

BRIDGE Newsletter

INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED MEDICAL DOCTORS (ITMDs)

VOL.4, SPRING 2019

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Message from the Program Manager, ITMD Bridging Program, Ryerson University

The Internationally Trained Medical Doctors (ITMD) Bridging Program provides the skills and competencies for highly educated and experienced ITMDs to gain employment in health research and health sector management positions in Ontario, Canada, as an alternative to clinical practice.

Since Ryerson University's ITMD Bridging Program began four years ago as a proof of concept (pre-pilot program), it has achieved much success. To date, this competitive program has received over 750 applications and 131 students have been trained for non-licensed healthcare jobs. In Spring 2018, the program received funding from the Government of Ontario to expand the program for six new cohorts, training up to 150 participants, until March 2021. So, as of March 2019, under government funding, 49 ITMDs will have completed their in-class coursework and practicum placement.

We are extremely proud that participants of the ITMD Bridging Program are of diverse backgrounds and originate from 44 different countries around the world. Diversity and inclusivity is a priority for the program and it is important for all of our participants to feel welcomed and supported. Our Spring 2019 cohort of the ITMD program with 25 ITMDs are set to begin in-class sessions on April 1, 2019. We look forward to working with them to achieve their very best!

On behalf of our program team and participants, I would like to extend our heartiest thanks to Ryerson University's



Dr. Shafi U. Bhuiyan

senior management, The Chang School Dean's office, the program's committed project advisory committee (PAC), our practicum placement support partners, and our respected colleagues including MCCSS and MTCU, for their continued support towards the success of the ITMD Bridging Program.

Bring Skill and Competency to Your Team

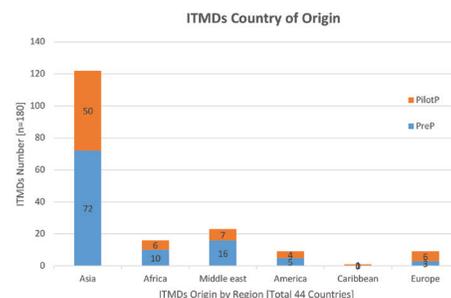
The Internationally Trained Medical Doctors (ITMD) Bridging Program at Ryerson University is a one-of-a-kind innovative learning opportunity that fosters internationally trained health professionals' capacity building and equips them with additional skills and competencies that help them transition into health care careers.

As a part of the program, ITMD program participants are required to complete 13 weeks of in-class training in areas like health research methodology, health informatics and data management, project

management, professional communication and leadership, and multidisciplinary health research and management. In addition, participants are required to complete an 8-week practicum placement at one of our partnering organizations.

With their skills in meta-analysis, report writing, and knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE), graduates of the ITMD bridging program have the ability to assist you in project management, proposal drafting, preparation of ethics submissions, data entry and data interpretation, manuscript drafting, systematic

reviews. Hire one of our graduates and bring skill and competency to your team!



ITMD Participants



Project Management Forum for Internationally Trained Medical Doctors, December 2018

**Spring 2019
Cohort 9**

15 countries

**25 participants
(9 males / 16 females)**

Alumni Inspirations



**Adam Benjamin
(from Trinidad and Tobago),
Cohort 7**

Being a part of the ITMD bridging program allows students to interact with some of Toronto's most experienced leaders in areas of project management, statistical research, and professional development. Each instructor has extensive experience in their field of study as well as years of experience to impart their knowledge and valuable lessons to their colleagues and students. This experience only serves to benefit those seeking further development of their skills. The ITMD program also allows the chance to make valuable connections to those leaders who contribute to Canadian healthcare on all levels, from physicians to public health workers in various government positions. These crucial connections distinguishes this program and its participants.



**Guzin Dincel (from Turkey),
Cohort 8**

What can this program do for you? What can you gain? Through the ITMD bridging program at Ryerson University, you will be given the opportunity to join a community where you will meet medical professionals from all over the world and share their experiences. You will be introduced to the important knowledge areas that will give you keen insight on what is required to navigate through the Canadian healthcare landscape. All this will give

you the confidence to take initiative and build your own bridges directed at a new future career in the Canadian workforce.



