

Recruiting Healthcare professionals in demand

by Heidi Riley

The **Health Recruitment and Retention Secretariat** provides recruitment support to Health PEI in its efforts to staff hard-to-fill healthcare positions.

The Secretariat was established in 2008 and currently has five employees. Positions at the Secretariat include:

- Health Recruiter focussed on the areas of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals such as Speech Language Pathologists, Psychologists, and Physiotherapists.
- Physician Recruitment Coordinator focussed on recruiting Family Medicine and Specialist Physicians
- Recruitment Assistant also provides financial, immigration, and administrative support
- Health Human Resource Advisor determines healthcare data for the Secretariat and the Department, including healthcare system vacancies, demographics of healthcare professionals, etc.
- Manager of Recruitment and Retention

Sheila Kerry, is the Health Recruiter for **Nursing and Allied Health Professionals**. She provided this list of PEI Healthcare careers currently in demand:

- Registered Nurses
- Nurse Practitioners
- Psychologists
- Social Workers
- Medical Laboratory Technologists
- Physiotherapists and PT Assistants
- Occupational Therapists and OT Assistants

“There is an ongoing need to support Health PEI in its nursing recruitment efforts,” says Sheila. “Hard-to-recruit nursing positions tend to be within the specialty areas of nursing, such as Intensive Care and finding qualified individuals with nursing experience.”

Determining future opportunities in PEI’s healthcare system

“We work to promote current opportunities and to determine future job vacancies. People who are planning their careers need to know about future job vacancies so that they can choose a career that is likely to be in demand when they finish their education.”

One way of determining future job vacancies is to study the demographics of current healthcare professionals. For example, the average age of Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) working at PEI hospitals is 40, with a handful in the 60 to 65 year range who may soon be thinking of retirement planning.

“That information is a good indication that it is likely that some of those individuals will choose to retire within the next few years.

“On the other hand, we are seeing a different trend with Medical Laboratory Assistants. Right now the average age of these individuals is 30 years old, and the majority is female. Because of this trend, we can reasonably assume that some may be considering planning a family, so we should expect some temporary full-time opportunities in the future.

“For those looking for a career in healthcare, physiotherapy is a really great option. Physiotherapists in Canada have endless career opportunities in both the public and private sectors. The unemployment rate for Physiotherapists in Canada is very low – back in 2014, it was 0.3 percent. Physiotherapists are often not actively seeking new employment, so we engage with individuals who may be employed now, but would consider job opportunities on PEI.”



Sheila Kerry, Health Recruiter, Health Recruitment and Retention Secretariat, PEI Department of Health and Wellness. Submitted photo

Meeting with professionals

Individuals interested in a career in health can meet with the Health Recruiter directly. Alternatively, the Health Recruiter can also arrange meetings for candidates to connect with healthcare professionals and experts within the system.

For more information about healthcare opportunities on PEI, call **902-620-3872** or email healthrecruiter@gov.pe.ca

To learn more about the **Recruitment and Retention Secretariat**, or for a list of healthcare opportunities and programs, visit www.healthjobspei.ca



Bioscience company looking to continue to expand in 2018

by Stacy Dunn

Mohammed Moin, Vice President of Somru BioScience Inc. in Charlottetown, came to UPEI in 2001 as an international student to study Computer Science. He co-founded Somru BioScience Inc. with his brother from the USA, who is a molecular biologist.

The brothers were motivated to succeed in drug development after their father died of esophageal cancer without access to groundbreaking medication. “Biologics are expensive,” says Moin. “They cost tens of thousands of dollars, and a course of treatment could cost \$200,000 per year.

“The goal of our customer-oriented biotechnology company is to come up with a set of tools to develop antibodies and immunoassay solutions for research, diagnostic, and therapeutic applications. We are always looking to partner with pharmaceutical companies to accelerate their biosimilar drug development process.”

Somru BioScience Inc. started in 2012 with one scientist in a 500 square foot space in the National Research Council incubator at UPEI.

In 2014, Somru moved to a 3,000 square foot space in the West Royalty Industrial Park, and employed eight staff.

In November 2017, the company finished building its own 5,000 square foot research laboratory facility at the BioCommons Park. About 14 employees work there now, and there are plans to hire 100 more people over the next five years and expand the physical space to 20,000 square feet.

Future outlook

In 2017, Somru signed a joint venture partnership agreement with Radiant Pharmaceuticals to establish and operate an independent state-of-the-art diagnostic and research laboratory in Bangladesh. Radiant will market Somru-developed biomarker-based laboratory test kits for diabetic and oncology patients in Bangladesh.

“We export to 20 countries now, and are looking to double our workforce in 2018,” Moin says. “We are looking to grow further in Europe and Asia with a strong focus on improvements to our systems and processes such as automated kit assembly, electronic assay worksheets, and data analysis tools.”

Job titles in demand

- Bioscience Technologist and Senior Scientist (Diploma, BSc, MSc, PhD)
- Senior R&D Manager (MSc, PhD)
- Manager with experience in human diagnostics
- Data Scientist (MSc)
- Senior and Intermediate Software Developer (Diploma, BSc, MSc)
- Sales and Marketing Manager (Asia and Europe)

How to stand out

“We invite people with the skillsets we are looking for to email their resumé or visit our facility to drop it off in person,” Moin says. “We also encourage grade 12 students to job shadow our scientists and college or university bioscience students to apply for internships.”



Mohammed Moin, Vice President. Submitted photo

PEI BioAlliance support

“We are grateful to the PEI BioAlliance for their support,” he says. “At one of their networking luncheons, a woman with PhD gave her resumé to the BioAlliance’s HR manager, Vivian Beer. Vivian emailed me the same day about this applicant. An hour later, I contacted the woman to ask her to come in for a job interview.

“She contacted me two hours later to agree to the interview.

“She told me she had flown to PEI that day, attended the BioAlliance event, and never dreamed she would be contacted for a job interview the same day.”

For more information, visit www.somrubioscience.com

For more information about careers in Bioscience on PEI, call **Vivian Beer** at **902-367-4407**.

Visit www.peibioalliance.com/job-postings.php

