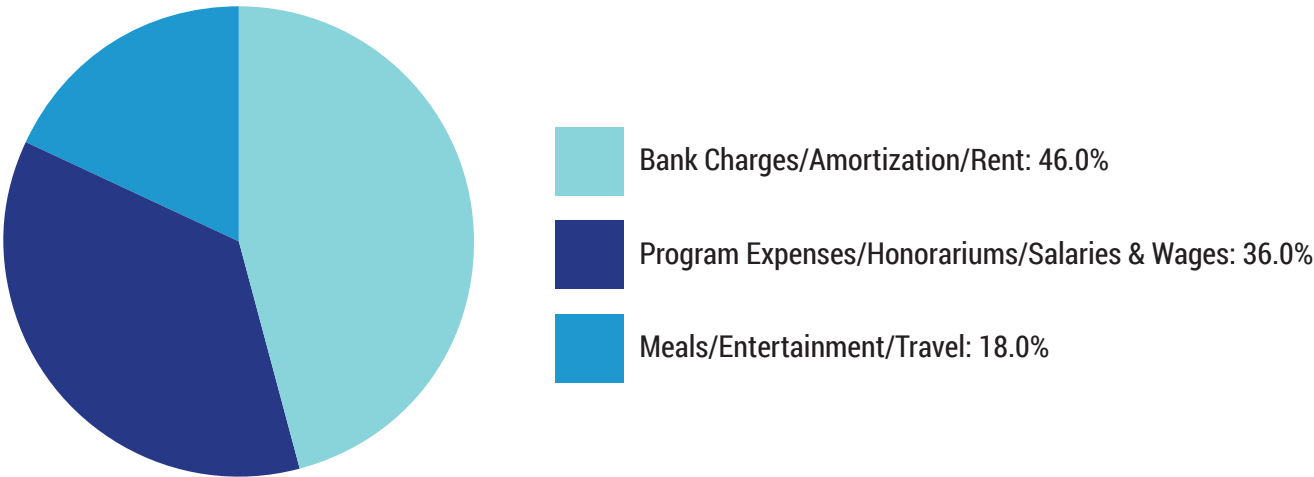
**Statistics as of September 2018*

TOTAL REVENUE

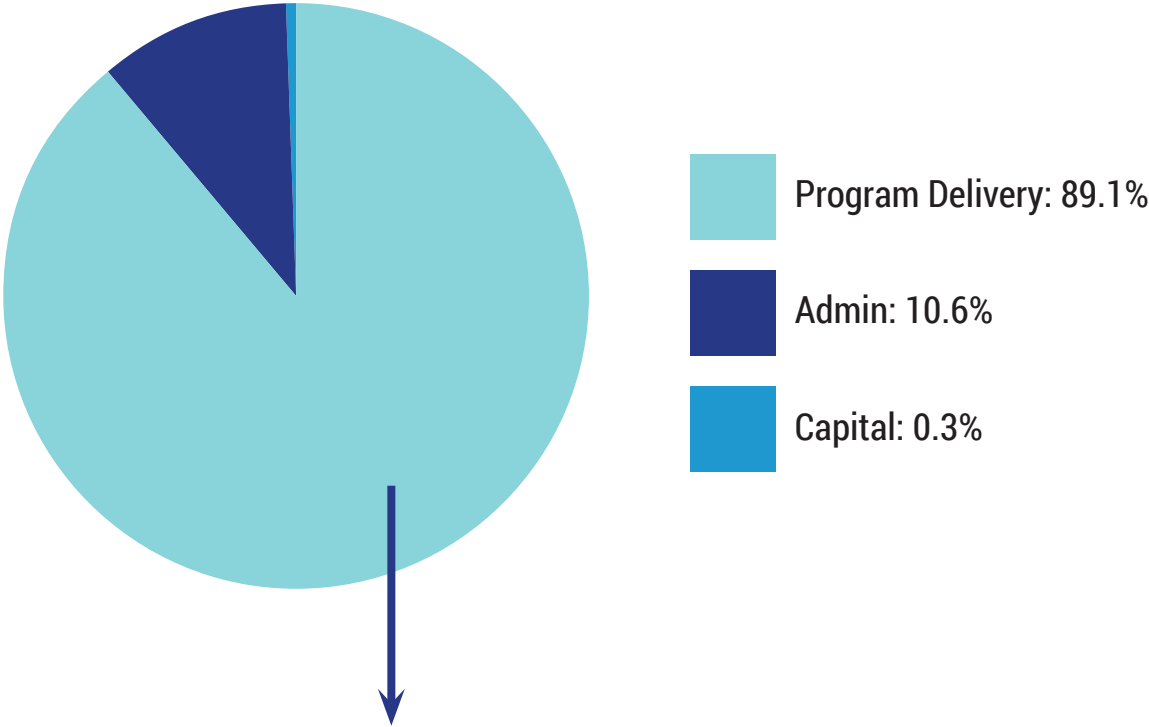


***Provincial Government Grants:** Funds were provided by the Government of Alberta (FQR) for the development of the IMG Canada portal, which is to provide information on alternative careers