



Fulfilling Potential: Foreign-Trained Physicians A Pathway Forward for Maine

A Remote Forum Sponsored by

**The New Mainers Resource Center, Portland Adult Education
The Daniel Hanley Center for Health Leadership**



Thank you to our Co-Sponsors who have shared their valuable time and expertise.



United Way
of Southern Maine



Today's Agenda

9:00 AM - Welcomes and Keynote Speaker

9:30 AM - Overview of the Challenges - Panel Discussion with Q & A

10:30 AM - Breakout Rooms - Physicians Share Their Stories

10:45 AM - Break

11:00 AM - Overview of Progress - Panel Discussion with Q & A

11:50 AM - Wrap and Adjourn

Thank you all for spending your morning here!

Here are some guidelines for our online format:

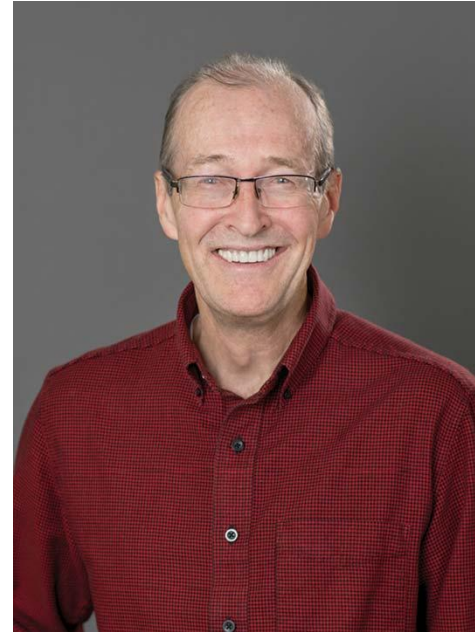
- **Please keep your microphone on mute unless you are speaking.**
- **During the Q and A section please “raise your hand” if you would like to speak or use the chat function.**
- **The event will be recorded.**
- **Members of the press are present but will not be recording or using anything said as quotes.**
- **If there are additional questions after the conference, you are welcome to “stay” after the conference.**

WELCOME!



Executive Director
Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition

WELCOME!



ERIK N. STEELE, D.O.
President, Maine Medical Association

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Mohamed Khalif

Founder, The Washington Academy
for International Medical Graduates.

Washington Academy for IMGs



Mission

Our organization was created in 2019 to address and break down barriers that prevent Washington international medical graduates from accomplishing their professional and medical career goals.



Member Profile

Our organization supports immigrant or refugee physicians who have obtained their medical degree abroad.

Key Initiatives

We help immigrants and refugees achieve career success by providing:

- Career preparation
- Professional development
- Licensing and credential guidance

