

## **Are You Struggling to Recruit an Associate? Michigan Health Council's, "Physician Recruitment 101" Can Help**

By Kim Burley

At the Michigan Health Council, we manage three physician recruitment programs; Medical Opportunities in Michigan (MOM), Physician Sourcing Service (PSS) and Consulting Partners in Recruitment (CPR) to aid in keeping physicians practicing in Michigan. As we work with our member hospitals across the state, we find that the individuals that are managing the physician recruitment process, especially in the more rural community hospitals, are administrators and they find it very challenging to juggle responsibilities and allow time for recruitment. Physicians practicing in group practices also find it difficult to dedicate time to recruit partners. Often, their office managers end up coordinating their efforts. They may or may not have physician recruitment experience and knowledge of sourcing methods available. For those individuals that have never recruited physicians before, knowing how to get started and what recruitment resources are available is the hardest part.

The Health Council has developed an on-site "Physician Recruitment 101" training program to provide an overview of the physician recruitment process and assist the client in developing a recruitment and retention strategy.

Dale Terpstra, DO, Vice President of Physician Services at Zeeland Community Hospital, a boarded ENT and Family Medicine physician, wears many hats. Not only does he have oversight for their medical staff office which provides support to oversee credentialing, privileging, and peer review processes he supervises the providers in two hospital owned medical practices. In addition to all of these responsibilities, he is in charge of physician recruitment at Zeeland. According to Dr. Terpstra, he is spending 15-20% of his time related to recruitment activities. Prior to assuming his role at Zeeland, he never officially had experience recruiting physicians.

The physician shortage along with the current state of the economy in Michigan and lifestyle issues have made recruiting very difficult. Dr. Terpstra said, "There are more physicians interested in less than full time positions as well as not being interested in traditional type practice situations. There is more demand for part-time, outpatient or ambulatory type practices and less interest in hospital work combined with the office practice." "Sharing in call responsibilities is also more of an issue," added Terpstra.

Dr. Terpstra, a current MOM and PSS member, participated in the MHC “Recruitment 101” training. He found the overview of the variety of ways to reach prospective candidates and how to make contact time most effective and efficient while enhancing the ability to make the best possible impression in an honest manner very helpful. Dr. Terpstra’s session was two hours and included details on determining the ideal candidate profile, gathering search opportunity information, key sourcing methods available, obtaining key information during candidate and spouse initial intakes, reference and background checks, candidate/spouse site visit expectations, conducting effective site visits, visit follow-up, contracting and practice start-up preparation.

A variety of recruitment tools; checklists and forms were provided to assist in the gathering of effective search opportunity information, an intake form for initial candidate contact, a spouse questionnaire, reference check materials and sample visit itineraries were also provided.

Today, Dr. Terpstra utilizes the MOM and PSS programs as key sourcing methods to obtain potential candidates. As a result of his “Recruitment 101” training, he is also identifying contacts in local medical training facilities to provide information that can be disseminated to potential candidates. Dr. Terpstra said, “We have had a number of leads from the sources we are using. They have helped to provide a means to get leads we would not have had otherwise.”

Incidentally, Dr. Terpstra currently has opportunities available for Family Medicine, Internal Medicine and Hospitalists. Dr. Terpstra explained why a physician would want to consider Zeeland. “We have a brand new hospital (two years old), a great family centered community which is close to Grand Rapids, a major metropolitan area, while still being close to great recreational opportunities. The community values people with high integrity and moral character and those willing to demonstrate their support for members of the community.”

The onsite “Recruitment 101” training is available in two hour, and half and full-day sessions. Contact Kim Burley, Director, Physician Sourcing and Consulting at 800-550-6013 or at [kim.burley@mhc.org](mailto:kim.burley@mhc.org) for more information.

The author Kim Burley is the Director, Physician Sourcing and Consulting at the Michigan Health Council. Visit [www.mhc.org](http://www.mhc.org) or contact Kim at 800-550-6013 or [kim.burley@mhc.org](mailto:kim.burley@mhc.org).