



WILLIAM
OSLER
HEALTH
CENTRE

Osler This Month

Recruitment Efforts Help Draw New Doctors to Georgetown

In this second installment of our two-part feature on new physicians at William Osler Health Centre, we introduce two more doctors who have recently joined the Osler team as well as some of the physicians who have helped bring them on board.

At one time, physicians rarely took an active part in recruiting new doctors. But with the number of physicians in Ontario declining, Georgetown was in danger of losing its referral base for medical, surgical and obstetrical services. So, the medical staff began to take a more prominent role in the recruitment process.

Drs. Jeff Sutherland, Wei Chu, Ken Deichert, Paul Zeni and Debbie Zeni are all busy physicians with demanding practices and hospital duties. Still, they take time to travel to medical schools across Ontario to talk to new graduates and other doctors about what Georgetown has to offer. They also act as guides to the hospital (and occasionally dinner party hosts as in Debbie Zeni's case when the power blackout last summer forced the cancellation of a planned hospital tour.)

Jeff Sutherland is the Site Chief of Family Medicine at the Georgetown campus and as such one of the main contacts for prospective new physicians. "We're lucky in that Osler is a "family-physician-oriented environment," he says. "Graduates can become well-rounded physicians with a good balance of hospital and office work."

Doctors thinking about practicing in Georgetown can tour the hospital and meet the nurses and other staff informally. The Osler physicians also work with town officials to facilitate community tours. Even real estate agents get involved to show the benefits of living in Halton Region.

Debbie Zeni finds new medical graduates in particular want to know about more than just the work environment. "Generally, the newer grads are much better balanced than they used to be. They want time for family and leisure - downtime. Georgetown is great that way. It's in the countryside, near skiing and that kind of thing, but also fairly close to Toronto ...it's easy to sell."

Setting up practice in a new community is a complicated endeavour, especially for young graduates who often have high student debt loads. It can take months or even years between a physician's first contact with Osler and the time he or she actually begins to work at the hospital. The number of new doctors who have begun to practice here recently is testimony to the ongoing hard work of the Osler physicians, the Town of Halton Hills and Halton Region.



"From sand desert to snow desert!" That's how Dr. Nazar Sharobim describes the transition from his homeland in the Sudan to working as a general practitioner in St. Anthony on the Great Northern Peninsula in Newfoundland and Labrador.

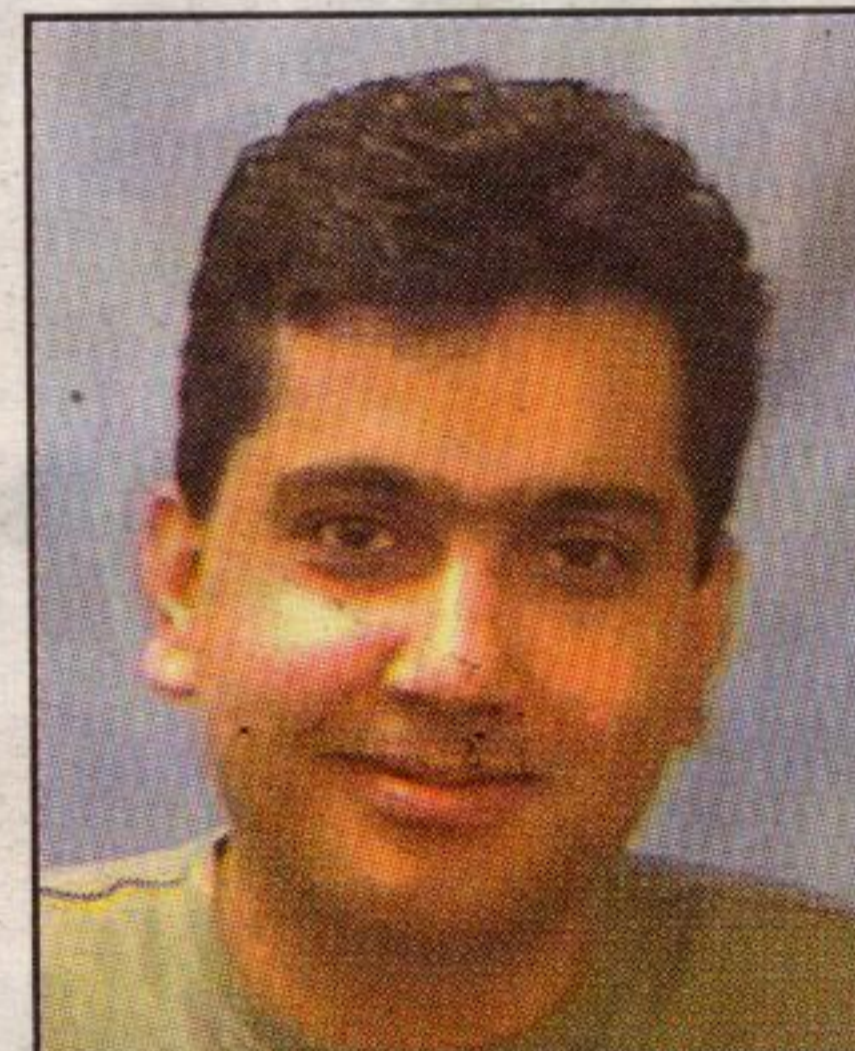
Literally and figuratively, it was a 'sea change'. But he doesn't regret his decision to move to Canada a bit. He believes it is the best place in the world and feels at home in the multicultural atmosphere here.

