



AIMGA NEWSLETTER

Edition 3
July 2021



ALTERNATIVE CAREER PATHWAYS FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES (ACPS FOR IMGs)

What do we mean by an alternative career?
Alternative careers for IMGs are non-physician, health and wellness jobs that utilize IMGs' medical knowledge and skills.

What we know?
Alternative careers are often sought by IMGs in Canada as a stepping-stone in their pursuit of licensure as a means to familiarize themselves with the Canadian healthcare system. For others, an alternative career is a long-term, permanent career change and a way to regain professional identity if pursuing licensure is unattainable or undesired.

What is AIMGA doing in this area?
AIMGA has been pursuing viable alternative career pathways for IMGs for the past 3 years.

"We have helped many IMGs obtain licensure and we will continue to do so; however, not all IMGs will meet with success or wish to pursue licensure. Therefore, I wanted to know what other career opportunities are available to our members. This led us to the realization that there is a lack of information for IMGs wishing to pursue alternative careers. Our team has been steadily working to develop resources and programming based on the research we have conducted." Deidre Lake

AIMGA has been conducting research in collaboration with the University of Calgary and has published two research articles and a book chapter. The team has also conducted a national survey with over 1,700 IMGs in order to understand the proportion of IMGs interested in alternative careers, their socio-demography, and the reasons behind opting for an alternative career.

We conducted eight focus groups with IMG participants from across Canada. The findings of this study are helping us to ensure

appropriate guidance, skill-building, and supports for the decision-making process and identification of the most suitable careers.

Clinical Research Assistant





Participate in the design, administration and monitoring of clinical trials. Analyze and evaluate clinical data gathered during research. Ensure compliance with protocol and overall clinical objectives.

Usually requires a Bachelor degree in Medicine/Medical sciences, Health Sciences, Nursing, Psychology or equivalent and 0-3 years of experience in the field or in a related area. Knowledge of FDA regulatory requirements is required. Has knowledge of commonly used concepts, practices and procedures within a particular field. Rely on instructions and pre-established guidelines to perform the functions of the job. Work under immediate supervision. Primary job functions do not typically require exercising independent judgment. Typically reports to a supervisor or manager.

\$	\$	\$	\$
Average Hourly	Range Hourly	Average Yearly	Range Yearly
\$18.46	\$11.21 - \$31.38	\$35,997	\$21,865 - \$61,195

> NOC Code

> Alias Job Titles

> Qualifications Required

> Salary Range

> Job Demand

> Growth Opportunity

> Years' Experience Required

> Training Options (if available)

> Personal Qualities

> Notes/Other Information

> Steps towards capacity building to become competitive for this job

> References

Figure 1. Outline of a sample factsheet

AIMGA's Resources/ Fact Sheets

Apart from identifying around 200 potential alternative jobs for IMGs, we have been developing factsheets for each of these jobs. We have already published 55 job factsheets on our [website](#). (See figure 1)

The factsheets contain a general overview, job responsibilities, and qualification requirements. In addition, they contain information on demand based on the current job market, wages/salary, growth, training options, and other details. These fact sheets will not only provide information on potential alternative jobs for IMGs but also help them make informed decisions about their careers.

Publications

1. Turin TC, Chowdhury N, Ekpekurede M, Lake D, O'Brien M, Goopy S. **Alternative career pathways for International Medical Graduates towards job market integration: A rapid review towards synthesizing the opportunities and challenges.** Int J Med Educ (In press)
2. Turin TC, Chowdhury N, Ekpekurede M, Lake D, O'Brien M, Goopy S. **Professional integration of immigrant medical professionals through alternative career pathways: A scan to synthesize the current landscape.** Human Resource Health (In press)
3. Chowdhury N, Ekpekurede M, Lake D, Chowdhury TT. **The Alternative Career Pathways for International Medical Graduates in Health and Wellness Sector.** In International Medical Graduates in the United States 2021 (pp. 293-325). Springer, Cham.
4. **Choosing alternative career pathways after immigration: Aspects internationally educated physicians consider when narrowing down alternative career choices.** Turin TC, Chowdhury N, Lake D [Submitted]

Mitac's Accelerate Internship Program

AIMGA in partnership with the University of Calgary secured a competitive grant through Mitac's Accelerate Internship Program which is an initiative supported by ScotiaBank. Only 20% of the total submissions were successful and our project was the only one selected for Alberta.