**Maha Awaiz Hassan
(from Pakistan)
Cohort 7**

The ITMD bridging program is extraordinary in that it brings together a group of highly-qualified and motivated internationally trained medical doctors (ITMDs) from all over the world, who explore or revisit areas of research and project management together. I graduated from this program in the summer of 2018 and I am currently working in the capacity of a research coordinator at St. Michaels Hospital. This program helps connects its participants with the right resources and the numerous success stories of my extremely dedicated fellow ITMDs is proof of that. I am a proud alumna of this program and it gives me immense pleasure to see its exponential growth. This is a much-needed program in very crucial times.



**Alireza Khatami (from Iran),
Cohort 8**

Internationally Trained Medical Doctors (ITMD) Bridging Program at Ryerson University is a unique program specifically designed to assist those medical professionals to find a job in alternative healthcare careers in Canada. The courses cover the must-know subjects in health research methodology, biostatistics

and data analysis, as well as fundamentals of project management, and communication and leadership for healthcare professionals. All instructors have devoted themselves to teach at the highest possible level and are always available to help the participants. An important feature of this program is the practicum placement following completion of the courses. Currently, I am doing my practicum placement at Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services. ITMD owes its success to the program's founder and manager, Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, a leading global health researcher, whose seminal work on developing and introducing the Maternal-Child Health Handbook in Bangladesh has improved lives of millions of peoples. To understand how positive, supportive and enthusiastic he is, remembering his motto is enough: "Always moving forward".



**Joel Shyam Klinton (from India),
Cohort 8**

The greatest challenge faced by a physician who moves to Canada is recognition of their education and expertise. The ITMD bridging program provides the perfect platform for overcoming the hurdles encountered while pursuing a career in Canadian healthcare. The vision of Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan and his esteemed faculty, coupled with their professional guidance, forms the backbone of this program. From the start of the application process, there is a sense of belonging and assurance as we evolve from proud ITMDs to established Canadian

healthcare professionals. The program is well-structured and addresses the key areas of training that international doctors require to prepare themselves for the Canadian healthcare system. The classrooms are packed with active participation from doctors from across the globe, which broadens our knowledge. Overall, the ITMD bridging program is a perfect bridge between the clinical knowledge acquired back home and the professional training needed for healthcare in Canada.



Samson Moses (from India), Cohort 6

The ITMD Bridging Program gave me the skills, knowledge, and professional integrity required for success. The faculty supports the student body and provides them with the necessary tools and resources to aid in their success. Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, is a great mentor with invaluable knowledge and entrepreneurial expertise. His continued support is the greatest asset to the program that consists of training in research methodology, project management, and communication skills. The practicum is critical in demonstrating the theory and methodology learned throughout the course and gave me an opportunity to network and meet numerous healthcare professionals. Within a short time frame, I was able to accomplish many great things and reach new heights. This would not have been possible without the support of the ITMD Bridging Program, Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, and the wonderful staff and peers I had the opportunity to work with.



Sara Pathan (from India), Cohort 7

When I came here with my Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), my ambitions soared when I was made aware by the ITMD bridging program that there were several healthcare career opportunities other than clinical practice. After my practicum at Mount Sinai Hospital, I was hired and have continued to work there. I am also the charter secretary for the Toronto Global Doctors – Lion’s Club International, founded in 2018, and we are already active in the community. With the number of graduates growing, there continues to be more diversely experienced medical professionals who I can easily approach when I need advice or support, including our instructors and Program Manager, Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan. In my opinion, this program is imperative for any international medical graduate (IMG) to understand the Canadian culture and workplace expectations. It has helped my career and I recommend it for anyone who recognizes their professional potential, but is not sure how to reach it.