Dr. Sharobim finished his medical training in the Sudan and spent a year in Egypt on a rotation before coming to Canada on his own in 1996. Becoming licensed as a doctor in this country involved long hours of study and writing numerous examinations, but he was determined to follow his vocation as a physician. He worked in construction while studying, qualified as a general practitioner in Newfoundland and Labrador where he practiced for a year and a half, and then sat additional examinations to earn his designation as a family physician.

He moved to Ontario to be closer to relatives, worked in walk-in clinics in Toronto for a few months and eventually applied for a 're-entry' program funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. As part of this program, he was able to complete a year of emergency medicine training at The Ottawa Hospital in return for service in an underserved area. He chose to work in Georgetown where he provides emergency room coverage at the hospital and also works at the Georgetown Medical Associates Clinic.

Two months ago, he married his fiancée from the Sudan. After so many years of training and studying on his own, he is enjoying this new phase in his personal and professional life. And both he and his wife are happy living in the Toronto area.

When asked what he likes best about Canada, Dr. Sharobim doesn't even hesitate. "Everything ..." he smiles. "... the respect it gives back to people, the way everyone is equal whatever their race or religion. It's a great place to live."



Aimal Sediq never intended to practice medicine in a small community. But working a single shift at William Osler Health Centre - Georgetown when he was a medical student was enough to spark an interest that has brought him back to the hospital as a staff physician.

Originally from Afghanistan, Dr. Sediq attended high school in Toronto and graduated from the University of Toronto

before training in medicine at the University of Ottawa. He was in Toronto doing an elective in emergency medicine when the supervising physician suggested he take a shift at the Georgetown campus. "He was my supervisor, so naturally I said 'yes'," Dr. Sediq laughs. "But I worked there that day for 20 hours ... got to know all the staff, all the nurses ... and had a really good time. It stayed in my mind."

After his residency, he opted for a few weeks of elective work at Osler. Dr. Frank Martino, a staff physician based in Brampton, was instrumental in making the arrangements and setting up additional electives in obstetrics, orthopedics and anaesthesia. At the end of it all, Dr. Sediq had made up his mind - he wanted to practice in Georgetown.

Starting a new family practice isn't easy. Between that and raising two young children with his wife, there is little time for outside interests or thoughts of expanding into specialty areas of medicine. For now, Dr. Sediq's goals are clear. "I want to run a good clean practice. I want a good relationship with all my colleagues. I want my patients to be happy with the service they get. And I want to be happy with the service I give."

But he has plans for the future. Eventually he wants to teach, work with foreign doctors, and explore fields such as travel medicine and laser surgery.