

Internationally Trained Doctor Committed to Saving Lives

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Colleges of Ontario Network for Education and Training

By Ani Yildirim

Daniyal Rehman is an internationally trained doctor from Pakistan who will be able to work as a paramedic and start saving lives in a matter of few months. He has successfully transferred his medical credits to the paramedic program at Durham College. Because of this, he did not have to take a two-year full time college program, which would have required him to repeat learning he had already completed in Pakistan.

Daniyal immigrated to Canada four years ago with his wife, also a physician. He has a bachelor of medicine, a bachelor of surgery, and six years of clinical practice. When he first came to Canada he tried to pass the Medical Council of Canada's licensing exam, a requisite to be accepted for the required additional training in Canada. He passed the first exam but failed the second. Daniyal realized that it could take years for him to pass the exams and get the training necessary to be recognized as a physician in Canada, with no guarantee that he could get a job in the field.

Daniyal and his wife were expecting their first child and he needed to support his family, so he did what many immigrants do: he found a survival job and started considering new career opportunities.

Daniyal decided to become a Paramedic Level 2 in Ontario. The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care informed him that his skills surpassed those of a Level 4 Paramedic, he only lacked ambulance training. Acquiring this training was not as easy as it first appeared.

He started contacting paramedic programs but was told the only way to obtain the certificate is to graduate from a two-year full time college program. There was no exception because of his prior experience. All he needed was someone to listen and understand his situation.

When he approached Susan Domokos, an internationally trained immigrants Advisor at Durham College, he finally received the personal



Daniyal Rehman, a physician from Pakistan will soon be a paramedic.

attention that his case needed. Susan directly contacted Ralph Hoffman, the Associate Dean of Health and explained Daniyal's situation. Hoffman came up with a plan: Durham College needed a letter from the Ministry stating that Daniyal had more skills than a Level 4 Paramedic and only needed ambulance training.

The Ministry did not immediately issue the letter. He almost gave up until Domokos called when she didn't hear back from him. "He felt he was bugging them, [the Ministry] and that

they would get back to him when they could or if it was appropriate". Domokos encouraged him to persist in getting the letter. As a result, the Ministry asked Ralph Hoffman at Durham for a letter from the college stating that Daniyal met the outcomes normally associated with graduates.

That's when Hoffman crafted an academic plan to give Daniyal all of the necessary items to meet safety standards. Once Daniyal finishes his academic requirement, he will be out on field placement by January of 2010.

A team of three people worked together to reach a happy result. According to Domokos, "We just somehow didn't want to take 'no' for an answer, while respecting the system and the fact that it works to ensure the safety of all." She adds, "An empathetic, genuine and unstoppable idealism helps too."

Daniyal is satisfied with the outcome of his endeavor. "Medicine is me. I can't think about doing anything else."

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