



The Corporation of the Town of Bruce Mines

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July 6th, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

premier@ontario.ca

Re: Policy Without Appropriation: Physician Shortage in Northern Ontario and the Practice Ready Ontario Program

Dear Premier Ford,

On behalf of the Council of the Town of Bruce Mines, we are writing to, once again, address the physician shortage in Northern Ontario. This critical issue has been front and centre for years, and while the *Practice Ready Ontario (PRO)* program—which evaluates internationally educated family physicians to confirm they are ready to practice in Ontario—is widely acknowledged and genuinely applauded, the province appears to have stopped short of closing the loop.

Therefore, council is compelled to express our concern in the gap between the government's opening the door to a solution but falling short of providing the financial framework needed to walk through it.

Northern Ontario's municipalities face a structural imbalance that is fundamentally different from communities in the south. We are small in population, geographically dispersed, and operate with limited tax bases that cannot support the escalating costs associated with physician recruitment, retention, and community health infrastructure. Despite these limitations, municipalities are increasingly expected to shoulder responsibilities that fall squarely within the provincial mandate for health care delivery.

Municipalities **have** stepped in where we can, but we cannot continue to fund physician recruitment packages, housing incentives, locum coverage, or clinic operations without dedicated provincial support. The current model places an unsustainable burden on small

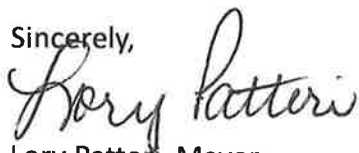
communities that simply do not have the tax revenue to fill the gaps left by the provincial health care system.

We respectfully request that the Province of Ontario:

1. **Establish a dedicated Northern Ontario Physician Recruitment and Retention Fund**, accessible to small and rural municipalities ensuring communities are not forced to subsidize provincial healthcare responsibilities.
2. **Work directly with Northern municipalities** to develop a coordinated strategy that reflects the unique demographic, geographic, and fiscal realities of the North.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further and look forward to a written response from your office.

Sincerely,



Lory Patten, Mayor
Town of Bruce Mines

Cc:

Ms. Marit Stiles

Leader of the Official Opposition
Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario

Mr. John Fraser

Interim Leader, Ontario Liberal Party

The Honourable Sylvia Jones

Deputy Premier of Ontario
Minister of Health

The Honourable George Pirie

Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth

Bill Rosenberg

Member of Provincial Parliament
Algoma—Manitoulin

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)

Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA)

Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)

Distributed to all Ontario municipalities.