



CONFERENCE DIALOGUE



Richmond Hill College

Bridging the Gap

Integrating Internationally Educated Health Professionals into Ontario's Healthcare System

Ontario Career Colleges are creating practical pathways to address critical healthcare workforce shortages through specialized bridging programs.

Leadership in Healthcare Education



Dr. Soheila Hafezi

CEO & President, Richmond Hill College

Dr. Hafezi holds a PhD in Distance Education Management and provides strategic leadership for innovative, workforce -focused educational programs. Her expertise spans educational leadership, quality assurance in online learning, and bridging programs for internationally educated health professionals.

She serves as Chairperson of the "Nursing and Healthcare Conference: A Global Dialogue," connecting educators and policymakers worldwide.



The Healthcare Workforce Challenge

Ontario's healthcare system faces sustained shortages across multiple sectors: nursing, personal support work, medical administration, and allied health professions. As demand for qualified workers grows, traditional academic pathways alone cannot meet urgent labour market needs.

Career Colleges have emerged as agile, workforce - driven institutions capable of rapidly designing programs that respond to these critical gaps.



Career College Advantages



Short Duration

Programs designed for rapid completion, enabling faster workforce entry.



Flexible Delivery

Online and hybrid formats accommodate diverse learner needs and schedules.



Competency - Based

Curriculum models focus on practical skills and workplace readiness.



Employer Alignment

Direct connection to employer expectations and industry standards.



These structural advantages enable Career Colleges to bridge the gap between international training and Canadian practice standards more efficiently than traditional pathways.



Richmond Hill College: A Leading Example

Richmond Hill College has developed a comprehensive suite of specialized bridging programs that support newcomers transitioning into Ontario's healthcare workforce. These programs address critical shortages while facilitating meaningful integration and credential recognition.

Nursing Bridging Programs for IENs



Preparing Internationally Educated Nurses

Programs focus on Canadian nursing jurisprudence, clinical communication, infection prevention and control, and medication administration principles.

- Professional ethics and workplace culture
- NCLEX-RN/CPNRE exam preparation
- CNO expectations and standards
- Hospital, long - term care, and community settings

Diverse Bridging Pathways

1

PS W Equivalency

Internationally trained caregivers, midwives, or practical nurses transition into Personal Support Worker roles through training in resident care, dementia communication, safety protocols, and clinical documentation.

2

Medical Office Administration

Health graduates transition into administrative roles through OHIP billing, EMR systems, appointment management, clinic workflow, and patient communication training.

3

Allied Health Technical Roles

Lab assistants, sterile processing technicians, and phlebotomists learn Canadian safety standards, specimen management, sterilization protocols, and quality systems.

4

Community Mental Health

Professionals trained in psychology, counseling, or social work complete targeted modules for community mental health settings and supportive housing programs.



The Richmond Hill College Model

01

Online & Hybrid Delivery

Flexible learning formats accommodate working professionals and diverse schedules.

02

Exam Preparation

Targeted support for professional certification and licensing examinations.

03

Workplace Communication

Training in Canadian healthcare culture, professional communication, and team collaboration.

04

Clinical Skill Development

Hands -on training aligned with Ontario healthcare standards and employer expectations.



Immediate Workforce Impact

5

Program Types
Specialized bridging pathways addressing critical healthcare sectors.

100%

Workforce - Focused
Programs designed with direct employer alignment and labour market needs.

Fast

Rapid Integration
Short program durations enable quick entry into Ontario's healthcare system.



A Scalable Solution for the Future

The expansion of bridging programs within Ontario's Career Colleges represents a high - impact, scalable, and future - oriented solution to healthcare workforce shortages.



Labour Market Impact

Directly addressing critical workforce needs across multiple healthcare sectors.



Credential Recognition

Creating equity in recognizing international training and professional experience.



Meaningful Integration

Supporting newcomers in achieving professional success and community belonging.



System Sustainability

Building long - term stability for Ontario's healthcare system through accessible pathways.