

What would I say to a candidate interested in rural medicine and why the candidate should consider Hanover strongly?

A little about me....

I was born in India but have travelled through a few countries before immigrating to Canada in 2005. After graduating high school, I enrolled into engineering but was also spending time with the Western College of Veterinary Medicine which sparked my interest in medicine. I graduated medical school from the University of Saskatchewan and embarked on a journey to learn about rural medicine in Hanover, Ontario. Hanover is a town of ~7,500 people almost in the middle of Southwestern Ontario and if you zoom into Google maps, you can even see that it has a Walmart. Having never done an elective in Hanover and ranking it quite high on my CaRMS application, little did I know that I had stumbled upon one of the best residency programs in Canada, at least for me. One would think that since Hanover is only 2 hours from London or Toronto, most things are referred out but such is not the case. Before I embark on why I chose Hanover, a potential resident should ask oneself:

“Where do you want to live?” and “What do you want to do?”

The profession of medicine is both demanding and rewarding at the same time. It is imperative that one consider both their professional and personal goals before picking any residency program. Having worked in both urban and rural family practices and been interested in a competitive residency program like Urology, I wanted to be a skilled clinician working in a comprehensive practice, which includes community-based care, long-term-care, inpatient medicine, emergency medicine, and low-risk obstetrics. As the primary health care provider participating in all aspects of care for my patients from office, to acute hospital care and minor surgical procedures, I can build special relationships complementing my image of a general physician. Very few specialties in medicine have the privilege to see up close and personal the wholesome effects of a disease on the patients’ psyche, feelings, and function. At the same time, I wanted to enjoy the “big city” cultural events, concerts, restaurants, or attractions like escape rooms, and be close to the outdoors for hiking, canoeing, paintball and snowboarding. Now, back to Hanover...

I chose Hanover because it allows me to work in a rural environment and look at the patient in entirety in an era of super-specialization with the convenience of visiting the big cities within the same day if necessary. On any regular week, I

work in the emergency department, assess inpatients, manage clinic patients, assist in the OR, provide obstetrical care, and do home visits for palliative care. One can truly experience rural generalism but if you have special interests, then the program can be tailored to meet your learning goals. The preceptors in Hanover are among the best I have had the pleasure of working with and I cannot emphasize this more. It also helps that the electronic medical records are modern with integration between the hospital and the clinic records although the west has it best! The learning environment is essential in ensuring one's learning and retention of the vast amount of knowledge and skills required to be a competent family physician in just 2 years! Many of the preceptors have special interests in most of the enhanced skills programs offered across Canada such as emergency medicine, palliative care, anaesthesia, and obstetrics. On the flip side, my friends and I meet over the weekends in either London or Toronto to engage in board game battles, or breaking escape rooms, while tasting cuisines from around the world.

If your aim is to enjoy the different hats one must wear during their training or career as a rural family doctor while still enjoying the benefits of going to the great lakes or attending various festivals in Ontario, then Hanover offers a great program that meets both your personal and professional goals.

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