



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 20, 2007**

### **KINGSTON REQUESTS MINISTRY RECOGNITION AS UNDERSERVED AREA**

Kingston, ON: The City of Kingston and Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) are pleased to report that an application to the Underserved Area Program of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has been submitted today. This application requests provincial designation recognizing Kingston as an underserved area in the category of Family Physicians based on the number of full-time equivalent practising family physicians in relation to the Kingston population.

This designation would permit Kingston to tap into additional provincial funding and incentive programs by adding Kingston to the list of communities where doctors can fulfill their Return of Service agreements, which entail certain medical graduates to provide five years of physician services after graduation. Currently, doctors such as International Medical Graduates are not able to choose to stay in Kingston and start their practise as they must practise in a designated underserved area. "An underserved area designation from the province would be a start to helping Kingston level the playing field for physician recruitment," says Jeff Gouveia, Family Physician Recruiter at the Kingston Economic Development Corporation.

Kingston is requesting Ministry of Health and Long Term Care designation to support its efforts to recruit 22 primary care physicians to meet the current needs of the community. The report shows that metropolitan Kingston has the equivalent of 104 full time physicians and a family physician/patient ratio of 1:1,686. This ratio is well above the provincial guideline of 1:1,380.

"It is great to see the issue of family physician recruitment getting the attention it deserves," says Jeff Garrah, KEDCO's Chief Executive Officer. "There has been tremendous involvement this year in addressing the issues and the concurrent work being undertaken by Statistics Canada will help further illuminate the needs of our community. In recent months, the Family Physician Recruitment program at KEDCO has confirmed four new family physicians beginning practices in the city. While this begins to address some immediate needs of residents living without a physician, a longer term outlook is required to address retirement and retention issues."

The Underserved Area application was prepared by Janus Global Consulting Inc., who were contracted earlier this autumn to undertake further research, including community consultation, and complete the submission.

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