The 6-month long project (June to November 2021) provides us an opportunity to expand upon our work on alternative careers for IMGs. More information will follow.



Mr. Saif Sikdar, a PhD level graduate student at the University of Calgary, will be leading this initiative as the designated intern for this project under the supervision of Dr. Turin Tanvir Chowdhury and Deidre Lake. Apart from this project, Saif has received several scholarships in his academic career and has developed an interest in the area of alternative career pathways for IMGs. He also has an interest in organizing knowledge mobilization and community engagement programs as the president of the Bangladeshi Scholars' Association at the University of Calgary. We welcome Saif to AIMGA and look forward to working with him during this time.

AIMGA’S SUCCESS IN THE PAST YEAR

Career Transition Program

We have successfully completed cohort 7 of our Career Transition Program (CTP). The Career Transition Program for IMGs has consistently proved to have a positive impact on the participants’ pursuit of careers. This program has resulted in economic growth for some, regaining professional identity, achieving alternative career goals, and capacity building for AIMGA. Due to COVID-19 our program delivery had to move online from the middle of cohort 5, however, this opened up the opportunity to help IMGs outside of Alberta. We now have participants joining from Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario.

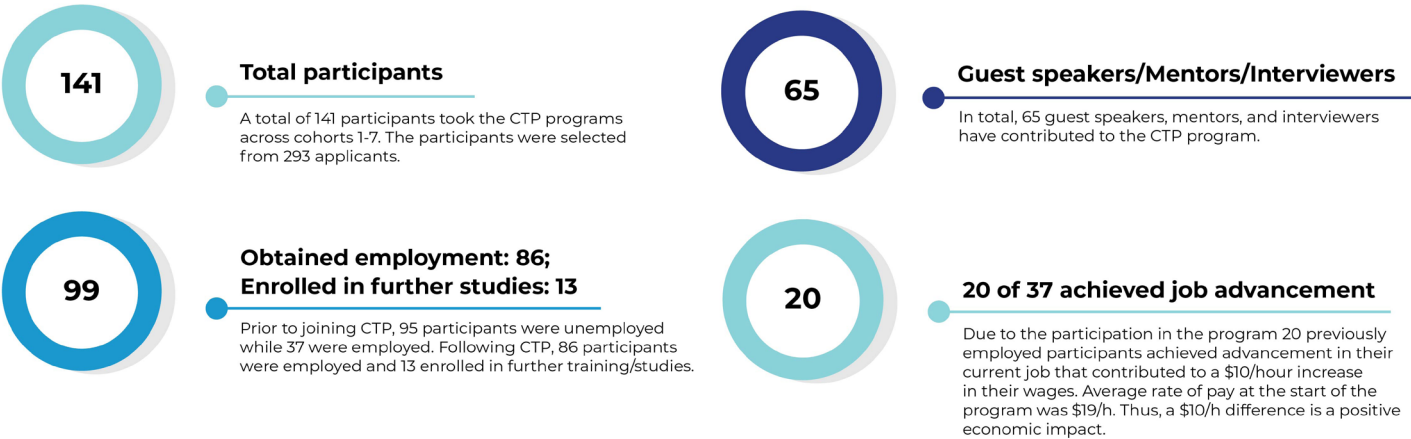


Figure 2. Snapshot of the CTP program

Success in AIMGP / CaRMS:

