
Information Release

National Summit focuses on improving rural health care access and equity

(February 22, 2017, Mississauga, ON) A national summit is being hosted today in Ottawa dedicated to improving health care access and equity in rural communities in Canada. Advancing Rural Family Medicine: The Canadian Collaborative Taskforce is a partnership between the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC) and the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC). Discussions will focus on a new release called the [Rural Road Map for Action](#) that provides 20 recommendations to enhance rural health care. Stakeholders develop implementation strategies, identify priorities, and share innovative approaches and measures of success.

The recommendations identify four directions outlined in the Rural Road Map that aim to:

- Reinforce the social accountability mandate of medical schools and residency programs to address health care needs of rural and Indigenous communities
- Implement policy interventions that align medical education with workforce planning
- Establish practice models that provide rural and Indigenous communities with timely access to quality health care
- Institute a national rural research agenda to support rural workforce planning aimed at improving access to patient-centred and quality-focused care in rural Canada

The Summit agenda will focus on how the report recommendations can be translated into actions that are coordinated, comprehensive, measurable, and sustainable. The aim is to engage all stakeholders in applying these recommendations to future policy-making and planning, as well as to identify roles in addressing issues related to health care equity for rural Canada.

The Summit unites national leaders in education, practice and human resource planning, as well as physicians of rural and Indigenous communities. Participants include leaders from health care organizations, educational bodies, government, research organizations, rural and Indigenous communities.

A final report with Summit outcomes will follow.

ABOUT ADVANCING RURAL FAMILY MEDICINE: THE CANADIAN COLLABORATIVE TASKFORCE

In 2014, the CFPC and the SRPC embarked on a joint initiative to develop a pan-Canadian framework to strengthen the rural physician workforce, provide high-quality culturally safe care, and improve access for all people living in rural and remote communities across Canada. In 2015 the Taskforce conducted a focused review of rural training and practice at the education and health system levels and published their findings in a background document titled [Review of Family Medicine](#)

[Within Rural and Remote Canada: Education, Practice, and Policy](#). More information about the Taskforce is [available online](#).

ABOUT THE SOCIETY OF RURAL PHYSICIANS OF CANADA

Founded in 1992, the SRPC is the lead advocate and representative for over 3,000 rural physicians practicing in Canada. Its mission is to provide leadership for rural physicians and to promote sustainable conditions and equitable health care for rural communities. The SRPC performs a wide variety of functions, such as developing and advocating health delivery mechanisms, supporting rural doctors and communities in crisis, promoting and delivering continuing rural medical education, encouraging and facilitating research into rural health issues, and fostering communication among rural physicians and other groups with an interest in rural health care.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS OF CANADA

The CFPC represents more than 35,000 members across the country. It is the professional organization responsible for establishing standards for the training and certification of family physicians. The CFPC reviews and accredits continuing professional development programs and materials that enable family physicians to meet certification and licensing requirements and lifelong learning interests. It also accredits postgraduate family medicine training in Canada's 17 medical schools. The College provides quality services, supports family medicine teaching and research, and advocates on behalf of family physicians and the specialty of family medicine.

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