

Profile This Week

The Doctor Recruitment Programme

The Doctor Recruitment Programme is a programme which is designed to supply remote underserved areas of Canada with adequate health services. Under the direction of Dr. W.J. Copeman, M.D., D.P.H., F.C.F.P., Senior Medical Consultant with the Ministry of Health in Ontario, the programme has had an immense effect on providing doctors to underserved areas across the Northwest, including our own local area.

It is common knowledge that doctors tend to move from rural to urban settings, from north to south, and from family practices to specialty practices. On that note, it is little wonder why towns such as ours have difficulty in locating medical practitioners who will remain in our town.

In Ontario, since 1969, more than 160 communities have been designated as underserved for physician services. There are 305 doctors working in the Ministry of Health programme designed to attract doctors to such areas. It is the most successful programme of its kind in the world. There is, however, an annual attrition rate of 5-10 per cent (normal attrition for doctors is about 3 per cent) and approximately fifty doctors are needed for the programme annually.

More and more towns are realizing that community involvement is necessary, to ensure the provision of health care. The initiatives to bring health services come from town councils, chambers of commerce, industry, service clubs

and private individuals.

Dr. Copeman has designed a programme that is meant to attract doctors to these underserved areas. This programme has many components. In order to ensure that our area will never do without the necessary medical personnel, there are certain steps that towns must take. One is local organization, where a local group or individual is responsible to organize and manage a programme to attract a doctor.

Another is an advertising campaign where advertisements are placed in professional medical journals, such as the Canadian Medical Association Journal; The Journal of Canadian Family Physician and The Ontario Medical Review; the advertisements should be run continuously until a physician has been recruited.

Contacts are also made to the medical schools and to the teaching hospitals where residents and interns are being trained. For the past three years, the Ministry of Health has been conducting a physician recruitment programme on successive evenings at each of the five medical schools in Ontario; those being London, Hamilton, Ottawa, Toronto and Kingston. All residents, interns, senior medical students and doctors at the medical schools who are interested in obtaining their own practice, will also be in attendance at these meetings. This series of evening meetings is commonly known as the *Underservices Area Programme Recruitment Tour*; and joining the various medical people are Hospital Administrators, hospital personnel, heads of town councils, Chamber of Commerce people, and other professionals who are interested in attracting physicians to their area.

In Ontario, the Ministry of Health will pay the expenses for a physician and spouse to visit a potential community which is designated as an underserved area for physician's services. The visit by the doctor is a crucial part of attracting the physician to the community, and the community and professional hospitality displayed is of great importance. Some things are essential, and others are desirable and helpful in attracting the doctor and his family.

Some of the enticing factors are: good housing with a reasonable rent; modern attractive clinic facilities at a reasonable rent; a rotational call system among doctors in the area; the presence of a group practice; specialist back-up availability from resident and visiting specialists; adequate vacation allowance; time off; good schools; good recreational opportunities for all members of the family; employment for the doctor's spouse and an adequate community programme which will make the doctor and family feel welcome and appreciated (which is very helpful in keeping them in the community.)

The Underserved Area Programme Recruitment Tour is taking place this week in the southeastern parts of Ontario, and McCaus-

land Hospital and Terrace Bay will be well represented there. Hospital Administrator Don Ross and Chief Lab Technician Administrative Assistant, Jim Files will be in attendance during the entire tour to the five medical centres. Dr. Wilkes also plans on flying down for the Friday session as a representative for McCausland Hospital and the town of Terrace Bay.

The Recruitment Programme in our area receives much support not only from the hospital itself, but also from the municipalities of Terrace Bay and Schreiber and Rosspport. The hospital has been involved in this programme for the past three years and has been responsible for bringing Dr. Wilkes, Dr. Croll and Dr. Lau into our area.

Don Ross said that they have upgraded their presentation this year with various pamphlets on Rosspport, Schreiber and Terrace Bay, as well as with an audio-visual slide presentation of our area.

I was able to view this presentation before it went before the public, and I must say that it was one of the best that I have seen. The slides cover a variety of establishments throughout our local area including stores, services, schools, service groups,



Hospital Administrator Don Ross proudly displays McCausland Hospital's presentation devices and chats with the commentator of the audio-visual display Bev Lafoley and with script writer Bill Glassier.

and of course the hospital. Don Ross, with the help of the M.N.R. helicopter was able to capture the beauty of the north shore area through his camera, and Physiotherapists Bev Lafoley and Bill Glassier provided the script and voice for the presentation. Between the three of them, nothing has been left untouched. They were out to promote our area, and they have successfully done so.

"It's a case of the little towns vs. the big towns down there," said Administrator Don Ross. "We are competing with towns such as North Bay, Sudbury and Thunder Bay, many of them having used a professional consulting service to put to-

gether their presentation. The Recruitment Programme has become a very competitive one, and we have to make our town look and sound as attractive as possible in order that these young doctors will become interested in settling here."