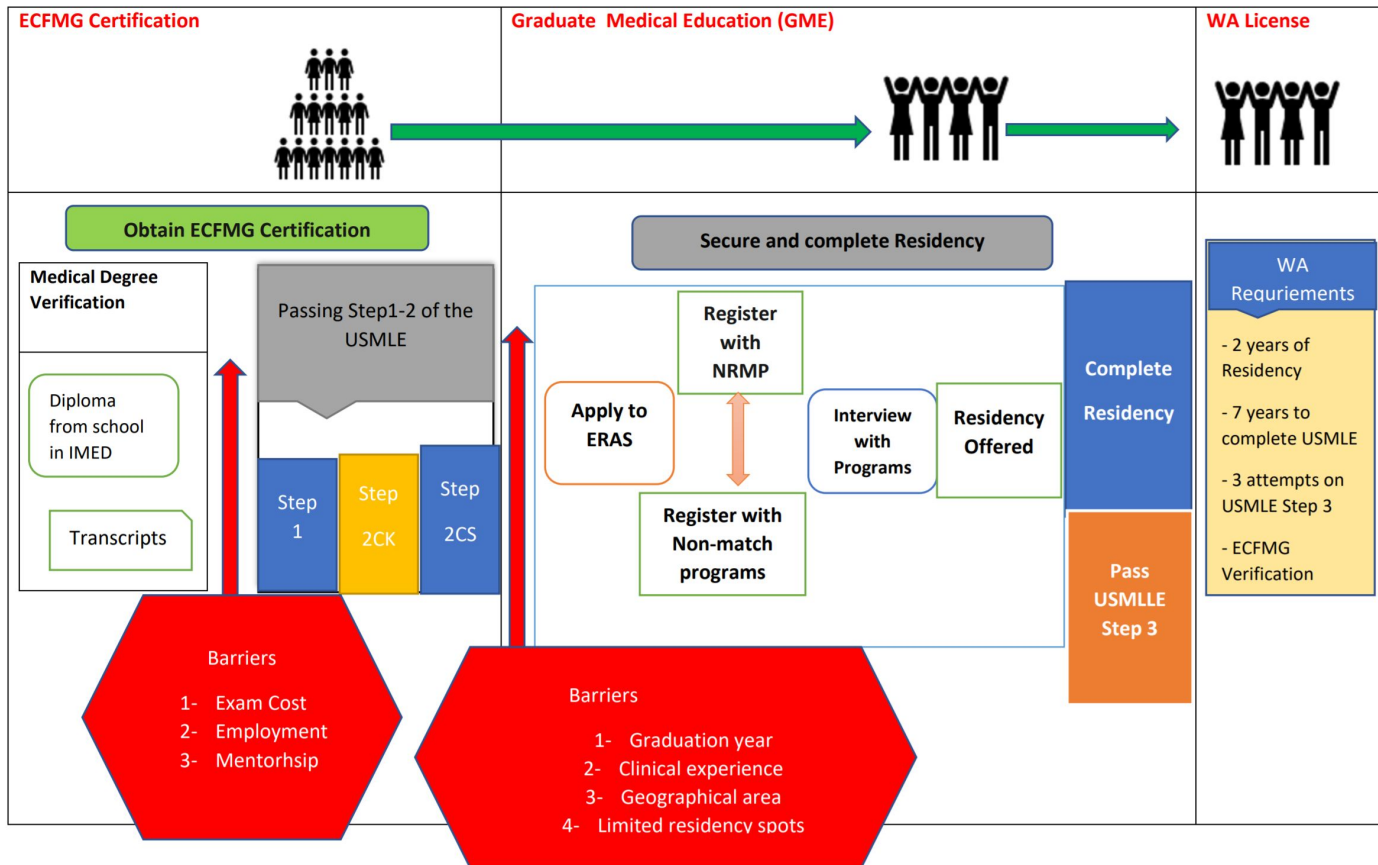
About the people we serve

500 Immigrant and Refugee Physicians In WA

20 different languages

93% are underemployed

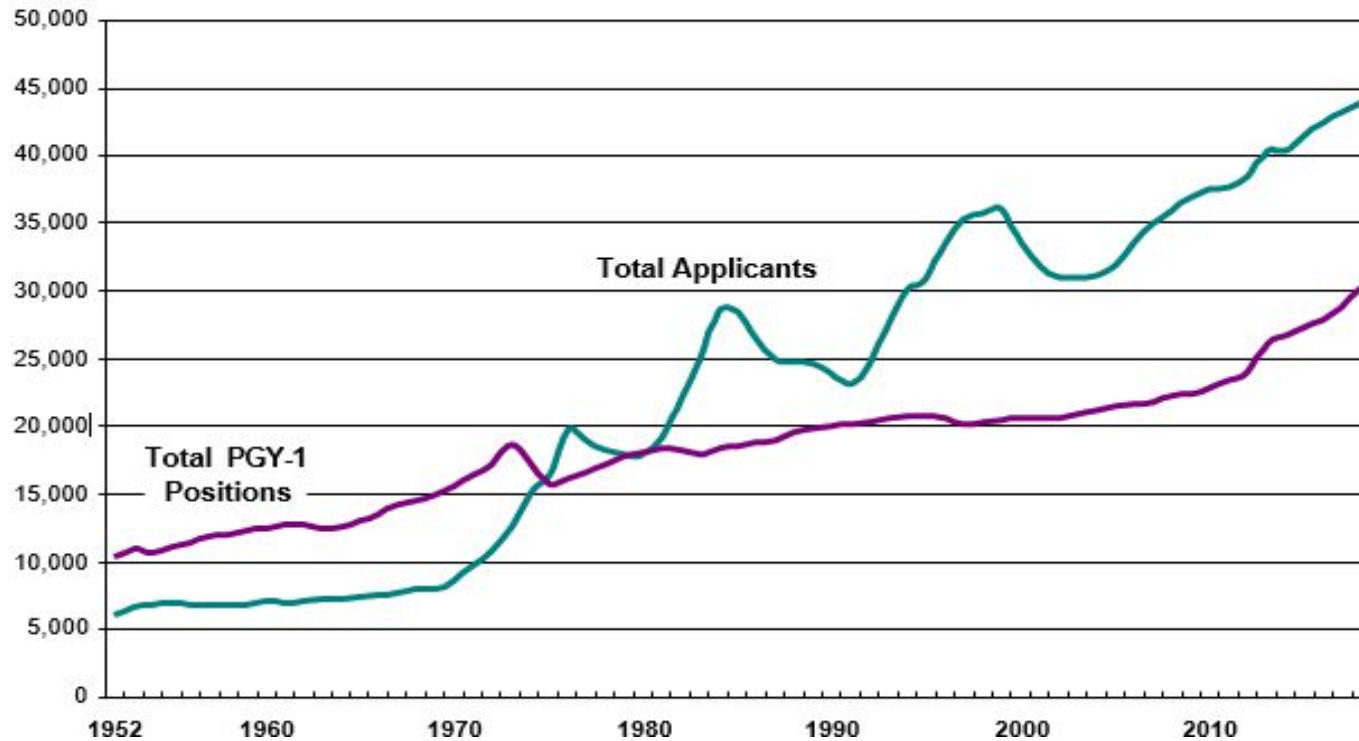
Most common employment is Uber



USMLE: United States Medical License Examination **NRMP:** National Residency Matching Program **ERAS:** Electronic Residency Application Service
ECFMG: Educational Commission For Foreign Medical Graduates **IMED:** International Medical Education Directory

Figure 1

Applicants and 1st Year Positions in the Match, 1952 - 2018



HB 1129

- ❑ Limited License to IMGs who completed Step 1, 2 CK, 2CS and Step 3 of the USMLE
- ❑ The WMC may, upon the written request of the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or the Secretary of the Department of Corrections (DOC), issue limited licenses to persons who work with patients, residents, or inmates of state institutions under the control and supervision of the DSHS or the DOC.
- ❑ In 2019 the Department of Children, Youth, and Families assumed control of programs previously administered by the DSHS, including juvenile rehabilitation facilities, community facilities, and parole services. Therefore, this bill allows DCYF to request IMGs.
- ❑ Local health departments and licensed health facilities may request limited license.



WASHINGTON
**Medical
Commission**

Licensing. Accountability. Leadership.

International Medical Graduates Clinical Experience License

In 2021, the legislature passed [SHB 1129](#). This new law requires the Medical Commission (WMC) offer a limited license for International Medical Graduates (IMG) to gain clinical experience. Those meeting specific criteria and requirements below can be licensed for two years, with the option for one renewal for a total practice time of four years.

Applicants

People wishing to apply for this limited license meet the following criteria:

- Be a Washington state resident for at least one year;
- Be [ECFMG](#) certified; and
