



NATIONAL NEWCOMER  
NAVIGATION NETWORK

RÉSEAU NATIONAL DE  
NAVIGATION POUR  
NOS NOUVEAUX ARRIVANTS

# **Toolkit** for Canadian Healthcare Providers Recruiting, Onboarding and Retaining Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHPs)

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# ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

**This Employer Toolkit provides up-to-date resources, promising practices, strategies, tools, and a checklist that can support organizational preparation, recruitment, onboarding and retention of Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHPs) into the health care sector.**

## OBJECTIVES

This toolkit increases the understanding of:

- Preparing your organization to create a welcoming and inclusive work environment and culture for IEHPs
- Hiring and recruiting practices that provide IEHPs with equitable access to jobs
- Onboarding strategies to enable IEHPs to integrate into the workplace
- Learning how to retain IEHPs to reduce turnover and to boost employee well-being experience

## WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit is designed for health care sector employers in Canada.

# NATIONAL NEWCOMER NAVIGATION NETWORK (N4)

N4 is a national network for the diversity of providers who assist newcomers in navigating the complex Canadian healthcare and social service systems. N4 provides opportunities for professional development, education, virtual discussions, networking, and the sharing of data and resources. N4 aims to promote best practices in the field of newcomer navigation, with the ultimate goal of improving the experience of newcomers to Canada.

From 2019 – 2022, N4 successfully built a robust network of professionals from diverse sectors and geographies passionate about advancing health equity and improving their services to meet the needs of those newest to Canada. In April 2022, IRCC expanded N4's mandate to target inequities for newcomers in being optimally employed within healthcare, a key strategy in tackling Canada's health human resources (HHR) crisis. N4 is currently leveraging its platform and tools to address the barriers for IEHPS in being optimally employed.

# UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

The health human resources (HHR) crisis is one of the greatest challenges facing Canada's health care system today.

Currently, health occupations have the highest proportion of long-term vacancies. It is remarkable then, that less than half of internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) in Canada are working in their trained profession.

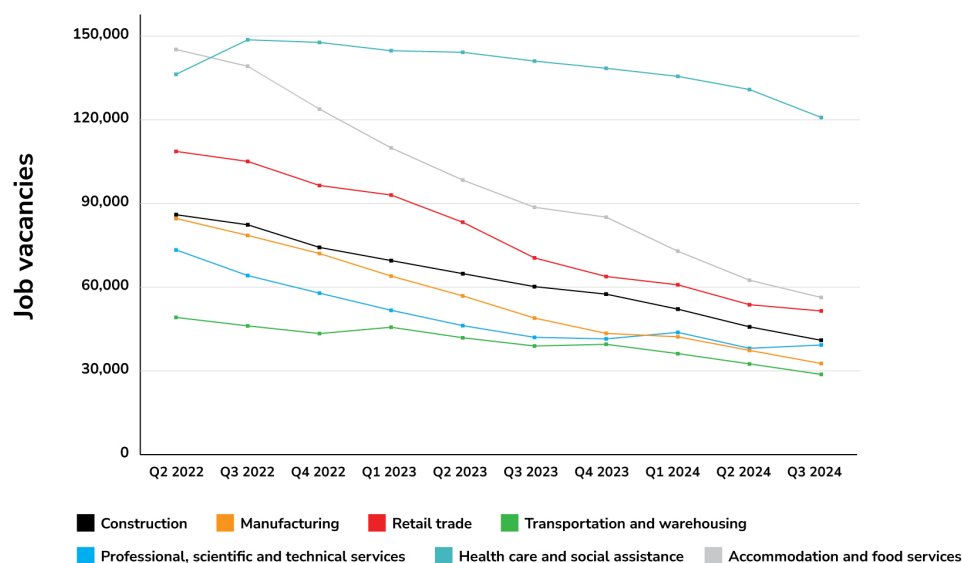
The future of health care requires innovative, sustainable solutions to the HHR's crisis that Canada's health care system is currently facing. The successful integration and retention of IEHPs into the health care workforce can help to address the HHR crisis, while advancing equity and diversity of the Canadian health care workforce.

