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New family physician now practising in Whitecourt

WHITECOURT — Local residents have increased access to primary care with the arrival of a new family physician now practising in the community.

Dr. Andrew Halladay is a general practitioner who started practising in Whitecourt last month. He received his medical training at the University of Alberta (U of A) and completed his medical residency in Red Deer through the U of A's Rural Family Medicine program.

"The arrival of Dr. Halladay is good news for the residents of Whitecourt, who now have another family physician to help them meet their health care needs," says Sarah Hoffman, Minister of Health. "The Government of Alberta is committed to continuing to work with Alberta Health Services and community partners to recruit additional health professionals to our province."

Alberta Health Services (AHS) has three physician resource planners dedicated to identifying and pursuing physician recruitment opportunities for AHS North Zone. They work closely with various community partners and organizations, such as local Health Advisory Councils, the Rural Physician Action Plan, and independent community physician recruitment and retention committees, including the Whitecourt town council.

"It's a particular treat for us to recruit a physician trained through the University of Alberta's Rural Family Medicine Program. We're very happy to have Dr. Halladay join our medical team – Andrew and his family are a great fit for our community," says Dr. Craig Hodgson, Area Zone Medical Director for Whitecourt in AHS North Zone.

Mayor Maryann Chichak helped in recruiting Dr. Halladay, touring him and his family around Whitecourt. She's pleased recruitment efforts are bringing health care providers to the community.

"Whitecourt is pleased to welcome the Halladay family," says Chichak. "Not only will Dr. Halladay be a great fit to the medical team currently in place, we are looking forward to working with him to bring additional graduates to our community to practise medicine. We take pride in enhancing our residents' quality of life and wish the family well during their transition to Whitecourt."

Dr. Halladay and his wife have two children. Together, they enjoy travel as well as camping, hiking, biking and snowboarding. "I'm looking forward to being involved as a member of the community and taking part in the different activities Whitecourt has to offer," Dr. Halladay says. "After moving so often in the past several years, it will be nice to settle down."

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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