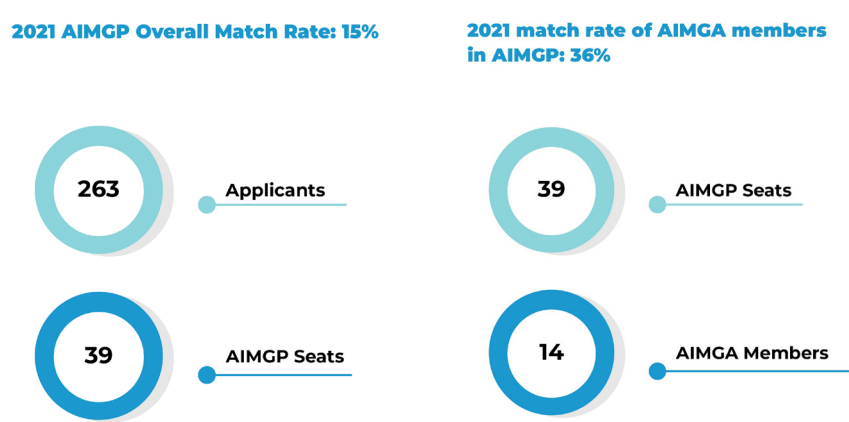


Figure 3. AIMGP overall success rate and the percentage of AIMGA members in AIMGP residency seats

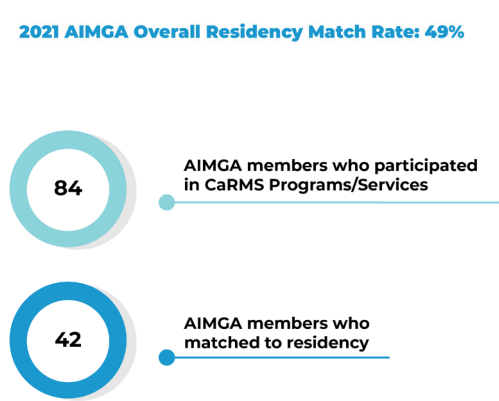
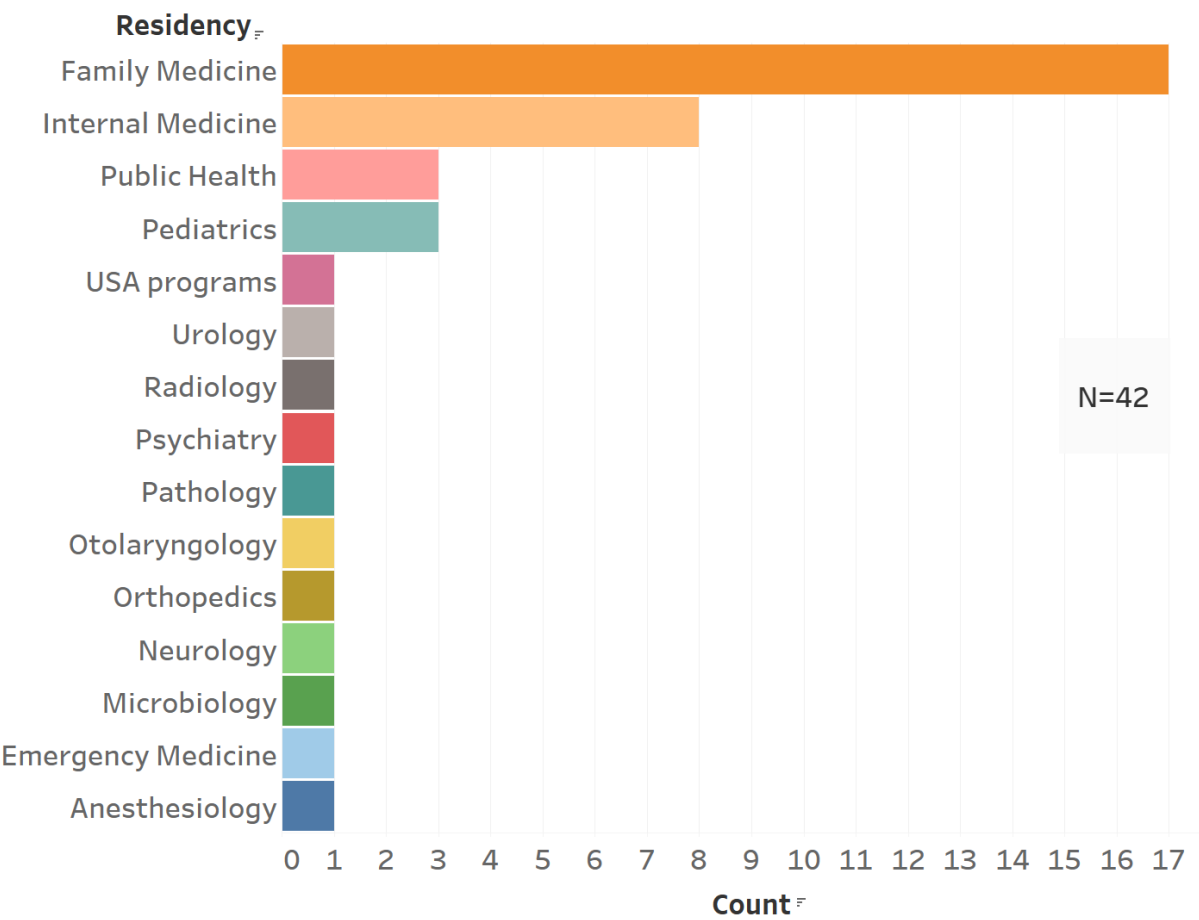


