

Two more doctors setting up practices in Milton

New physicians expected next year, but Milton still short of doctors

By Melanie Hennessey
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Milton's physician shortage will soon be further alleviated now that two new doctors are making plans to set up shop next spring.

The female physicians have confirmed they'll come to town to practise family medicine early next year, said Halton Physician Recruitment Co-ordinator Angela Sugden-Praysner.

"It's been a busy summer," she said. "A lot of physicians

have come to do site visits in all four (Halton) communities."

The two doctors are recent graduates, one from the University of Toronto and the other the University of Western Ontario.

Sugden-Praysner said it's still undecided as to whether they'll join existing practises or have their own offices.

She noted that she's also been working with another physician who could potentially come to Milton next month but has yet to confirm.

"Our fingers and toes are crossed," she said.

Recently, American-trained physician Dr. George Gleisner joined Milton's medical community.

The 40-year-old got his start as a doctor in the province through the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario's (CPSO) Registration Through Practice Assessment Program.

The initiative thoroughly assesses physicians and then

grants those who are qualified certificates of registration to practice in the province with an agreement to work in an under-served area for five years.

Recruitment efforts have also been successful around the rest of the region.

Three more doctors have been lined up for Burlington, with one coming next month and two more at the end of the year.

In Oakville, one new physician started in February while another just arrived to assume the practice of a retiring doctor.

And in Halton Hills, Sugden-Praysner said the big news is that a female physician has signed on to come to Acton next month.

But despite all of this, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care still deems three of Halton's municipalities under-served when it comes to doctors.

Sugden-Praysner said Milton is considered short two doctors, Halton Hills, five, and Burlington, six to eight.

While Oakville hasn't received the provincial under-served designation, Sugden-Praysner estimated it's short by about six to eight doctors as well.

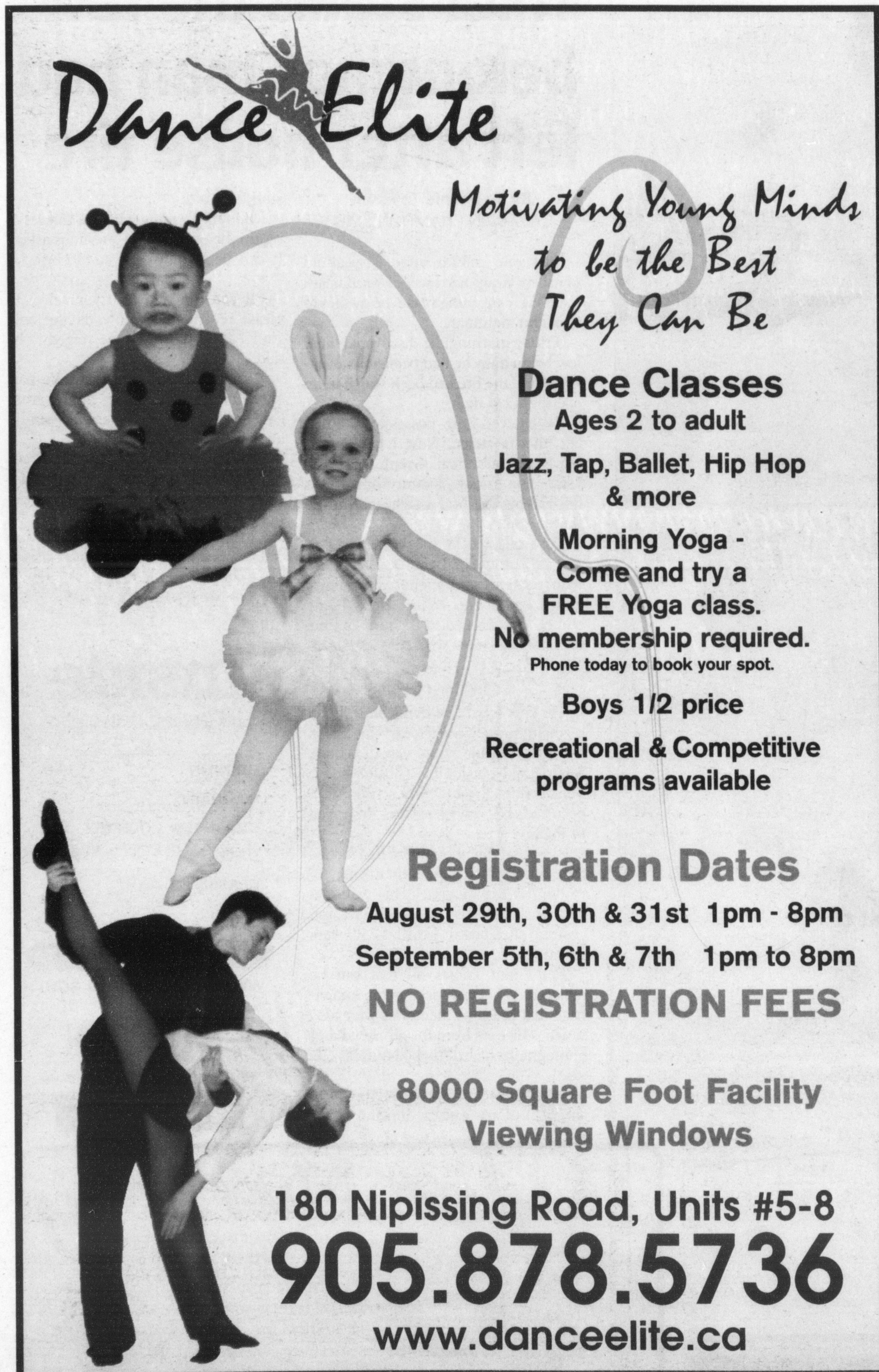
"The need is very great," she noted, adding that plans are in the works to make an application for Oakville to officially be deemed short on physicians by the Province.

A re-application for Milton's under-served designation is also going to be made, since the town is growing rapidly and the current shortage figure is based on an outdated population. Doing so would likely make the town short another six or eight doctors.

Although the under-served designation may sound like a negative thing, it actually comes with some perks. Family physicians that agree to practise in under-served areas for two years or more can receive up to \$40,000 in free tuition from the Province.

For more information on the Region's physician recruitment program visit www.halton.ca.

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