Not only does this tour provide an opportunity to locate permanent doctors for this area, it is also used to find 'locums' or part-time physicians when needed. Dr. Copeman's services are also used to locate doctors for relief duty, when our own are on vacation.

This year there will be over 300 interested and possible recruits at the

tour; many of whom are looking at towns such as ours, for three years or so down the road.

"The programme is an excellent one," says Don Ross, "not only because it provides doctors to the area, but also because it makes them aware of our community and keeps their interests up for when they are ready to start their practices."

For those of you who think that obtaining a doctor for our area is an easy task, think again. It involves a lot of hard selling, good public relations and some hard-working individuals.

Without them, health services would indeed be at a premium.

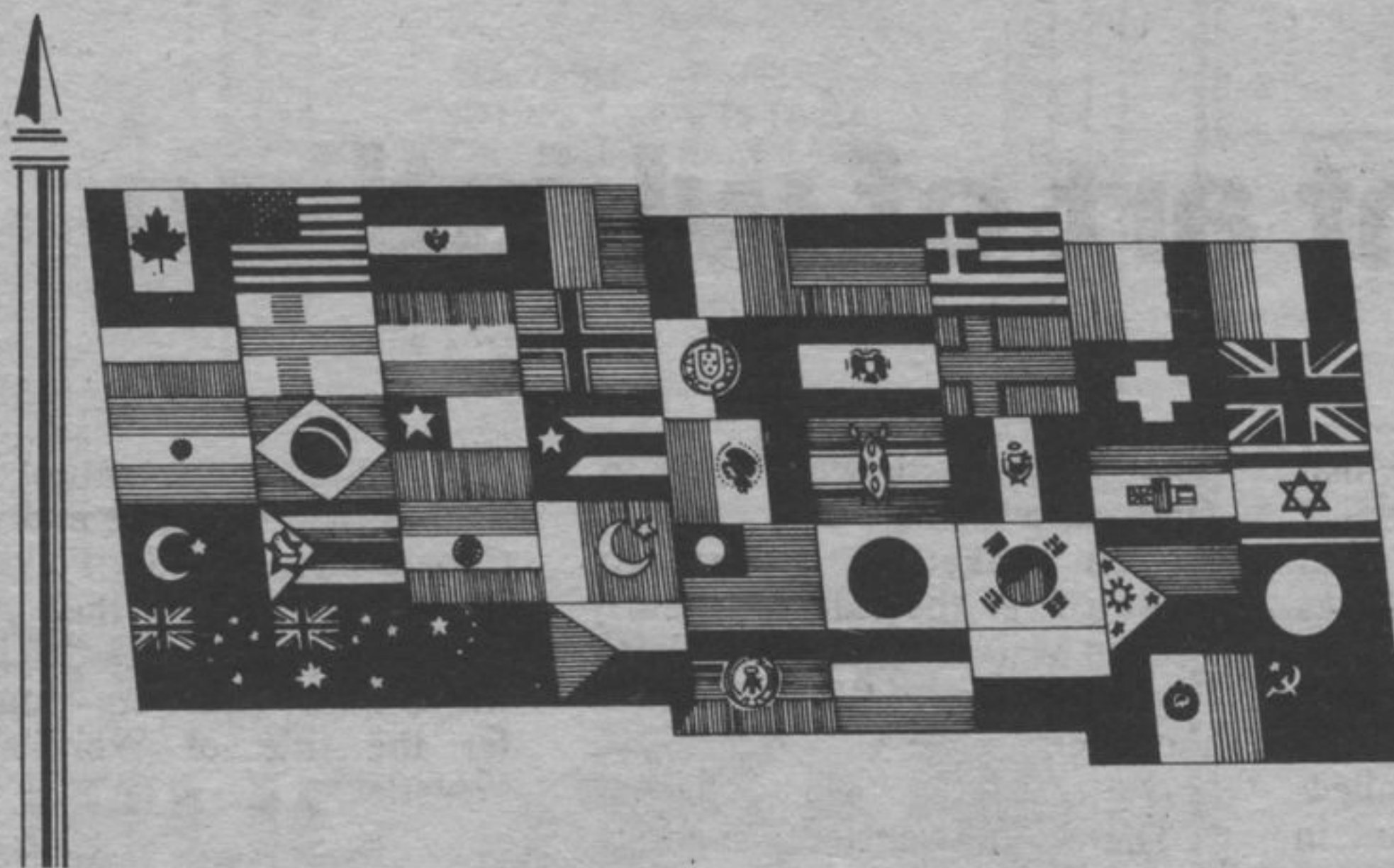
We would like to apologize to Rick and Marilyn MoQuin for the typo error in their birth announcement last week. Their son's name should have appeared as

AARON EDWARD



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