

ROMP Students Gain Exposure to Peterborough's Family Medicine System

Rural Ontario Medical Program tours local health services, making a stop at Peterborough Family Health Team.

PETERBOROUGH, ON— Medical learners from the Rural Ontario Medical Program (ROMP) visit Peterborough Family Health Team on Thursday, May 29, for a day of immersive education and exposure to real-world primary care during the 2025 ROMP Week. The 10 students join local Peterborough family doctors to gain valuable insight in the family medicine world.

While Peterborough is often viewed as a small urban centre, many surrounding areas fall under Ontario's rural classification. Local family physicians are deeply committed to medical education, and today, many have generously volunteered their time to engage with these learners. Thanks to the collaboration of Peterborough Family Health Team, the Family Physician Think Tank, and dedicated family physicians, the visiting ROMP learners are paired with local family doctors who are not only passionate about teaching but also eager to share the unique Peterborough experience.

Family medicine is more than team-based care—it encompasses a wide breadth and scope that extends beyond traditional primary care. Across the province, family physicians practise in diverse areas such as low-risk obstetrics (e.g. Partners in Pregnancy Clinic), palliative care, student health, emergency medicine, and more.

"Medical learners, like the ROMP students, represent the future of our primary healthcare system," said Duff Sprague, CEO of the Peterborough Family Health Team. "The chance to learn alongside some of the most dedicated physicians I've encountered is truly invaluable. By offering them a meaningful experience within our community, I hope we're planting the seeds for future recruitment and helping to sustain family medicine across Ontario."

ROMP has supported medical students and residents since 1988 by coordinating elective medical rotations for these future healthcare providers. It works with medical schools across Ontario by setting up credentialing and securing privileges so learners get rich hands-on experience, while getting a sense for the rural lifestyle.

The Peterborough Family Health Team is the largest team-based primary care model in Peterborough that incorporates interprofessional healthcare providers such as nurse practitioners, mental health clinicians, nurses, registered dietitians, and pharmacists. In addition to hosting ROMP students annually, Peterborough is a Queen's Medicine residency site, becoming home to Postgraduate Years 1 and 2 every year. Peterborough is fortunate to have the Family Physician Think Tank who took the lead this year in engaging with these learners in hopes that they one day may choose to take a career path in family medicine.

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