
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health
Doctors of BC

British Columbia introduces Rural Interest Award for medical students

VICTORIA – The Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC are strengthening their efforts to attract more doctors to rural and remote communities with a new shared \$100,000 financial award for medical students who demonstrate an interest in practising medicine in those communities and to support rural students entering medical school.

“This new scholarship fund reflects government’s focus on supporting health care in rural communities,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “Municipalities, government, health authorities, Doctors of BC and UBC are working hard to attract and retain doctors who are invested in the wide scope of medicine practised in these areas and the strong community ties they will build.”

The first set of British Columbia Rural Interest Awards have been granted to 20 University of British Columbia medical students who come from a variety of rural communities or have demonstrated an interest in entering rural medicine once training is complete. Annually, up to 20 medical students will be given individual awards of \$5,000 to support their pursuit of practising rural medicine.

“We know that students who train in rural communities are more likely to consider practicing rural medicine,” said Dr. Bill Cavers, president of Doctors of BC. “This initiative demonstrates our commitment to working collaboratively and improving patients’ access to care in rural communities.”

The British Columbia Rural Interest Award will be given to:

- Up to seven third year students who have completed the Rural Family Practice Clerkship or the Integrated Community Clerkship,
- Up to seven fourth year students who have completed a four-week rural elective, and
- The remaining awards are granted to first year students upon admittance to UBC Medical School.

“Rural medicine is broad, interesting and relational; you can do full service family medicine and provide significant continuity of care,” said Samantha Chittick, a fourth year medical student from Kelowna. “I can’t understand why anyone would want to do anything else.”

For students applying upon completion of the third year Rural Family Practice Clerkship, Integrated Community Clerkship or fourth year Rural Electives, the deadline is June 30, 2015. For first year students applying upon admittance to UBC medical school, the deadline is Sept. 30, 2015.

“Rural physicians fulfill a special niche,” said Selena Demenoff, a first year medical student from Grand Forks. “As part of the community, they are their communities’ health advocates.”

These awards have been established through ongoing funding from the Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues, a collaborative committee of the Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC.

Learn more:

Eligibility and application deadline information can be found here: rccbc.ca/education-and-cmecpd/medical-students/reap/british-columbia-rural-interest-award/

Information about the collaborative committee of Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health can be found here: www.doctorsofbc.ca/resource-centre/physicians/handbooks-guides

Media Contacts:

Laura Heinze
Media Relations Manager
Ministry of Health
250 952-1887 (media line)

Sharon Shore
Senior Manager, Communications and Media
Relations
Doctors of BC
604 638-2832 or 604 306-1866 (pager)

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