for IMGs and will be expanded upon in the upcoming year.

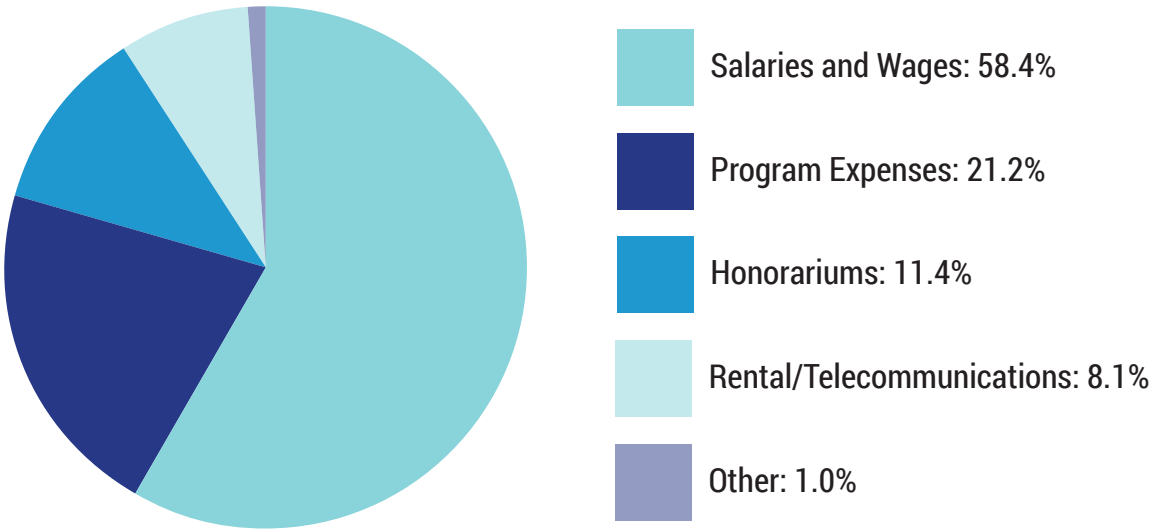
MEMBERSHIP & FEES BREAKDOWN



FEDERAL GRANTS BREAKDOWN



PROGRAM DELIVERY BREAKDOWN



Note: Members and stakeholders who wish to view the detailed financials may request an appointment to view them at AIMGA's office.

