

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF RURAL PHYSICIANS

C. Sendanyoye, S. Petrie, D. Carson, S. Steven & P.A. Peters (2019)



Family physicians serve the 32% of Australians and 22% of Canadians who live in rural areas.



16% of Australian family physicians practice in rural areas



1 in 10 will leave rural practice



14% of Canadian family physicians practice in rural areas



1 in 7 will leave rural practice

A lack of consistent medical professionals has led to an **erosion of local health services** while programs to prioritize rural recruitment have had only moderate success.

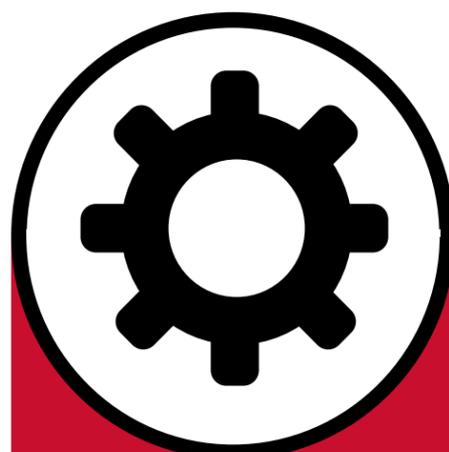
Why decide to leave rural practice?



Excessive workload



Geographic or social isolation



Lack of management and support

Why decide to practice in rural areas?

Rural born medical students are 2-9x more likely to take up rural practice



Graduation from elective rural placements is a strong predictor of future rural practice



Strong community support and appreciation may encourage more physicians to stay in rural areas



Rural family physicians are able to provide a wider variety of care due to the lack of specialists



Bring physicians into rural areas

Keep physicians in rural areas

but how?



Begin recruitment in rural secondary schools

Recruitment of medical students based on rural origin alone is not contributing sufficiently to a sustainable workforce.



Emphasize more exposure to rural practice

Positive exposure has been shown to shift urban-born medical students' perspectives on rural practice and encourage recruitment/retention.



Re-evaluate remuneration programs

Physicians prefer solid administrative support and locum relief over increased income. This finding means social aspects should be improved instead of solely offering increased income.



Encourage support from allied health professionals

A more unified rural health care workforce can allow tasks to be completed by those with the appropriate training, leading to more effective care from all providers.

