

## **WIN 6.1 - Creating a Positive Work Environment**

### **Lesson 6 - Barriers to Recruitment**

Dr Chris Bourdon, Health Sciences North:

There are tremendous benefits to an organization like Health Sciences North, which is an academic health science centre in Sudbury, Ontario. Our affiliated medical school is the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. We're the main hospital for north-eastern Ontario. So this hospital, this organization couldn't function without IEHPs. There are rare departments that haven't had success from recruitment of an IEHP, and haven't benefitted from it. There's a whole bunch of moving parts. There's graduating physicians and/or other credentialed professionals like nurse practitioners or dentists, that we need to recruit in order to satisfy the needs of our clients, our patients.

#### **Barriers to Recruitment**

There are multiple barriers—I mean, we're a resource-rich yet resource-finite organization. We need to make sure that we're lean in our production, so that's one of the challenges. I can imagine we are amongst the most complex organizations with respect to hiring in that even the hire has some nuances to it—you know, perhaps a physician trained in another province or another country needs to get licensure in this province. There are several different paths to get licensure, and so those specialists that we use in an integrated model are acquired to help us navigate all that complicated, legislative requirements. Even though we're a regional health centre we're an academic health science centre; we're one of the newest—in fact, the newest kid on the block. And so our piece of the pie, so to speak, when it comes to academics is different than well-established health science centres. And so we need to make sure that we establish ourselves in that game, so to speak, and so that represents another challenge.

We're remote—I mean, we're certainly not remote as some other northern communities, I mean, there's good highways and good connections, but for some people, and where you look at where people train, the vast majority of people don't train in northern Ontario. We do now have, probably bar none, the most successful vehicle, and that is the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, the premise being if they train in the north, they'll stay in the north. And that premise has held true.

And so it's a bit of a flyer to move up to Sudbury, to move up to northern communities or serve northern communities, because you know it's different than being in Toronto or having the amenities of, you know, that cosmopolitan city. And so that—that's a struggle. And you know the socioeconomics of our region is such that we have a greater burden of illness. People aren't as highly educated; the incomes aren't as great; we have underserved segments of our population, either because of their remoteness or their history—we you look at the Aboriginal community, and we have a higher percentage of Aboriginals in northern Ontario that require different types of care or care that's culturally sensitive to their needs. And this is a francophone area, so there is certainly an asset if they're francophiles or francophones who can communicate with some of our patients in their language of choice.

The biggest barrier: sometimes it's a bit of a shock, especially in Sudbury, for IEHPs if they haven't been to a region like this, or they haven't seen snow, or they haven't been around, you know, a truly four season area, or they haven't been to an area where there's not as much summer. So there's a whole bunch of moving parts.

I'm sure it's not different than other jurisdictions; it's not dissimilar here; but there are very unique circumstances, all of which present their own unique challenges in recruitment, and they need consideration when we recruit someone in terms of, you know, having a positive effect on the end-game, and ensuring that we can deliver patient services.