AIMGA'S PROGRAMS & SERVICES



**New
Members
to AIMGA
(IMGs)**

→ **New
Member
Orientation** → **Service
Needs
Assessment
and Plan**

**Licensure
Support
Pathway
(Calgary &
Edmonton)**

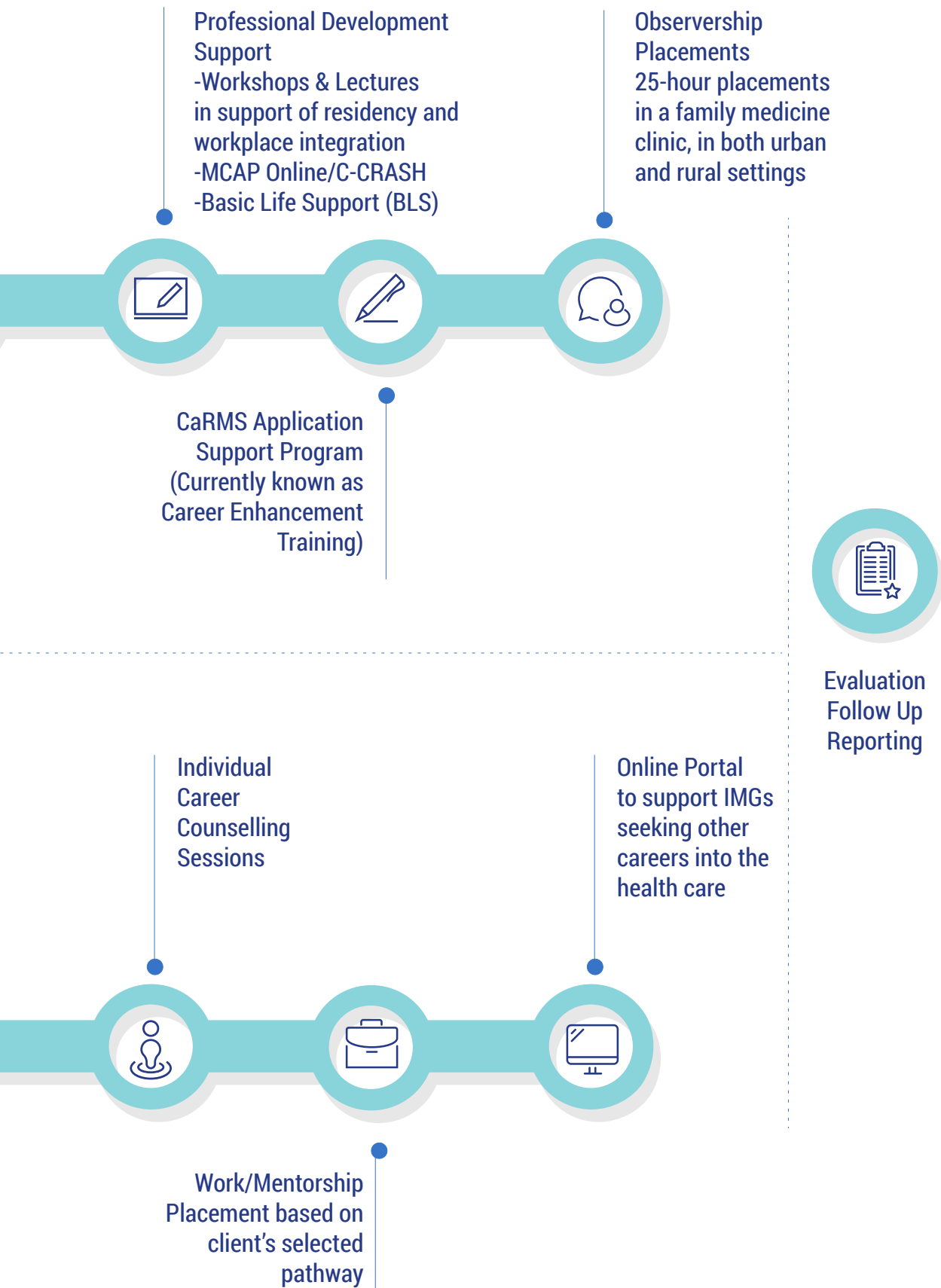
Study Groups
MCCQE1
NAC-OSCE/QE2
-Workshops & Lectures
in support of medical
examinations (clinical)

**Language/
Communication
Programs
(PLS, IELTS,
MCAP Online)**

**Career
Transition
Pathway
(Calgary
only)**

**Employment
Assessment**

**10 Employment
Workshops/
Mentoring
Circles**



AIMGA'S PROGRAMS & SERVICES

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

AIMGA hosts a New Member Orientation (NMO) which is a mandatory orientation for all new AIMGA members. The NMO provides an overview of the pathways to licensure and their requirements as well as overview of all AIMGA services and programs and eligibility criteria. The purpose of this session is to provide an understanding of AIMGA and to help determine which pathways are most suitable and the steps needed to guarantee your success.