- Pass all steps of the [USMLE](#).

IMGs meeting these conditions must:

1. [Submit an application](#);
2. Complete a background check; and
3. Maintain practice agreement between the license holder and the supervising physician with the medical commission. The practice agreement portal [can be accessed here](#). If a practice agreement needs to be amended or terminated, it will need to be filed with the WMC at medical.delegations@wmc.wa.gov



Thank You !

Mohamed Khalif

Mohamedk@waimg.org





Panel Discussion

Overview of the Challenges

Facilitated by
Sally Sutton, MAPP, MSSW, Program Coordinator
New Mainers Resource Center

Foreign-Trained Physicians - Definition and Maine Population

Foreign-Trained Physician (FTP) – For the purpose of this program, when referring to FTPs, we mean those individuals who have completed medical school outside of the U.S., as well as whatever licensing requirements, exist in that country and who have been practicing medicine in a particular specialty. They are a licensed, practicing physician. (From Hanley Leadership Development XV, Foreign-Trained Physician Workforce Development Group)

Maine Population - High number of refugees and asylum seekers

Panel Participants

José Ramón Fernández-Peña, MD, MPA



Panel Participants

Susan E. Bell, Ph.D.



Panel Participants

Georges Kanda



Pathways through medical licensure and immigration

Susan E. Bell

Drexel University

January 19, 2023

Fulfilling Potential: Foreign-Trained Physicians

A PATHWAY FORWARD FOR MAINE

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Foreign-Trained Physicians International Medical Graduate (IMG) categorizations

US citizen IMG (USIMG)

- medical school outside the US
 - Caribbean medical school

non-US citizen IMG (non-USIMG)

- prepare to complete medical training in a US residency
- J-1 visa

Refugee Physician (non-USIMG forced to flee from homeland)

- medical license from homeland
- status of asylee, refugee, asylum-seeker, etc.

