



NEWS

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Hinton Physician Receives New Award

The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) has selected Dr. Stuart Iglesias, a Hinton area physician, as the first recipient of its new Rural Physician Award of Distinction.

The new award honours and recognizes the work of all rural physicians, especially those unsung heroes who provide Alberta rural communities with outstanding medical services and who also make significant contributions to their communities.

Dr. Iglesias was selected as the 2002 award recipient based on his outstanding contributions to rural medicine, rural anaesthesia and obstetrics, and his noteworthy contributions to his community in many areas. In this first year, twenty nine nominations were received from rural Alberta residents and community organizations across the province following a public call for nominations.

The award will be presented annually to an Alberta rural family physician who has lived and worked in rural Alberta for at least four years and who demonstrates a superior commitment and contribution to the community through medical practice, teaching other health professionals, conducting research, or volunteering in the community. Rural Alberta is defined as any community outside of the Calgary and Capital health regions.

The new award was developed by RPAP as one element in its comprehensive retention plan.



Dr. Iglesias received his award June 19 in Hinton at a community celebration co-hosted by RPAP and the Hinton community.



Distinction

Profile on RPAP's 2002 Rural Physician

Award of Distinction

R E C I P I E N T

Dr. Stu Iglesias has served the Hinton community as a family physician for the past 18 years. He not only maintains a busy practice but also contributes to his local community and the advancement of rural medicine. He has special skills in surgery, gynecology, obstetrics and anesthesia. Dr. Iglesias and his wife have two daughters, both now attending university. He enjoys scuba diving, snowboarding and running the local saddle club.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO RURAL MEDICINE, ANAESTHESIA AND OBSTETRICS

Dr. Iglesias has made outstanding contributions to rural medicine, rural anaesthesia and obstetrics. Some of these are:

- Instrumental in providing advanced obstetrical service for the Hinton community. In addition to delivering more than 100 babies per year, he also handles difficult obstetric referrals from other areas.
- Has worked hard to encourage the development of services locally in order to minimize the need for patients to travel to Edmonton for medical care. He was a key supporter of the development of ultrasound and Teleultrasound and helped fundraise more than \$100,000 to provide this latter service locally.
- Initiated a 24/7 epidural service which continues today. As a GP surgeon, initiated the community's pelvic laparoscopic program for diagnosis and tubal ligations.

- For the past 10 years, has been a Clinical Lecturer in the Department of Family Medicine, University of Alberta, teaching and developing obstetrical skills in second year family medicine residents.
- Works at the national level to enhance rural medicine, anesthesia and obstetrical care. He has been an executive member of the Alberta Section of Rural Medicine since its inception and is a member of the Clinical Practice Committee of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada. Dr. Iglesias is also Past-Chair of the Obstetrics Committee of the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada.
- Has a keen interest in ensuring that rural communities continue to have well trained physicians. His efforts have helped develop consensus statements about training for advanced obstetric and anesthesia skills. Another consensus statement is expected soon on general surgery.
- As a representative of the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC), he sat on the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) Committee on Training for Rural Family Practice. The final report of this committee was instrumental in the development of the new Alberta Rural Family Medicine Network.

- Has published a number of research papers and articles related to rural medicine, anesthesia and obstetrics and is currently Assistant Editor for the Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine. Dr. Iglesias is also a regular presenter at national conferences.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY

Dr. Iglesias has made many noteworthy contributions to the community including:

- Chairperson of the École Mountainview School Council 1994 - 96.
- Sponsored a non-profit instructional and recreational club for children and families with horses which became the Iron Creek Saddle Club.
- Founding member of the Hinton Rodeo.
- Principal fundraiser for the Seabolt Watershed Society.

Alberta Rural
Physician *AWARD of*
DISTINCTION



Community

The development of community partnerships has occurred because of a shift in the way health care providers and organizations work together in the delivery of care. Partnerships offer the opportunity for organizations to improve service delivery and coordination while strengthening the community where people live, work and play.

Partnerships play a key role in carrying out the mandate of the Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) to improve the rural health care landscape.

While the definition of community partnerships may vary, the purpose and outcomes can be similar. Community partnerships are formed to meet varying organizational needs, including:

- Gaining knowledge and skills,
- Sharing risk and costs associated with providing services, and
- Capitalizing on interdependencies of organizations in the achievement of common goals.

