



PARO CAREER COUNSELLING HANDBOOK

“Do what you love and you’ll never work a day in your life.”

That old adage is rich with promise – and pressure. Let’s face it, deciding on a career path and then finding the perfect job comes with its own set of challenges, and many of us delay the task for several reasons. For those of us in our junior years, it seems too far away, and for those in our senior years, heavy work schedules and studying for licensing exams can sometimes take priority.

But, the truth is, it’s never too early to start thinking about how to land your dream job. That’s why we’ve produced this handbook: brimming with tips, tools and tidbits, it’ll help make finding a job and establishing a career easier and more enjoyable.

Here’s what we cover:

TOP 10 TIPS ...

From Senior Residents

From New Physicians

PARO’s Favourite Web Resources

How Your PGME Office Can Help

Specialty Society Resources

TOP 10 TIPS

The best advice often comes from those who've just lived through the experience themselves. To that end, we reached out to senior residents and new physicians and curated their top tips for navigating the job-finding landscape and the transition to practice.

....from Senior Residents:

1. Informal networking is key. Talk to your program directors and supervisors to find opinions, advice, and opportunities.
2. Talk to chiefs of staff at local hospitals to find out about job availability, and what they might be looking for in future staff.
3. Practice your 2-minute "elevator pitch". This allows you to speak concisely and spontaneously about who you are, your interests, and where you want to be.
4. If needed, prepare and plan for future academic work or certifications (Fellowships, Masters, or PhDs) to secure a job in your desired field.
5. Ask your program and staff to provide education about billings and practice management, ideally in both formal and informal settings, to assist with your transition to practice.
6. Get involved whenever you can – keep your eyes and ears open for new opportunities, particularly those in your field. Paying attention can lead to future opportunities.
7. Keep in touch with near-peers to hear about challenges they are facing and successes they have had in the job search.
8. If you're having difficulties with informal mentoring, ask your program to provide a formal mentor match.
9. When on service, approach staff with similar interests and ask how they got to where they are.
10. Don't burn bridges. Word spreads quickly among programs and you will always want the ability to go back for a reference.

... from New-in-Practice Physicians:

1. Stay in touch with the programs, mentors, and clinics you've rotated through. You never know where a job opportunity will come from.
2. Do not be afraid to make your interests known. If you want a job somewhere, talk to physicians in that location.
3. Structure your training to be marketable. Talk to division chiefs where you'd like to work and ask them honestly about who they are looking to hire, and what skills you could develop to help you get a job.
4. Seek mentorship when possible, be it formal or informal. Remember that one mentor will not have all the answers, and strive for balance from various perspectives.
5. Ask for honest feedback from someone you trust, and use that constructive criticism to improve yourself.
6. Locum in a variety of settings to find the style of practice you enjoy.
7. Meet with a representative from the HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency (healthforceontario.ca) and physician recruiters to find out about opportunities.
8. Decide if you want to work in a community or academic setting, as each can require different skills and goals.
9. Ask your program for advice and formal education around billing and practice management.
10. Work hard and set a good example on your rotations – word of mouth is important, especially in small communities and specialties.

PARO'S FAVOURITE CAREER WEB RESOURCES

Here are some of our favourite links to career resources and jobs. We've included a description of each to help you pinpoint the best resource for your needs.

1. HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency

The HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency provides information on available jobs and locum opportunities, as well as information on physician roles, CME programs, and physician resources. The jobs and locum opportunities tend to be most helpful for family medicine graduates, although there is information for other specialties on the website. In addition, they provide the Practice Ontario Program, which is a free career-planning service for postgraduate medical residents. Through this program postgraduate trainees can connect with a Regional Advisor. Their role is to assist all areas in Ontario to reach their physician recruitment and retention goals, and to work closely with all medical schools in the province to provide personal job-search assistance and career advice to medical residents.

[HFOJobs](#)

[Practice Ontario](#)

[Practice U](#)

2. Canadian Medical Association

The CMA offers a New In Practice guidebook with information on practice opportunities and different funding arrangements (fee for service, alternate funding plans, salaried positions, locum, long-term opportunities), the business side of medicine (overhead, EMRs, negotiation), medical billing, financial planning and insurance.

The CMA website has a timeline tool that provides you with a schedule of what you need to have completed by when to help ease your transition into practice. Although it is calibrated for family medicine, it's easy to personalize it for any specialty. The CMA also provides practice management seminars and a series of excellent online modules on a variety of transition to practice topics

3. Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

The RCPSC website provides information on entering professional practice including podcasts and links to CMA and CPSO transition to practice resources.