US medical licensure requirement for International Medical Graduates

- Become certified by Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)

+

- Pass US Medical Licensure Exam

+

- “Match” to US medical residency

+

- Complete US medical residency

Table 1: Refugee Physicians Training

Characteristic	
Year of graduation from medical school, mean (range)	2010 (1997-2018)
Progress on path to US Medical Licensure	N = 28
Not pursuing US medical license	4
Studying for USMLE	7
ECFMG certified	17
Applied to residency	15
Matched to residency	7
Did not match to residency	8
Has not applied to residency	2
Average years to successful residency match	6
Observerships	N = 28
No observership	8
Completed observership	20
Average number observerships completed (range)	2 (1-8)

I am grateful to the study participants who generously shared their experiences.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Lillian Walkover (UC San Diego) to this research. During the time she was a postdoctoral fellow in Global Health at Drexel University, Dr. Walkover participated in recruiting, interviewing, and interpreting the interviews and was co-author of “The case for refugee physicians.”

Thanks are also due to Drexel’s College of Arts and Sciences and the following Drexel undergraduates for supporting the project: Sanam Amin, Precious Anyadike, Leighann Carrion, Madeline DelVescovo, Julia Fucci, Amanda Ma, Synthiche Smart, and Virginia Wardell.



Breakout Rooms

Physicians Share their Stories



Break: Back at 10:45



Panel Discussion

Overview of Progress

Facilitated by
Vanessa Sylvester, M.Ed., Program Associate
New Mainers Resource Center

Panel Participants



Michael Zimmer, JD
Senior Policy Advisor at
World Education Services.



Amy Grunder
Director of Legislative Affairs
Massachusetts Immigrant and
Refugee Advocacy Coalition



Robert P. Marlin, MD, Ph.D., MPH
Chief of the Metta Health Center,
Lowell Community Health Center



FULFILLING POTENTIAL: FOREIGN-TRAINED PHYSICIANS A PATHWAY FORWARD FOR MAINE

JANUARY 19, 2023

Robert P. Marlin, MD, PhD, MPH
Chief, Metta Health Center
Associate Chief Medical Officer
Lowell Community Health Center
Lowell, MA



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
SPECIAL COMMISSION ON
FOREIGN-TRAINED
MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

AN OVERVIEW

Commission Goals

- licensing internationally trained physicians
- expanding access to healthcare services in rural and underserved areas of Massachusetts
- legislative recommendations to the General Court (Senate and House of Representatives)



barriers to licensure identified

- lack of familiarity with the U.S. healthcare system and licensure requirements
- loss of professional identity
- lack of professional network in MA and the U.S. generally
- resource constraints of working “survival” jobs to meet family obligations

barriers to licensure identified

- complexity of state licensing requirements
- arbitrary and discriminatory regulations
- lack of financial assistance to cover licensing/testing/other fees
- Lack of dedicated support from BORIM and higher education systems

barriers to licensure identified

- requirement for U.S. graduate medical education (residency)
- time to licensure
- time limit for completing USMLE exam sequence

Special Commission recommendations: administrative and legislative

- enhanced online and staff resources
- time to licensure
- time limit for completing USMLE exam sequence



Special Commission recommendations: legislative and regulatory

- access to residency: MN IMG Assistance Program (IAP) model
- Access to residency: MN Bridge to Residency for Immigrant International Doctor Graduates (BRIIDGE) model

Special Commission recommendations: Pathway to Full Licensure

- limited licensure by Board of Registration in Medicine
 - no U.S. residency experience required
 - focus on practice, not clinical training
 - based in under-resourced community settings
 - limitation in location, not scope
 - renewable
 - financially feasible for internationally trained physicians and sponsoring organizations

Special Commission recommendations: Pathway to Full Licensure

- restricted licensure by Board of Registration in Medicine
 - focus on rural/underserved areas in MA
 - focus on primary care, psychiatry and other specialties most needed in these areas
 - restriction is geographic, not related to scope of practice
 - provides a full salary
 - renewable (2 year minimum)
 - upon completion, eligible for full, unrestricted license

Special Commission recommendations: Pathway to Full Licensure

- builds on the Canadian Practice Readiness Assessment (PRA)
- potential for adoption in other states and for other disciplines



thank you

<https://budget.digital.mass.gov/summary/fy20/outside-section/section-102-special-commission-on-foreign-trained-medical-professional-licensure>





Update: Maine Legislation

An Act to Establish a Special Commission Regarding Foreign-Trained Physicians Living in Maine

**Representative Kristen Cloutier, Lewiston
Assistant House Majority Leader**



Adjourn

Thank you to the speakers, physicians and facilitators for making this event possible