## COMPARISON OF PHYSICIANS AND NURSES WORKING IN THEIR TRAINED OCCUPATIONS, 2021



Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. "Internationally Educated Health Care Professionals in Canada: Sociodemographic Characteristics and Occupational Distribution," August 23, 2023. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2023008/article/00004-eng.htm>

## JOB VACANCIES BY SECTOR, Q2 2022 TO Q3 2024



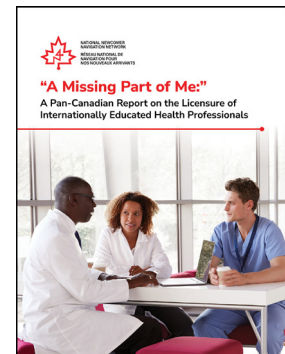
Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0400-01 Job vacancies, payroll employees, and job vacancy rate by industry sector, quarterly, adjusted for seasonality <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410040001>

## N4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In consultation with N4 Community of Practice (CoP) Working Groups and research with individuals, key stakeholders and organizations across Canada, N4 developed the following reports:

This report explores the barriers that internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) experience on their path to licensure in Canada, as well as some facilitating factors. The research is the result of individual and organization stakeholder visits that N4 conducted in 2022 and provides a snapshot of the everyday realities of frontline and lived experience professionals at this time.

[\*\*View Report: "A Missing Part of Me:" A Pan-Canadian Report on the Licensure of Internationally Educated Health Professionals\*\*](#)



The companion documents to this report are recommendation documents for internationally trained physicians (ITPs) and internationally educated nurses (IENs):

N4 has published a report designed to serve as a roadmap to successfully integrate and retain ITPs into the Canadian health care workforce. The recommendations advance integration and retention without sacrificing Canadian standards for physician credentialling and licensing, which support patient safety and quality of care.

[\*\*Link to Report: Part of the Solution, Not the Problem: Recommendations for Welcoming Internationally Trained Physicians into Canada's Health Care Sector\*\*](#)



N4 has published a recommendation report designed to serve as a roadmap to integrate and retain IENs, without sacrificing Canadian standards for nurse credentialling and licensing, which support patient safety and quality of care.

[\*\*View Report: Welcoming Internationally Educated Nurses into the Canadian Health Care Sector: Recommendations for Change\*\*](#)



# N4 INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED TRAINED PROFESSIONALS (IEHP) RESOURCE HUB

The N4 IEHP Resource Hub is a comprehensive platform that provides resources, tools, reports, and an up-to-date list of supports for IEHPs, organizations supporting them (stakeholders) and employers. It promotes collaboration, knowledge sharing and integration of IEHPs into Canada's healthcare system. [View IEHP Resource Hub.](#)

## TOOLS FOR IEHPS

- IEN Pathway to Licensure
- ITP/IMG Pathways to Licensure
- Navigation Services
- Federal/Provincial/Territorial Initiatives (F/P/T)
- Mentorship and Orientation Programs
- Bridging Programs
- Financial Supports
- IEHP-Led Organizations
- Settlement Services
- Non-Clinical Supports
- Employment Information
- SPU Online Program
- Impact Stories
- RSS News Feed
- Newsletter
- Conversation Café
- Reports

- Events Calendar
- eLearning Library
- Resource Library
- Webinars
- CoP Working Groups

## TOOLS FOR EMPLOYERS/STAKEHOLDERS

- Employer Toolkit for Recruitment and Retention of IEHPs
- Checklist for Recruiting, Integrating, and Retaining IEHPs
- Employer Series: A Guide for IEHPs Integration
- Webinars
- RSS News Feed
- eLearning Library
- Resource Library

## VISUAL LICENSURE PATHWAYS

There are many different pathways to practice in Canada for physicians trained abroad. The pathways depend on the country of training, specialty, and the province of settlement. In some cases, more than one pathway may be an option.

### [View ITP Visual Licensure Pathways](#)

If a nurse trained abroad wants to practice as a practical, registered, or psychiatric nurse in Canada, this infographic shows the steps to take.