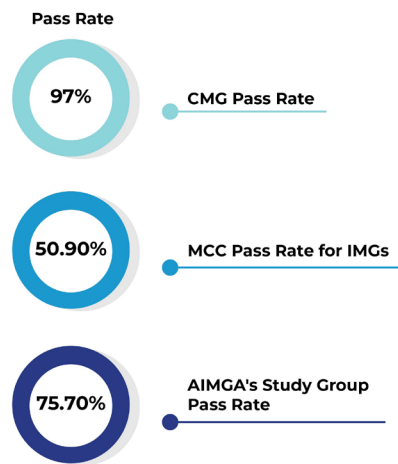
Figure 4. Overall success rate of AIMGA members who participated in CaRMS preparation programs/ services and matched to residency

Out of 42 candidates who secured residency, fourteen (33.33%) matched in Alberta, fifteen (35.71%) in Ontario, three (7.14%) in Manitoba, two (4.76%) in Saskatchewan, one (2.38%) in Quebec, and six (14.29%) in the USA.

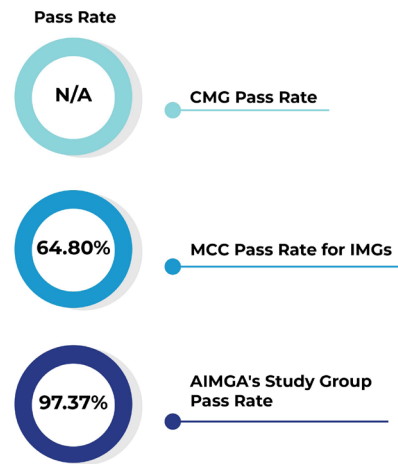


AIMGA's success in MCC exams:

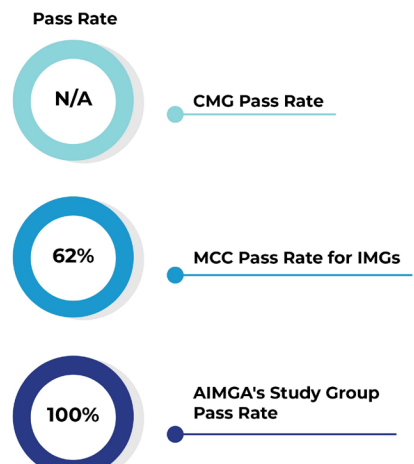
Success in QE1:



Success in NAC-OSCE:



Success in TDM:



MCC Pass rates taken from their website. AIMGA pass rates are derived from those who completed the annual survey and/or milestones report.

AIMGA LAUNCHES HEALTHHUB FOR NEWCOMERS

HEALTHHUB FOR NEWCOMERS

Health Matters! Wellness Matters! Diversity Matters!



AIMGA has been busy creating opportunities for our members to support throughout the pandemic. In March 2020, we created a COVID Response Team which has turned into a Health and Wellness Team. We launched our HealthHub for Newcomers in the beginning of 2021 and have been busy supporting community members, community partners, and Alberta Health Services. In December 2020, the Calgary East-zone Newcomer Collaborative (CENC) was formed which AIMGA belonged. We were part of the AHS community taskforce to provide supports to employees of meatpacking plants in Calgary and surrounding areas when outbreaks occurred. We later supported AHS and the Mosaic PCN during vaccine clinics at these sites. Through CENC, we worked closely with The Immigrant Education Society (TIES) and ActionDignity to support the collaborative. We conducted follow up surveys with recipients of services and supports. We've also been supporting refugee clients of the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) to address vaccine hesitancy and to increase vaccine uptake. We are working closely with the Mosaic Primary Care Network and Alberta Health Services to offer educational supports and community townhalls in various languages. Most recently, we've been working with the Centre for Newcomers (CFN) to support community, walk-in, vaccine clinics.



