
October 20, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

This week, October 20-24, is [National Rural Health Week](#), an annual celebration that recognizes the immense impact rural health care providers have on the health of rural Canadians. As part of this year's celebration, rural health care providers are being encouraged to share some of their life outside of work to help show the passion of the people behind rural medicine. There will also be a webinar for those who are interested in building relationships with decision makers. I encourage you to learn more and consider taking part.

National Rural Health Week is a timely reminder of the important work rural and remote physicians do to ensure the people who live and work in those communities can receive the care they need and deserve, at every age and stage of their lives, close to home. We also play a critical role in the financial viability of rural communities. Without the availability of quality rural medicine, families and businesses look elsewhere for a place to put down roots.

Our communities rely on us for preventative and primary care, emergency medicine, internal medicine, palliative care, mental health, women's health, geriatrics, addictions, and much more. It's an often daunting task. We know there are communities who are struggling to keep their local emergency departments open or are struggling with diversions or virtual ERs. None of this is acceptable. In order for the ongoing system changes to achieve their intended goals, the people who practice rural medicine must have a voice in guiding those changes.

I recently wrote to you that your SRM Executive is updating our governance structure to allow us to influence the decisions that affect us and our patients. We are in the process of determining which section executives will serve as a liaison for each health pillar and will be reaching out to the corresponding ministers to continue our advocacy for rural medicine.

Re-opening of the Rural Team Recruitment Grant Program

Earlier this month, the Government of Alberta announced that it was re-opening the **Rural Team Recruitment Grant Program** for a second round of intakes. Many of you may remember that the uptake for the first round of the program was overwhelmingly successful, and we are pleased to see that it has been reopened.

As it did last time, the grant will provide funding to help rural clinics and community organizations expand their primary care teams by hiring new non-physician, non-nurse practitioner professionals. You can learn more here: alberta.ca/rural-team-recruitment-grant-program. The deadline for applications is October 28 and I hope you will take the time to see if it is right for your practice and community.

Thank you for everything you do for your patients and your communities, and for choosing rural medicine. This week, and every week, we recognize and celebrate your impact on rural Alberta.

Regards,

Dr. Rithesh Ram
President, Section of Rural Medicine