### [View IEN Visual Pathway](#)

**THE PATH TO NURSING IN CANADA**  
 Are you an internationally educated nurse who would like to practice in Canada? This map shows all the steps you will need to complete. Click the links below to learn more.  
 To keep you informed of practice news and opportunities, click the links below to learn more.

**Credential Assessment**  
 Credential assessment is a process where your nursing education is assessed by a Canadian nursing regulator. This is the first step in the process. You will need to provide evidence of your nursing education, including your diploma, transcripts, and a letter from your nursing regulator. The assessment process is designed to ensure that your education meets the standards required to practice in Canada. The assessment process is completed by the International Nurse Credentialing Service (INCS).

Country	Assessment Agency	Assessment Agency Website
Algeria	Algeria	Algeria
Argentina	Argentina	Argentina
Australia	Australia	Australia
Bahamas	Bahamas	Bahamas
Bahrain	Bahrain	Bahrain
Bangladesh	Bangladesh	Bangladesh
Barbados	Barbados	Barbados
Belize	Belize	Belize
Bhutan	Bhutan	Bhutan
Bolivia	Bolivia	Bolivia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Brazil	Brazil	Brazil
Bulgaria	Bulgaria	Bulgaria
Canada	Canada	Canada
Chad	Chad	Chad
China	China	China
Colombia	Colombia	Colombia
Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Costa Rica
Cuba	Cuba	Cuba
Cyprus	Cyprus	Cyprus
Czechia	Czechia	Czechia
Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic
Dominica	Dominica	Dominica
Ecuador	Ecuador	Ecuador
Egypt	Egypt	Egypt
El Salvador	El Salvador	El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea	Equatorial Guinea	Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea	Eritrea	Eritrea
Estonia	Estonia	Estonia
Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Ethiopia
Fiji	Fiji	Fiji
France	France	France
Ghana	Ghana	Ghana
Guatemala	Guatemala	Guatemala
Haiti	Haiti	Haiti
Honduras	Honduras	Honduras
Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Hong Kong
Hungary	Hungary	Hungary
India	India	India
Indonesia	Indonesia	Indonesia
Iran	Iran	Iran
Ireland	Ireland	Ireland
Israel	Israel	Israel
Italy	Italy	Italy
Jamaica	Jamaica	Jamaica
Japan	Japan	Japan
Jordan	Jordan	Jordan
Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan
Kenya	Kenya	Kenya
Korea	Korea	Korea
Kuwait	Kuwait	Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan
Laos	Laos	Laos
Latvia	Latvia	Latvia
Lebanon	Lebanon	Lebanon
Lesotho	Lesotho	Lesotho
Lithuania	Lithuania	Lithuania
Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Luxembourg
Macao	Macao	Macao
Madagascar	Madagascar	Madagascar
Malawi	Malawi	Malawi
Malaysia	Malaysia	Malaysia
Maldives	Maldives	Maldives
Mali	Mali	Mali
Malta	Malta	Malta
Mexico	Mexico	Mexico
Moldova	Moldova	Moldova
Morocco	Morocco	Morocco
Mozambique	Mozambique	Mozambique
Myanmar	Myanmar	Myanmar
Nepal	Nepal	Nepal
Netherlands	Netherlands	Netherlands
New Zealand	New Zealand	New Zealand
Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria
North Macedonia	North Macedonia	North Macedonia
Oman	Oman	Oman
Pakistan	Pakistan	Pakistan
Panama	Panama	Panama
Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea
Paraguay	Paraguay	Paraguay
Peru	Peru	Peru
Philippines	Philippines	Philippines
Poland	Poland	Poland
Portugal	Portugal	Portugal
Romania	Romania	Romania
Russia	Russia	Russia
Rwanda	Rwanda	Rwanda
Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia
Senegal	Senegal	Senegal
Serbia	Serbia	Serbia
Singapore	Singapore	Singapore
Slovakia	Slovakia	Slovakia
Slovenia	Slovenia	Slovenia
South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
South Korea	South Korea	South Korea
Spain	Spain	Spain
Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
St. Kitts and Nevis	St. Kitts and Nevis	St. Kitts and Nevis
St. Lucia	St. Lucia	St. Lucia
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Sudan	Sudan	Sudan
Sweden	Sweden	Sweden
Switzerland	Switzerland	Switzerland
Taiwan	Taiwan	Taiwan
Tanzania	Tanzania	Tanzania
Togo	Togo	Togo
Tonga	Tonga	Tonga
Turkey	Turkey	Turkey
Turkmenistan	Turkmenistan	Turkmenistan
Uganda	Uganda	Uganda
Ukraine	Ukraine	Ukraine
United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
United States	United States	United States
Uruguay	Uruguay	Uruguay
USA	USA	USA
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan
Venezuela	Venezuela	Venezuela
Vietnam	Vietnam	Vietnam
Yemen	Yemen	Yemen
Zambia	Zambia	Zambia
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe

