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Denver Health helps international physicians match with Colorado residency programs

DENVER (March 20, 2026) — Denver Health is proud to announce that four members of the 2025 cohort of international physician learners in the Colorado Works for International Physicians (CO-WIP) Clinical Readiness Program have matched into residency programs in Colorado.

- **Naw Wai Htoo, MD**, from Myanmar, matched in family medicine at HealthPoint in Kent, Washington.
- **Muhanned Soud, MD**, from Iraq, matched in family medicine at St. Mary's Regional Hospital in Grand Junction.
- **Rebeka Sultana, MD**, from Bangladesh, matched in family medicine at Denver Health's Community Health Services in Denver.
- **Yonas Woldekiristos, MD**, from Eritrea, matched in family medicine at CommonSpirit Health in Pueblo.

In addition, one physician from the 2024 cohort, Suhaila Obaidalla, MD, successfully matched this year. This achievement brings the program to a 100% match rate for the 2025 cohort — and a 100% match rate since the program's launch.

Program participants work closely with inpatient and outpatient faculty physicians at Denver Health, who provide clinical assessment and play a critical role in teaching, evaluating and preparing learners for residency training.



The COWIP Clinical Readiness Program is a rigorous nine-month curriculum designed to equip internationally trained physicians with the skills, knowledge and cultural insight needed for success in the U.S. health care system.

“International medical graduates bring exceptional skill and a deep commitment to caring for patients, and it has been a privilege to teach and mentor them through the Colorado Works for International Physicians program,” said Philip H. Fung, MD, medical director of Colorado Works for International Physicians Clinical Readiness Program and associate professor of medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. “Alongside our faculty, I’ve seen how this program empowers talented physicians who already hold MD-equivalent degrees to refine their clinical abilities, immerse themselves in U.S. medical practice and become strong candidates for primary care residency programs. Their passion, dedication, and life experiences strengthens our health care workforce, and we are proud to support their path to becoming licensed physicians serving communities across the state.”

In partnership with the Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning, the program provides pre-clinical support for international medical graduates, including guidance on testing requirements and certification. The Spring Institute also works with Denver Health to support recredentialing for physicians enrolled in the program.

The CO-WIP Clinical Readiness Program is part of a broader statewide effort to integrate internationally trained physicians into Colorado’s medical workforce. With support from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment’s Office of New Americans, the Colorado Medical Board and the Colorado Association of Family Medicine Residencies, the program helps overcome the barriers internationally trained physicians face when transitioning into U.S. residency programs.

“COWIP has proven we can realize the gifts of international medical graduates to close healthcare gaps. Our graduates are serving across the state, including in rural communities where health care shortages are most extreme, said Abraham Nussbaum, MD, chief education officer. “These international graduates are deeply committed to providing care to all Coloradans and are showing us how it’s done. With the support of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, these physicians are taking care of Colorado and across the state, from Alamosa to Grand Junction, from Pueblo to Westminster. We are grateful every day to help people receive care across Colorado.”

The success of the cohort demonstrates that internationally trained physicians living in Colorado can gain the skills and experience needed to be competitive applicants for primary care



residency programs. Increasing their presence in residency training ultimately strengthens and diversifies the state's primary care workforce.

Applications for the 2027 cohort will open in summer 2026.

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About Denver Health

Denver Health is a comprehensive health and hospital system that provides high-quality care and proudly serves as the city's safety-net hospital. For more than 165 years, Denver Health has been guided by its mission to serve the people of Denver, to educate the next generation of health care professionals and to engage in research and community partnerships to better deliver the services that meet our patients' health care needs while strengthening our community.