Achievement Report 2017



Northern Ontario School of Medicine École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario $\dot{P} \cdot \nabla \cap \dot{\Delta} \sim \dot{\Delta}^{2} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}^{2}$



No Ordinary School of Medicine

Northern Ontarians' strong and unified voice inspired the creation of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM), which was developed to help realize the dream that all Northern Ontarians—no matter where they live—have access to quality health care. NOSM is No Ordinary School of Medicine. Comparing NOSM to other medical schools would be like comparing apples and oranges. NOSM is the only Canadian medical school to function as the faculty of medicine for two universities—Lakehead University in Thunder Bay and Laurentian University in Sudbury. No other Canadian medical school was created with an explicit social accountability mandate to improve the health of the peoples and communities it serves. The School's mandate is far beyond education and research. NOSM is a strategy to address the health needs of Northern Ontarians, improve access to quality health care, and contribute to the economic development of communities across the North.

Northern Ontario Communities as Classrooms

NOSM's education is quite literally "all over the map," taking learners out of traditional classrooms. NOSM learners are educated in Northern Ontario communities about the local culture, economic realities, and social determinants of health that are relevant in the region with the expectation that their experiences will win over their hearts and minds, and encourage them to return to practise in the North upon completion of their education. And it's working. The majority of NOSM learners do remain to practise in the North.

90 communities participate in the education of NOSM learners.

More than

94% of NOSM graduates who have completed both their MD and residency programs at NOSM are now practising in Northern Ontario. In 2016, NOSM contributed more than **\$100 million** of new economic activity in Northern Ontario.

More about NOSM's wider campus of Northern Ontario: bit.ly/nosmmap2017

Responding to the TRC's 94 Calls to Action

In June 2017, NOSM released a report titled *NOSM's Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.* The report—a culmination of extensive consultation across the School—demonstrates the ongoing work of the portfolios and units within NOSM since 2003. Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples is a key component of what makes the Northern Ontario School of Medicine unique. Even before NOSM's Charter MD Class was welcomed in 2005, NOSM was committed to improving the health of the peoples and communities of Northern Ontario. At the earliest stages of development, the School engaged the Indigenous communities of Northern Ontario as part of its mandate to be accountable to the social, cultural, linguistic, and geographic diversity of the region. **nosm.ca/reconciliation**

Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program Celebrates Tenth Graduation

Since 2007, NOSM has offered the Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program (NODIP), a 46-week internship that teaches dietetic interns the skills and knowledge they need for rural and Northern practice. In July 2017, NOSM celebrated the tenth graduation of NODIP interns. Graduates are trained by dedicated preceptors and committed organizations across the North. To celebrate this achievement, a video titled *Standing Tall: NODIP@NOSM*, was created by Dr. Hoi Cheu, Professor of English and Film Studies at Laurentian University. **nosm.ca/nodip**

800,000 km² All of Northern Ontario is NOSM's campus.

Medical Physics Residency Established

In January 2017, NOSM announced another in a long list of collaborations with the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) in Thunder Bay and Health Sciences North (HSN) in Sudbury. The academic health sciences centres have partnered with NOSM to establish an accredited Medical Physics Residency Education Program (MPREP) to train medical physicists in the North, for the North. Medical physicists are health-care professionals with specialized training in the medical applications of physics. Their work often involves the use of x-rays, ultrasound, magnetic and electric fields, infrared and ultraviolet light, heat and lasers in diagnostic imaging departments, cancer treatment facilities, or hospital-based research establishments. **nosm.ca/mprep**



Empowered Faculty

NOSM clinical faculty do a lot more in their roles as physicians than just seeing patients. Of course, their passion to help patients is likely what drew them to practise medicine, but there are many ways that NOSM's clinical faculty contribute to improving the health of the peoples and communities of Northern Ontario, and beyond. They are involved with teaching the next generation of health professionals and conducting health research to better understand how to treat patients. Others may have an interest in administration or designing curriculum to ensure students learn the right skills and knowledge. NOSM faculty across the North complete these tasks to ensure that patients across the region have high quality care, now and in the future. They also devote time to leadership and advocacy to advance issues of their profession, as well as staying up-to-date with their continuing education.

In the last academic year, NOSM's faculty members across the North taught approximately: 260 MD students, 165 residents, 12 dietetic interns, 26 physician assistant learners, 292 visiting learners, and 220 health sciences learners in audiology, speech-language pathology, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy.

Outstanding Research

For many years, Canadian health research took place primarily in large cities, which meant that there were many health questions that were going unanswered in Northern Ontario. For example, how does working in mining or forestry affect one's health? Does living in Northern Ontario mean patients with mental illness have different outcomes? Why are chronic diseases more common in the North? Since opening in 2005, NOSM's research has focused on questions of importance to the health of Northern Ontarians. There are many NOSM faculty members—medical anthropologists, sociologists, biologists, immunologists, physicians, and more—who conduct leading-edge health research in laboratories, as well as in many community settings across the North.

NOSM currently has three research chairs. These researchers were awarded these positions based on the contributions they have made through their work and knowledge of their field of speciality:

- Dr. Douglas Boreham, Bruce Power Chair in Radiation and Health
- Dr. Gregory Ross, Discovery Air Fire Services Chair in Environment and Health Surveillance
- Dr. Sheldon Tobe, Heart and Stroke Foundation NOSM Chair in Aboriginal and Rural Health

Community Collaboration

Serving Francophone and Indigenous patients is an important part of being a health professional in many Northern Ontario communities. Learners have the option of completing placements in French-speaking communities with Francophone faculty members. In addition, students who self-identify as Francophone can access their textbooks in French, and French language classes are offered to all medical students who would like to expand their language skills to better serve their future patients. Indigenous and Francophone peoples across the North have been heavily involved with the School since its early stages of development. NOSM encourages Indigenous and Francophone students in high school and university to consider health careers, and supports them throughout their journey to becoming health professionals. Indigenous cultural competency training and time with Elders are available on campus for all learners, staff, and faculty. The School also hosts regular sweat lodges, community partnership gatherings, and Indigenous language classes for all those interested in participating.

526 MDs

have graduated

from NOSM.

Educational Excellence

NOSM is involved with teaching a wide array of health professional learners, including medical students, residents, dietitians, physician assistants, medical physicists, audiologists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, and speech-language pathologists.



Since 2010, the Northern Ontario Academic Medical Association has awarded **more than \$9.5 million to NOSM clinical faculty** to conduct health research in Northern Ontario. This research directly contributes to exploring and finding ways to improve the health of the North.

The Road Ahead

Although NOSM has recorded a number of successful milestones since opening its doors in 2005, there is still much work to

be done. Northern Ontario continues to face a broad range of challenges, such as: communities that continue to struggle with maintaining medical services; the growing demand for healthcare services; the continued need for culturally safe health care; the prevalence of chronic disease; unfavourable social determinants of health; the strain of clinical and teaching responsibilities on health professionals; and, the shortage of comprehensive health services for rural, remote, Francophone, and Indigenous communities.

123 Registered Dietitians have graduated from NOSM's Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program since the internship began in 2007. Approximately 92% of NOSM MD students are from Northern Ontario. 329 residents have completed NOSM's 9 postgraduate programs.

Since 2011, more than 160 NOSM-educated family doctors now practice in Northern Ontario, which translates to better access to care for approximately 190,000 Northern Ontarians.