There are a number of key success factors with building a partnership:

- Set a clear mandate and measurable goals,
- Active participation in the partnership and equality in the relationship,
- Open, honest communication using a common language,
- Good listening skills and a mutual respect of one another, and
- Joint contribution of resources.


Following these guidelines, the RPAP has formed community partnerships with organizations such as University of Calgary (U of C), the University of Alberta (U of A), the Alberta Medical Association (AMA), the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and Alberta's Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) and their partnering communities.

The partnerships are formed in conjunction with the various programs designed for the RPAP target audiences - practicing physicians, medical students and residents, and the RHAs and rural communities. Examples of the diversity of RPAP partnerships and programs are as follows:

PRACTICING RURAL PHYSICIANS

Continuing medical education allows rural physicians access to high quality instruction to keep up with trends and advancements in medicine. Aided by RPAP funding, both Alberta universities provide programming through regional conferencing and teleconferencing on a regular basis.

The University of Calgary Medical Information Service and the RPAP provides the Virtual Library to rural physicians. This service helps busy rural physicians obtain answers to their clinical questions.



Partnerships offer the opportunity for organizations to improve service delivery and coordination while strengthening the community where people live, work and play.

Partnerships

- A winning combination

Through funding by Alberta Health and Wellness and the RPAP, the Rural Locum Program was initiated to provide a locum service to rural physicians practicing in communities with four or fewer physicians, and during weekend emergency call. The Alberta Medical Association administers this program on their behalf.

MEDICAL STUDENTS & RESIDENTS

The U of C and U of A Faculties of Medicine both work with the RPAP to support the concept of medical students and residents taking part of their training in a rural community with preceptors. The RPAP provides funding for accommodation, travel and an honorarium for the rural preceptors. The U of C Faculty of Nursing recently began a partnership with RPAP to explore rural clinical experiences for medical and nursing students, and to jointly explore rural health research.

Another partnership with both Alberta universities provides medical residents with the opportunity to take up to one additional year in training to help prepare them for rural practice.

Participating rural RHAs and the RPAP assist medical students and residents by providing a matching signing bonus for rural practice. New Alberta-trained physicians are eligible for a matching bonus to a maximum of \$10,000 from the RPAP for signing a Return in Service Agreement with a participating rural RHA.

RHAs AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

The RPAP partners with the rural RHAs to organize recruitment fairs to attract physicians to rural communities.

The Recruitment Expenses Reimbursement Program is a program to support rural physician recruitment by reimbursing some of the recruitment expenses incurred by rural RHAs and newly recruited physicians.

One additional partnership with the Alberta Medical Association benefits a group important to all rural physicians - spouses. The Rural Physician Spousal Network (RPSN) was created to recognize the special needs of spouses. The goal of the network is to promote the retention of rural physicians in Alberta through spousal networking, communication and programs that foster personal growth and satisfaction with rural living. The RPSN works in collaboration with the AMA's Physician and Family Support Program, to ensure professional counseling or other services are available for spouses and family members as well as physicians.

Future partnerships for the RPAP will include:

Working with the Rural Secretariat Canada and Alberta Community Development on creation of a community toolkit for recruitment and retention of rural physicians.



Developing for RHAs and international medical graduates a clear explanation of hiring and immigration processes with Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, Human Resources Development Canada, and Alberta Health and Wellness.

Community partnerships allow the RPAP to learn more about the rural community at large, the needs of rural physicians, and the partnering organizations - and provide better results. A win-win situation for all.



RPAP focuses on rural research

The Rural Physician Action Plan has taken two significant steps forward recently in advancing its focus on rural research.

SEARCH - ALBERTA HERITAGE FOUNDATION FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Dr. Ron Gorsche, RPAP Skills Broker (south) and a practising physician in High River, was appointed to the Steering Committee of the Swift Efficient Application of Research in Community Health program (SEARCH) of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. This program trains health professionals throughout Alberta to conduct research on priority health issues affecting their communities. To date, four rural physicians have been trained through SEARCH with funding support through RPAP's Enrichment Program that Dr. Gorsche coordinates with Dr. John Hnatiuk, RPAP Skills Broker (north).

"It's an exciting opportunity to focus on research and encourage more of my colleagues to get involved," notes Dr. Gorsche. "Physicians with ideas for research can contact SEARCH, Dr. Hnatiuk or myself through RPAP."