**Provincial Registration**  
 A. The nursing college will tell you the next steps, including whether you need additional training to become licensed in their province.  
 B. Be prepared to undergo a language assessment.  
 C. Some provinces will ask for your nursing ability. This involves an interview or a written exam. The goal is to ensure you can practice safely and effectively in Canada.

**Meet Additional Requirements**  
 A. Take additional language training and testing if required by the college.  
 B. Take a nursing bridging program or additional training if required by the college.

**Exams**

# PREPARING YOUR ORGANIZATION

**Organizational infrastructure and general awareness to be prepared for an inclusive work environment and culture for IEHPs.**

## CHECKLIST:

### A. COLLECTION

- We have an internal process that identifies IEHPs within our organization working in underemployed areas (e.g., health aides, environmental services, and food services).
- We include newcomers (those within Canada less than five years) as a socio-demographic in our staff self-identification and our engagement surveys.

### B. COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

- We are a member of our Local Immigration Partnership Table to create linkages to community supports and stay abreast of the issues facing newcomers in our area.
- We are aware of settlement organizations and other supports (housing, childcare, immigration) for IEHPs in our community. Find free newcomer services near you with the Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada database.
- We have a mechanism to connect IEHPs with available community support (language, religion, etc.).

### C. EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- We have policies and practices to understand, solicit, and address any experiences of discrimination.
- Our HR and leadership teams understand the value IEHPs add to the workforce to close labour market gaps and ensure representation of the community they serve.
- Our organization communicates the value IEHPs bring to their organization and how to support their sense of belonging.
- We actively encourage IEHPs to participate in our EDI (equity, diversity and inclusion) efforts.

## RESOURCES:

- N4 hosted webinar: [IEHPs integration to a Canadian work environment: perspectives from organizations & newcomers](#). Through stories and experiences shared by Career Transitions for International Health Professionals, World Skills Employment Centre, and Hire Immigrants Ottawa, this webinar presents the accounts and lessons learned from both perspectives in the hiring of newcomers in Canada.
- N4 hosted webinar: [Fostering Community Integration and Building Linkages When Hiring Internationally Educated Health Professionals \(IEHPs\)](#) with speakers from Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) and the National Local Immigration Partnership Secretariat. In this webinar, speakers share how to find resources in your community and how organizations can build relationships with settlement organizations, local immigration partners (LIPs) and others to foster IEHP success.
- N4 hosted webinar: [Workplace Inclusion: A Roadmap for Senior Managers](#) Saint Paul University professor outlines elements of EDI transformation that can push the needle in favor of minoritized group integration into the workplace.
- Hire Immigrants Ottawa has an Employer Playbook: [Strategies for Immigrant Inclusion in Canadian Workplaces](#) to help employers leverage newcomer expertise and provide best practices to foster an inclusive workplace.
- [N4's Professional Development series](#) contains webinars on workplace inclusion.
- [The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council](#) addresses key employer engagement practices and models that facilitate labour market integration of different newcomer groups.
- Kamloops Immigrant Services developed [The Welcoming Workplace toolkit](#) that is designed to provide resources to discuss equity, diversity, and inclusion in the work environment.
- [The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion has developed several toolkits](#) that highlight diversity, inclusion, and employment equity.
- Achēv developed the [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Guide to Support Immigrant and Racialized Women in the Canadian Labour Force](#) that provides examples on how to integrate DEIA into workplace policies and practices, which can influence positive and welcoming work environments.