Funding: Immunization Partnership Fund – Public Health Agency of Canada

AIMGA has been awarded funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) through the Immunization Partnership Fund (IPF). Partners and supporters include: Calgary East Zone Newcomers Collaborative (CENC), Alberta Health Services (AHS), Mosaic Primary Care Network, City of Calgary, COVID-19 pandemic Response and Impact Grant for Quality Improvement (CORIG-QI), Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), 19 To Zero, Edmonton COVID-19 Rapid Response Collaborative (ECRRC), and the University of Calgary.

Project Name: Improving COVID-19 Vaccine Literacy and Acceptancy among newcomers

Description: This project will offer tailored interventions to increase vaccine literacy and improve underserved newcomers to Alberta access to vaccination. Interventions will include practical aids such as booking vaccine appointments, providing appointment reminders, and providing transportation and accompaniment to and from vaccine appointments. The project will also create multi-lingual educational supports such as community-based forums, video-mediated resources, podcasts, campaign drives, pop-up events, workplace educational sessions, and presentations to those enrolled in language instruction classes.

Timeframe: June 1st, 2021 to May 31st, 2022.

Project announcement by Government of Canada: [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

As part of this initiative, AIMGA has been working with community partners to conduct educational sessions in both English and first languages via Zoom, in-person at community events, and at various workplaces.



We continue to create videos and podcasts to address concerns, questions, and new findings. Our resources are available on our website for anyone interested to access: <https://aimga.ca/healthhub/>



In collaboration with Action Dignity and CCIS, our health and wellness team members have called to check on clients to address vaccine hesitation, respond to questions, assist in vaccine uptake (making referrals and/or informing clients of walk-in clinics).

AIMGA's health and wellness teams have had to remain up-to-date with evidence-based information on COVID-19 vaccines, latest findings, and changing regulations in order to keep community informed. Our health and wellness team continues to meet on Friday mornings from 9:30-10:30am.

WHAT'S NEW AT AIMGA?

Introduction of Groups

We have created several interactive groups on our website for the following: Career Transition Program (CTP), Exam Preparation Programs (QE1, NAC-OSCE), and our Health and Wellness Team. These online groups provide a variety of resources and communication tools that allow our staff and members to connect, to share updates, and ask questions. Groups are only available to those enrolled in these programs. Please [click here](#) to see the list of groups that are available.

Forums

AIMGA has introduced two forums under our Community tab on our website that are available to members once they login.

General Member Forum: <https://aimga.ca/forums/forum/member-forum/>

Employment Forum: <https://aimga.ca/forums/forum/employment-forum/>

Regular Programs

All of our regular programs and services are on. Visit our Calendar page to see what's happening at AIMGA and to register for upcoming events: <https://aimga.ca/calendar/>

Current programs and services include:

- **Lunch and Learn / Networking Sessions** (ongoing)
- **Clinical Workshops** (ongoing leading up to the NAC OSCE)
- **Career Transition Program for IMGs** (new program will be offered in fall; accepting registrations)
- **MCCQE1 Study Group** (ongoing)
- **NAC OSCE Preparation Classes** (full)
- **2-day OSCE Preparation Course** (registration details coming soon)
- **Ready to Educate Workshop Series** (will be open to health and wellness team members)
- **To book one-to-one consults:** <https://aimga.ca/consultations-and-appointments/>

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) classes

Contact Clare Puzey for registration details by email at clare.puzey@ahs.ca or by phone at 587-223-2691.