RURAL RESEARCH FORUM

RPAP also participated in province-wide collaboration at a Rural Research Forum in March. The Forum was sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and the Rural Secretariat Canada to bring together provincial and national representatives with interest in advancing rural research.

"Participants agreed on the need to develop a rural research agenda that is inspiring, realistic and strategic," reports Monica Kohlhammer, RPAP Rural Physician Consultant (south) who represented RPAP at the Forum. "There is a need to build on our national and local research capacity, and to enhance rural-urban alliances to meet the forces of change in rural areas - globalization, urbanization, the rise in the knowledge-based economy, demographic changes, environmental pressures and shifts in governance."

RPAP Research Projects include:

- Support of physicians trained through SEARCH, as outlined above,
- On-Call Study on the impact of physicians' on-call responsibilities on their spouses and children,
- 2nd Cohort Study of U of A/U of C medical residents (1996-2000),
- Physician Rural Enrichment Program study of rural physicians who have completed an Enrichment Program,
- Pockets of Good News, an update just completed of recruitment and retention initiatives in Alberta communities, and
- Rural Physician Spousal Network survey to solicit feedback on Network programs, retention ideas and gather advice about what helps new rural physicians and their families thrive.

Future areas of focus include:

- Telecommunication tools for medical students, residents and practising physicians,
- "In time" career planning for medical students - early identification, nurturing and practice,
- Role of community development in recruitment and retention of physicians,
- Partnership development in recruitment and retention of physicians,
- Evaluation of RPAP communication strategies, and
- Community Toolbox for recruitment and retention of physicians.

Research and networking opportunities exist for RPAP with partners - the University of Alberta, University of Calgary, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Alberta Community Development and Rural Secretariat Canada. Regional health authorities and communities are key stakeholders in the vision of the RPAP research framework.



Get Clicking

Photo Contest runs June to September

Polish up your camera lens and dust off the family photo album! The Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) has lots of prizes for pictures taken by rural family physicians and their families.

RPAP has an ongoing need for interesting visual elements to use in its website, displays, brochures, posters and other communication materials. In particular, the organization needs photos of rural physicians and their families engaged in a variety of lifestyle activities in their homes, practices and communities. The photos will be used to develop a photo library.

The contest also will help RPAP reveal artistic talent in rural communities.

Contest categories include photos shot by rural physicians, photos shot by rural physician spouses and photos shot by children of rural physicians. Photos may be entered in two formats, either 35mm

colour print or digital colour 8 x10 at 300 dpi. Each entry should include a consent form, signed by those shown in the photo, that allows RPAP to use the photo in its materials.

All entrants will receive a small gift and 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will receive prizes in each of the three categories.

Contest entries will be accepted from June 1 through September 13, 2002. Judging will take place in late September and winners announced in October.

Photo contest guidelines and applications are available

on the RPAP website at www.rpap.ab.ca or by calling David Kay, RPAP Program Manager at 1-866-423-9911.



Upcoming Events

Exam Preparation Workshops Scheduled

Note the following workshops – and tell your colleagues – if you need assistance with upcoming examinations.

- **Clinical Examination Preparation Weekend – for physicians new to Canada.**
Saturday & Sunday, September 14 & 15, 2002
Early registration advised - limited to 45 physicians
- **CCFP Exam Preparation Course**
Saturday & Sunday, September 21 & 22, 2002
Early registration advised - limited to 32 physicians

Both Courses are held at the Foothills Hospital, Calgary.

For more information and registration forms contact: Office of Continuing Medical Education and Professional Development Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary Dale Wright, Acting Rural Education Coordinator Phone (403) 220-4249 Fax (403) 270-2330 E-mail dwright@ucalgary.ca

These workshops are supported by the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan.

Physician and Family Support Program

- **Insights Discovery** - insights into your personality and how you impact those around you. October 25, 2002 - Grande Prairie; November 22, 2002 - Calgary
- **Reclaiming Equilibrium** - weekend retreat. October 4-6, 2002 -- Diamond Buffalo Guest Ranch, Sundre.
- **Enriching Your Couple Relationships** - weekend retreat for couples to make new discoveries and choices. November 1-3, 2002 -Delta Lodge at Kananaskis.

For more information or to register, contact the Physician and Family Support Program, toll free 1-877-262-7377; email robin.robertson@albertadoctors.org or check the AMA website www.albertadoctors.org.



Further information and details on the RPAP and its initiatives may be obtained from:

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