# RECRUITING AND HIRING

This section focuses on resources to support hiring and recruiting practices that provide IEHPs with equitable access to jobs opportunities.

## CHECKLIST:

- Our organization conducts fair and unbiased interviews.
  
- Our organization practices ethical recruitment as outlined in the World Health Organization's Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel.
  
- Before funding and organizing international recruitment trips, our organization has identified underemployed IEHPs within our organization and community.
  - During the application process for any position, our organization asks candidates if they have an international education.
  
  - We have posted flyers in common areas (cafeteria, staff rooms, etc.) asking for IEHPs to contact our HR department.
  
  - We have posted on our external job board for IEHPs to contact HR.
  
  - We have connected with our larger community (local colleges, universities, local immigration network, etc.) to inquire if IEHPs are within their network.
  
- Our organization is aware of and optimizes programs offered for IEHPs by regulators and/or ministries of health

## RESOURCES:

- N4 webinar: [\*\*Beyond Training: How to Incorporate Equity in Hiring Processes to Welcome Newcomers into the Workforce\*\*](#) with a subject matter expert from Wilfrid Laurier University. This webinar provides guidance to organizations seeking to welcome newcomers into their workforce by applying an inclusion and equity lens. Participants are encouraged to identify bias within their organization's hiring practices and learn tools and strategies they can apply to incorporate equity into hiring processes.
  
- N4 webinar: [\*\*Learn to Successfully Structure Orientation for Internationally Educated Health Professionals\*\*](#) with speakers from the Ottawa Hospital and Horizon Health Network. This webinar describes the uniqueness of IEHP orientation, important topics that should be covered, and provide concrete, actionable recommendations that can be adapted by organizations hiring and recruiting IEHPs.

- N4 Webinar: **Addressing Challenges in Recruiting Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) at Hôpital Monfort**. This webinar sheds light on the key efforts in place to recruit and integrate IENs within their organization.
- **World Education Services developed a toolkit for recruiting immigrant talent**, that includes inclusive job descriptions, reaching immigrant talent, screening-in immigrant candidates, validating international credentials, addressing bias and interview considerations.
- The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council developed the **Attracting Immigrant Table: Inclusive Job Postings report and checklist** that provides recommendations and “do’s and don’t’s” for immigrant inclusive hiring practices.
- Workforce produced an **Employer’s Guide to Hiring Newcomers** to increase the cultural competency of employers so they can acquire skilled workers and work effectively with ethno-cultural communities.
- Impact North Shore developed the **“Rethinking Assumptions: Unpacking Canadian Work Experience Employer Resource Toolkit”** to equip employers with actionable resources and strategies to ensure they are able to benefit from immigrant talent. Employers will also find workable tools to better understand the education, skills, and talents of immigrants in the labour market.
- **The Toronto West Local Immigration Partnership EDI Toolkit** highlights resources from settlement agencies and service providers actively working to build inclusive workplaces for newcomer professionals.

## **SUPPORTING IMGs/ITPs:**

- The **Physician Recruitment & Retention in the Atlantic Provinces** provides physician recruiters, health authorities, policy makers, students, and other stakeholders with a medical student-informed guide about the current recruitment and retention models of each of the Atlantic provinces and suggested action plans for future directions.
- The Practice in B.C. **Family Physician Recruitment & Retention Toolkit** provides easy access to best or promising practice processes, tools, and templates that can assist in their local recruitment, retention, and practice coverage efforts and has dedicated resources for IMGs/ITPs.

## **SUPPORTING IENS:**

- N4 hosted webinar: **Supporting Integration into Practice: The Internationally Educated Nurse (IEN) pathway** at Sunnybrook features an inclusive approach to recruitment, integration, and retention of our internationally educated nurses into their workforce including leveraging partnerships and ensuring a wrap around approach to employment opportunities.
- **McMaster University Employer’s Guide** assists employers in hiring IENs which includes resources on hiring, recruitment, entry and orientation, succeeding in the workplace, culture and language, mentorship, helping IENs adjust, etc.

# ONBOARDING

This section describes onboarding strategies to enable IEHPs to integrate into the workplace and align to their unique needs, including an understanding of the Canadian health system, team-based care models, communication expectations and technology.

