June 23, 2006

TO: All Municipalities in the Province of Ontario

RE: Internationally Trained Physicians

The Council of the Regional Municipality of York at its meeting of June 22, 2006 adopted the following resolution regarding Internationally Trained Physicians:

WHEREAS the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) predicts that the physician shortage in Ontario will reach 2,347 in 2006 and 2,648 in 2008 in its report entitled Ontario Physician Shortage 2005: seeds of progress, but resource crisis deepening; and,

WHEREAS it is estimated that 1.2 million Ontarians are without a Family Physician; the population of Ontario continues to grow and age and this problem will grow worse over time as more physicians retire; and

WHEREAS qualified International Medical Graduates (IMGs) can make a valuable contribution to Ontario's health care system, particularly with respect to alleviating the current and predicted future physician shortage; and

WHEREAS in York Region, Georgina and East Gwillimbury are designated by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long – Term Care as underserviced areas for Family Physicians; and

WHEREAS it is noted that the MOHLTC [in conjunction with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) and Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine] has recently created up to 200 postgraduate International Medical Graduates training or evaluation positions per year for fully qualified IMGs who are residents of Ontario or require postgraduate training; and

WHEREAS internationally trained experienced physicians who currently practice outside of Ontario may be eligible for the new Registration through Practice Assessment Program, (RPA); and

WHEREAS The Regional Municipality of York recognizes that although some positive progress has been made, the physician shortage in Ontario necessitates even more progress in this area;

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Regional Municipality of York urges the Government of the Province of Ontario and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario take immediate action to:
1. devote more resources to manage the increase in the numbers of International Medical Graduates applying to the IMG Program
2. take action to make the temporary/pilot IMG program permanent and self-sufficient
3. prevent delays and remove barriers to the assessment of experienced internationally - trained physicians through the RPA program so that they practice in Ontario without unnecessary delays; and

THAT the Regional Clerk forward a copy of this resolution to the Premier of Ontario, the Ontario Minister of Health, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the CPSO, all municipalities in Ontario, all York Region MPPs and MPs, the Leaders of the Opposition Parties, and the College of Family Physicians of Canada.