Preparation Course for the CCFP Exam

The University of Calgary's Cumming School of Medicine is offering a course that is designed for practice eligible physicians who are preparing to undertake the CCFP Exam. For more information, contact: Rosanna Saavedra, Program Assistant, by email at rosanna.saavedra@ucalgary.ca. [Register Now](#)

i4 conference Registration

The future of health and care takes place at the intersection of people, relationships, community and science, and technology. Success in health and care services is tied to societal progress and the exploding speed of technology. i4 exists to help you invent the future of health and care services. Be part of that future. [Register Now](#)

Newcomer Research Network Symposium:

The Newcomer Research Network invites proposals for oral and poster presentations on research and practice regarding newcomers for the [Mobilizing Knowledge on Newcomers Symposium 2021](#). The symposium will be held online on October 15, 2021. The areas of focus for the call for presentations are resettlement and integration, social and health care, education, and grassroots community engagement. We especially welcome proposals highlighting research and practice experience that involves collaboration among Service Provider Organizations (SPOs), newcomer communities, and researchers. The poster sessions will provide an opportunity for SPOs and researchers—especially graduate students—in the early stages of their projects to showcase their work. Papers will be given in English or French. [Register Now](#)

Deadline for abstract submission is August 31, 2021. Notifications of acceptance will be made by September 15, 2021. [Submit your paper!](#)

LANGUAGE MATTERS

Stigmatizing	Respectful
It drives me <i>crazy</i> .	It <i>bothers/annoys/frustrates</i> me.
This is <i>nuts</i> .	This is <i>interesting/strange/peculiar/funny</i> .
This individual <i>suffers</i> from depression.	They <i>live with/are experiencing</i> depression.
<i>Mentally ill</i> or <i>insane</i> person	Person <i>living with a mental health problem or illness</i>
<i>Committed</i> suicide, <i>successful</i> suicide	<i>Died</i> by suicide
<i>Failed</i> or <i>unsuccessful</i> suicide attempt	<i>Attempted</i> suicide
Substance <i>abuse</i>	Substance <i>use</i> or <i>substance use disorder</i>
Everyone who is a <i>junkie</i> ...	Everyone who <i>uses substances</i> ...
They used to be an <i>addict</i> .	They are <i>in recovery</i> .

Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada

WELLNESS EXCHANGE: BOOST YOUR WELL-BEING WITH ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES DROP-IN SERIES

With more Albertans looking for healthy living ideas, Alberta Health Services has launched Wellness Exchange, an online weekly drop-in wellness series. These free summer and fall workshops offer one-hour sessions designed to build skills in five different areas to help individuals cope with stress and adversity, while promoting positive mental health and well-being.

The sessions are free and will run weekly. Participants can take any or all of the classes. For more information, [visit the AHS website](#).

OUR HEALTHHUB PARTNERS



OUR FUNDERS



Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada



Muhammad Ali Abid, 1987-2021



Ali and Marlies, AHS Design Lab

It is with great sadness, we announce the passing of

Muhammad Ali Abid

a great friend and supporter of AIMGA.

Ali contributed to AIMGA in many ways. He facilitated strategic planning sessions on the utilization of our members in community. He worked with our staff to provide tips and tricks on Zoom. He supported our health and wellness activities and assisted in the training of members who were hired as contact tracers in December 2020 via the AHS Design Lab. He was a regular guest speaker and mentor for our Career Transition Program. Recently, he helped to set up the vaccine clinic at Village Square and AIMGA's community townhall in Arabic. For our health and wellness team members who attended the 2020 i4 AHS conference, you may remember him as the dancing host.

Ali was a dear friend. He genuinely touched all of those he came into contact with. His positivity and encouragement were infectious. He had a great sense of humour and working with him was always a pleasure. He contributed so much to his colleagues, friends, and community. You could always count on Ali - he was one of a kind and will be missed by so many.

Ali leaves behind a wife and two children – aged four and six. We will send something to the family on behalf of AIMGA. His colleague is putting together a book of photos and stories for his children to remember him by. Any stories can be sent to Deidre. You can also leave a message [here](#).

In honour of Ali, we encourage you to inspire others as he did.

Ali, may you Rest In Peace. We send our heartfelt condolences and prayers to your family.

If interested in contributing to an education fund set up by Marlies for Ali's children, please contact mvandijk@telus.net.



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:

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