George Uzonwanne (from Nigeria), Cohort 8

The ITMD bridging program is a master class for internationally trained medical doctors. The courses selected are very instructive, in both real knowledge and application. The practicum also offers a pragmatic approach to applying knowledge to the real world. The blend of professional training in health, research, and skills for easier integration and better teamwork is excellent. The classes on leadership, communication, and Canadian culture and values have given most of us a great advantage and will shorten the time needed for cultural integration into Canada. Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan is a mentor’s mentor. He and his team build and sustain a positive sense of self-belief and can-do spirit. He’s forward thinking and goes beyond your expectations to help you succeed in both the program and in the country.



Julie Zhuo Yang (from China), Cohort 8

My journey in the ITMD bridging program has been one of the most valuable educational experiences that I have ever received. Not only has the program offered me in-depth knowledge on health research methodology, health informatics, and data management, it has also given me hands-on experience with data-analyzing software (such as SPSS and RevMan) while conducting systematic literature reviews and performing meta-analysis research. The knowledge that I gained has prepared me to become a competent clinician-scientist. I also had the opportunity to grow my soft skills in the health communication and leadership course – specifically cross-cultural communication skills, which are very essential to workplace relationships but often overlooked. My mentor, Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, has helped thousands of patients at Women’s Hospital at Bangladesh as both a passionate and gentle clinician and a global health researcher. He was able to help hundreds of thousands more women and children in the country to achieve better health status. He inspired me to become someone more than just a physician – a clinician-scientist who will contribute to the healthcare outcomes of Canadians.

OUR SUPPORT PARTNERS





ITMD Program: Networking and Mix and Mingle (Winter 2019)

Related Events



16th IEP Conference

March 21-22, 2019
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Website: iep.ca/conferences/16th-iep-conference-hiring-expo



HealthForceOntario

Medical Culture and Communication: Program for International Medical Graduates

HealthForceOntario
March-April, 2019
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Website: healthforceontario.ca/en/Home/All_Programs/Access_Centre/Services_for_IEHPs/Sessions/Preparation_Sessions_and_Courses/Medical_Culture_%26_Communication

North American Refugee Health Conference

North American Refugee Health Conference

June 14-16, 2019
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Website: northamericanrefugeehealth.com



Toronto Global Doctors Lion Club Charter Night, Winter 2019

ITMDs' Selected Publications

Bhuiyan, S.U., Begum, H.A., Thiyagaratnam, D., Al-Araji, A., Saad, W., Dehal, N., Micheal, M., Naeem, F., Anwar, M., and Choudhury, R. (2018). "Community clinics and primary healthcare facilities utilization by reproductive age women in rural Bangladesh: a systematic review of lessons learned from evidence-based studies." *Journal of Public Health Development*, 16 (3): 81-94.

Krishan, K., Dehal, N., Singh, A., Kanchan, T., & Rishi, P. (2018). Getting to zero' HIV/AIDS requires effective addressing of HIV issues in LGBT community. *La Clinica Terapeutica*, 169(6), e269 - e271. Retrieved from www.clinicaterapeutica.it/ojs/index.php/ClinicaTerapeutica/article/view/283

Bhuiyan, S., Linton, V., Stanizai, E. (2018). "Creating a roadmap for internationally trained medical doctors (ITMDs) to transition into non-licensed health sector employment: An evidence-based study identifying alternative career pathways. ITMDs Roadmap Study Summary Report, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. Govt. of Ontario. ce-online.ryerson.ca/ce/content/program_area/itmds/roadmap_for_itmds_study_summary_report.pdf

Ahmed, S., Majumder, S., Monia, Z.N., Bhuiyan, S.U. (2019). "Assessment of Postnatal Mothers' Knowledge of Newborn Care Practices: A Cross-sectional Study." *Journal of Community and Preventive Medicine*. 2 (1):1-6

USEFUL LINKS

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ryerson.ca/ce/itmd

[linkedin.com/groups/12044563](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12044563)

[facebook.com/groups/349476948819065](https://www.facebook.com/groups/349476948819065)