STUDY GROUPS FOR LICENSING EXAMINATIONS

The moderated Study Groups for Canada's medical licensing examinations present an excellent opportunity for IMGs to connect with peers and to work together to prepare for their medical exams. All Study Groups are moderated by a volunteer IMG who is interested in assuming the responsibility to facilitate the learning of their fellows. The volunteer is someone who has demonstrated a high level of success on the exam.

AIMGA organizes Study Groups for MCCQE1, MCCQE2, and NAC OSCE. These groups are supported by clinical workshops that are open to study group members. Workshops may include an overview of common cases in the following areas: Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, MSK, and Obstetrics/Gynaecology. Other workshops include: communication skills such as dealing with difficult patients, and breaking bad news.

OSCE PREPARATION COURSE

The OSCE Preparation Course is a 2-day preparation program. The first day includes an overview of the exam, a hands-on workshop focused on scenario-based training to practice clinical, procedural, and communication skills. The second day includes a mock OSCE where candidates are rated by examiners using clinical and communication checklists. Performances are videotaped for educational and preparation purposes. Following the exam component, there is a group feedback session where examiners share their observations and provide tips and strategies for success.

MMI PREPARATION COURSE

The Multiple-Mini Interview (MMI) Preparation Course is a 2-day preparation course. The first day includes an educational component where candidates are exposed to different question types and relevant strategies. This session includes sample scenarios. The second day includes a mock MMI where candidates are evaluated

and videotaped. This session ends with a group feedback session where examiners are asked to reflect on the excellent responses they heard and to articulate what made these responses stand out.

OBSERVERSHIP PROGRAM

AIMGA's Observership Program is open throughout the year and accommodates IMGs who qualify for program participation. The observerships are an important step of the residency application process as they offer an excellent opportunity for IMGs to learn in the specific context of the Canadian healthcare system, to increase knowledge, to build professional networks and to obtain feedback from licensed Alberta physicians and medical educators.

PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE SKILLS COURSE (PLS)

The Professional Language Skills (PLS) course offered at AIMGA is especially designed for IMGs who are second language speakers of English and who need to enhance their language skills for the IELTS and other workplace language tasks. The course exposes learners to language content, learning tasks and activities aimed mainly at supporting the improvement of their writing skills. The PLS is a great pre-requisite for those who need to improve their writing skills on the IELTS or interested in the IELTS preparation course.

IELTS PREPARATION COURSE

A score of 7 on each section of IELTS-Academic is accepted by the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Alberta as proof of language proficiency required for non-native speakers of English seeking further medical education and practice in Canada. AIMGA offers an IELTS Preparation Course that aims at helping IMGs improve their test scores and acquire the necessary language skills, concepts, strategies and confidence for successful performance on the actual tests. The course has a content-specific and result-oriented focus.

CAREER ENHANCEMENT TRAINING (CET) / CARMS APPLICATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

CET assists IMGs to understand the organizational structure of the healthcare sector in Canada and the essential skills and knowledge required to work in the healthcare system. The training includes resumes and personal statements and is highly recommended for those applying for residency through CaRMS or other programs such as ACSAP, MLPIMG, SIPPA or equivalent.

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT CERTIFICATION FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS (BLS)

BLS is a mandatory certification for all who work in the Alberta healthcare system. It is based on the Heart and Stroke Foundation curriculum used for the training of health care providers. BLS is delivered by certified instructors. Participants receive a certificate after successful completion of the exam at the end of the session.

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

AIMGA offers a variety of lectures and workshops throughout the year based on the needs of IMGs. For example, clinical workshops to support study groups, workshops to support those applying for CaRMs, workshops to support those selected for residency, and workshops related to research or professional development.