## CHECKLIST:

- We provide orientation that is dedicated to IEHPs and focuses on orientation to Canadian healthcare system and non-clinical skills such as “soft skills”
- We provide IEHPs with wrap-around support and mentorship that is based on their individual needs.
- We are aware of and have established connections with local settlement services to help newcomers with their immigration and integration needs

## RESOURCES:

- N4 hosted webinar: [\*\*The Welcome Collaborative, Supporting ITPs who are newly licensed in Nova Scotia\*\*](#). This webinar outlines their approach to orienting ITPs to be ready to practice in Nova Scotia within a multi-day orientation including their physician billing and insurance systems, healthcare system, immigration processes, and other key topics.
- [\*\*World Education Services developed a toolkit\*\*](#) for onboarding immigrant talent, that includes welcoming immigrant employees, the buddy system model, mentorship and networking and inclusive leadership.
- HIRE Immigrants developed an [\*\*Inclusive Onboarding for Newcomer Employers document\*\*](#) that includes onboarding strategies, a checklist and resources and references to support newcomer talent entering Canadian workplaces.
- [\*\*Immigrant Employment Council of BC has developed five toolkits\*\*](#) for onboarding newcomers to help employers create a welcoming and inclusive workplace and human resource strategies to hire and retain global talent. Toolkits include onboarding for Afghani refugees, Syrian refugees, and newcomers in general.
- [\*\*Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia developed a toolkit\*\*](#) for to help employers demystify immigrant hiring and implement proactive human resource strategies to hire and retain immigrant talent.
- The HIRE IEHPs project designed the [\*\*Workplace Integration Network \(WIN\)\*\*](#) that provides resources to support employers, managers, supervisors and other professionals with workplace integration of IEHPs.
- [\*\*ISANS Language Learning Centre\*\*](#) offers one-on-one instruction for newcomers who cannot attend regular language training classes.

# RETENTION

This section focuses on learning how to enhance an IEHP's sense of belonging in your organization to reduce turnover.

## CHECKLIST:

- We ensure IEHPs are aware of the mechanisms and supports in place to report micro-aggressions, discrimination, racism, etc. and encourage and act on all reports.
- We ensure IEHPs are aware of the mechanisms and supports in place to report micro-aggressions, discrimination, racism, etc. and encourage and act on all reports.
- We regularly review and act on themes from staff feedback from IEHPs within our engagement surveys, staff concerns, staffing metrics (turnover, representation), and exit interviews.
- We solicit and act on IEHP feedback on our policies, procedures, programs and training annually to promote an inclusive, diverse and equitable workplace.

## RESOURCES:

- The Government of Saskatchewan has a [list of resources on Retaining Newcomers Employees](#) that assists employers integrating newcomers into your workplace.
- The [Immigrant Employment Council of BC has a Retaining Immigrant Talent tip-sheet](#) that provides ideas, skills and resources to retain immigrant talent.
- The [Immigrant & Refugee Services Association PEI offers workshops](#) for employers on topics from the benefits of inclusion to retention of newcomers.

## SUPPORTING IMGS/ITPS:

- [The Community Retention Toolkit](#) provides suggestions for communities across Newfoundland and Labrador on how they can be involved in retaining IEHPs in their local health care system.

## SUPPORTING IENS:

- N4 hosted webinar: [Unlocking Nurse Retention Success: Strategies for Internationally Educated Nurses](#). N4 and Health Canada's Chief Nursing Officer speak to key strategies to foster the retention of nursing in general and specifically for IENs.
- N4 hosted webinar: [Promoting Retention of Health Care Professionals: The Importance of Mentorship Modules](#), with speakers from Department of Nursing at Brandon University and Horizon Health Network describes the importance of mentorship modules for the retention of health professionals.
- [CASN IEN Mentorship Program offers opportunities](#) to connect with experienced nurses to address retention and integration in the Canadian workforce by reducing transition stress and culture shock.
- [Health Canada developed a nursing retention toolkit](#) to support the working lives of nurses in Canada and to contribute to the retention of nurses in the workforce. The toolkit is organized by eight core themes that impact a nurses' day-to-day working life.