

2026 Northern Ontario Community Concierge and Connection Event

Thunder Bay; October 22 to 24, 2026

Thursday, October 22 2026

Prior to official conference start		
Morning	Possible separate opportunity involving students in Confed College and Lakehead University	
Afternoon	Arrival and hotel check-in	
Time	Proposed Item	Speakers
5:00 to 6:00 p.m.	Dinner, structured activity to meet one another and welcome new recruiters	
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.	Recruitment and retention strategies that work in small and rural communities	Speaker TBD
7:00 to 8:00 p.m.	Looking into the future: what emerging physicians want and need as they consider their future work	Panel of UME / PGME learners
The evening is ending early with the goal of sharing social time and building community together		

Friday, October 23 2026

Time	Proposed Item	Speaker(s)
8:00 to 8:45 a.m.	Breakfast	
8:45 to 9:30 a.m	NOSM University update. • expansion of medical education, where learners are training • electives update - NOR STAR • where NOSM University graduates are practising, and what increased learner presence may mean for Northern Ontario communities.	Dr. Kim Varty, Dr. Jason Sutherland, Dr. Sarah Newbery, David McGuire (tentative)
9:30 to 10:15 a.m.	Many roads lead to practice: Non PRO pathways into training and practice - this will also touch on international electives.	OH-HFO representative
10:15 to 10:30 a.m.	Break	
10.30 to 11.15 am	The PRO pathway to practice	Dr. Eric Wong (joining virtually) Medical Director of PRO program
11:15 to 12:15	Break out groups among recruiters. Opportunity to build on discussions from November 2025	Dr. Sarah Newbery (facilitator)
12:15 to 12:30 p.m.	Closing discussion and overview of the evening plan	

Time	Proposed Item	Speaker(s)
12:30 to 4:00 p.m.	Break before preparing for the evening. This period is intended to provide time for lunch and to prepare for the reception.	
4:00 to 6:00 p.m.	Prepare community exhibit spaces and final preparations before the reception.	
6:00 to 9:00 p.m.	Community Connection reception at the Valhalla Hotel and Conference Centre. Current planning is for an informal evening centered on direct conversations among community representatives, recruiters, residents, undergraduate medical learners and other attendees. The proposed format includes community exhibit spaces, cocktail tables, buffet-style appetizers and desserts, and opportunities to move through the space without a sit-down dinner or formal presentation interrupting conversations. Current planning also includes a NOSM University information table where interested undergraduate medical learners can ask about family medicine residency opportunities.	
9:00 to 10:00 p.m.	Take down materials.	

Saturday, October 24

To be confirmed	Possible separate opportunity involving students in other health services programs.
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