CAREER TRANSITION PROGRAM

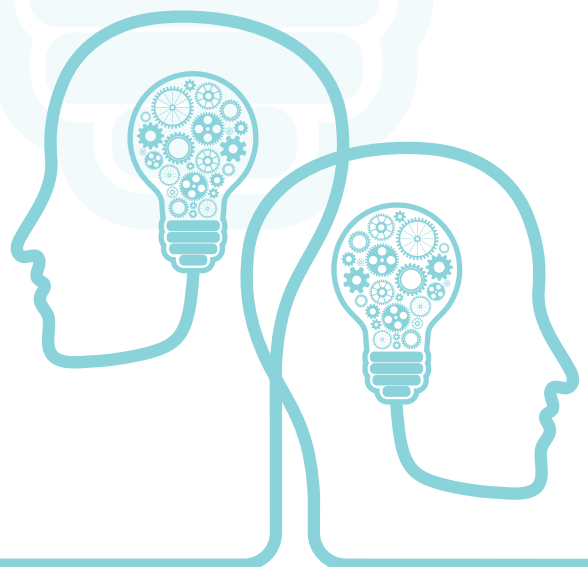
The Career Transition Program for IMGs is a collaborative initiative between the Alberta International Medical Graduates Association (AIMGA) and the Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC). This program has been made possible with funds from Governments of Canada (IRCC) and Alberta (Newcomer Integration Unit) to assist IMGs who are considering an alternative pathway into the Canadian healthcare system.

LUNCH & LEARN / NETWORKING SESSIONS

Lunch & Learn and Networking sessions are informal sessions for our members to network with one another and to learn about a topic of interest. For example sessions may be related to an upcoming program, a research study being conducted, a support service, a community based program, or an activity to facilitate discussion. These sessions are offered monthly.

“The best preparation
for tomorrow is doing
your best today.”

- H. Jackson Brown Jr.



SPECIAL THANKS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY



Marlies van Dijk, RN, MSc

Marlies is the Innovation Leader for Quality and Healthcare Improvement and leads the @Design4AHS lab at Alberta Health Services. She has led large scale change initiatives at both a provincial and national level since 2005. One of her proudest accomplishment is when she led the BC Surgical Quality Action Network to reduce surgical site infections across 25 surgical programs. Marlies is a non conformist and calls herself a positive rebel. She is huge proponent of using social movement theory, crowd sourcing and liberating structures to guide her work.

Her current challenge, using system design thinking to solve complex problems in healthcare, is keeping her busy. She has currently launched the first “inside” health organization innovation lab in Western Canada. Her team supports large provincial strategies and local clinical groups to co-design solutions in healthcare. They use system design thinking tools, hacks, sprints and dual operating systems to guide their work.

FEATURED BOOTHS



Mayagwe is the made-in-Canada app that provides direct access to a database of professional language interpreters – 24/7, 365 days a year – who can provide face-to-face interpretation service, either immediately or at a scheduled date/time.



HealthJobHub is a recruitment marketing platform connecting healthcare job-seekers directly to employers. Our mission is to fill healthcare jobs faster. Our vision is a sustainable and balanced healthcare workforce, with equal access to primary and allied healthcare services for all.



If you are looking for healthcare, supporting care or providing healthcare services, Trioova is your “one-stop-shop”.



The Newcomer Research Network (NRN) is an interdisciplinary community of researchers committed to advancing knowledge and intercultural practices with newcomers, including immigrants, refugees and international students. We are united in our efforts to improve the lives of newcomers in areas ranging from education, to health and well-being, healthcare, service access, settlement and integration.

SPECIAL THANKS

EVENT VENUE



PHOTOBOOTH



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR GENEROUS GIFT DONATIONS:



- Ahava Day Spa
- Aspen Crossing Railway
- Crowfoot Wine and Spirits

RnR Wellness Spa




ENTERTAINMENT:

Ahmed Hodelin & Ingrid Cespedes



CATERING BY ETHNICITY





“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

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Calgary, AB T2E 3K8

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AIMGA EDMONTON

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Edmonton, AB T5K 1X3

P: 587.524.2750
www.aimga.ca

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Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

