



# The President's Letter

Dr. Darryl D. LaBuick



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March 3, 2008

Dear Member:

I'm pleased to advise that eligible physicians should receive retroactive payments for the Rural, Remote, Northern Program (RRNP) slightly ahead of schedule, by the end of May. The program design is being finalized now and preparations are underway to collect the necessary application information from physicians. The effective date for retroactive payments is September 1, 2007.

The RRNP is a component of the Clinical Stabilization Initiative under the current 2006-08 trilateral agreement between the Alberta Medical Association (AMA), Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW) and Alberta's regional health authorities (RHAs).

A list of communities eligible for the RRNP is available on the AMA website. The RRNP incentive payment levels are determined by the points assigned to each community – higher points accrue from greater medical isolation and therefore carry a larger incentive payment for physicians. Annual RRNP incentive payments are capped at \$60,000 per physician.

There are two, separate payment components, each based on the number of points assigned to a community. These are:

- 1. RRNP premium payments applied automatically to claims for every health service** provided by any physician in an eligible community. This RRNP premium payment is a percentage added to your fee-for-service, reciprocal, Business Costs Program and/or alternate relationship plan (ARP) payments. The percentage is based on the total points assigned to the community.
- 2. An additional flat payment** made to a physician who provides services and resides in the community. To qualify, your annual income from providing services in that community must be greater than \$50,000. This flat payment varies by community and is calculated as a dollar-amount per point.

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Please note that to receive retroactive payments for either of the two RRNP payments, it is very important that your billings are up to date!

### **Applying to the RRNP**

You must apply by April 14 to receive payments from RRNP – and your signed application pertains to both the premium and flat-payment components. Alberta Health and Wellness will be mailing the “RRNP Application and Consent forms” today to all physicians who provided services last year in the eligible communities. (Please note that the consent portion of this form allows the AMA to issue your payment.)

Physicians in ARPs are eligible and will also receive the application forms by mail from AHW.

If you are a pathologist, radiologist or medical officer of health who is under contract with an RHA you will also be eligible for the flat payment. You will need to work with your RHA to complete and submit the form.

Please refer to the AMA website for an RRNP Backgrounder and for the list of eligible communities, points and RRNP incentive payments. (Visit [www.albertadoctors.org](http://www.albertadoctors.org), log in with your member number and password and choose Rural, Remote, Northern Program from the drop-down menu under the Fees and Negotiations tab.) If you have questions or concerns, contact Patrick J. Melia, AMA Director, Physician Payment Services by email: [patrick.melia@albertadoctors.org](mailto:patrick.melia@albertadoctors.org).

Yours truly,

Darryl D. LaBuick, MD, CCFP  
President