The Royal College website also explains maintenance of certification and describes how to maintain and document ongoing professional learning.

In addition, the site links to billing guides for all provinces – a great resource for all residents, including family medicine, to find and familiarize themselves with billing codes.

4. College of Family Physicians of Canada

The CFPC website provides information on clinical resources, practice management, work/life balance, and provincial resources (ie, how to get a billing number in Ontario), which is helpful in getting a practice started and balancing everything in your first few years out. They also offer sessions at their Family Medicine Forum to connect you with early career family physicians and fellow residents.

HOW YOUR PGME OFFICE CAN HELP WITH YOUR CAREER

McMaster University

Trainee Well Being Site

This PGME website contains an extensive list of external links relating to resident support and wellbeing, including links to the most important career counselling services (Practice Ontario, HFO MRA, CFPC, RSCPC, CMA, CPSO, OMA, MD Management). This page is a good resource to start with as it compiles the most important links for residents. The career counselling section is most useful for incoming residents and final-year residents (for the 'transition to practice' links).

NOSM

Although there are no specific online resources available, we recommend that you contact the PGME office at 705-662-7259 for additional assistance.

Queen's University

Wellness Director

The PGME Office of the Director of Resident Affairs provides various wellness-related services available, including career counselling. This office provides support on all aspects of the resident experience including issues relating to personal, career, financial, and academic matters.

University of Ottawa

Although there are no specific online resources available, we recommend that you contact the PGME office at 613-562-5413 for additional assistance.

University of Toronto

Career Resources Page

This is a compendium of links related to careers and finances. It includes links to Practice Ontario, Medical Employers, the U of T Career Centre, and introduces the reader to the Career Counsellor for PGME. This resource is helpful for residents, as it contains several relevant links. Some links will be particularly relevant to final-year residents, as there is information about finding jobs/locums. The links related to general career counselling and planning are relevant to residents in any year.

Western University

Career Management Page

The Learner Equity and Wellness office at the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry provides trained counsellors to assist you in navigating the transition from residency to professional practice. They support medical students and residents with career counselling, CV and interview preparation, research of employment opportunities and assistance with finding or creating research opportunities.

SPECIALTY SOCIETY RESOURCES

Your Canadian specialty society is often a great resource to help you formally, or informally, connect with mentors and career opportunities. As these societies update what they provide to residents and new-in-practice doctors frequently, it's a good idea to visit your particular website often.

Below, we've summarized the resources currently available from the specialty societies that have designated resident sections on their webpages. If your specialty society has something that we don't have here, let us know and we'll add it as we update our guide.

This [link](#) takes you to a page that links to all the current Canadian specialty societies.

The links below take you directly to the resident pages of the relevant Canadian specialty societies. For those in family medicine – it's linked above in the CFPC section.

CSIM (Canadian Society of Internal Medicine)

- mentorship and networking events at their AGM
- directory of senior staff willing to provide career counselling
- website with educational resources and a job posting section

PHPC (Public Health Physicians of Canada)

- informal mentorship and networking opportunities at the AGM
- career opportunities page on the website

CAEP (Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians)

- Resident Mentorship Program
- CAEP Fellowship Directory
- informal connections with colleagues/mentors online and through conferences

SOGC (Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada)

- website contains a "Career and Training" section, including a job bank
- Resident Career Guide that breaks down education and professional goals by PGY level

CAS (Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society)

- annual conference with networking opportunities for residents and fellows
- a Residents' Tumblr page that links to some useful fellowship resources, including an FAQ and forum
- website highlights examples of the various paths residents have taken during residency useful for residents thinking about fellowship

CSOHNS (Canadian Society of Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery)

- website contains a Job Board and Classifieds

CAP (Canadian Association of Pathologists)

- website that offers resources for practice management and finding fellowships, as well as job market surveys and careers section with active job postings

CCS (Canadian Cardiovascular Society)

- informal mentoring is available through the CCS conference and yearly Trainee Day
- website houses a national Fellowships database

CPA (Canadian Psychiatric Association)

- informal networking is available online and at their annual conference
- website highlights online careers/classifieds linked under the Professional/Academic section

CPS (Canadian Paediatric Society)

- website with information on how to set up a community practice plus locum listings

COA (Canadian Orthopedic Association)

- website contains a fellowship opportunities page for the Canadian orthopedic community and explains Canadian fellowships

