

May 17, 2010

## Rocky Mountain House earns recognition for recruiting and retaining physicians to its community

EDMONTON – The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) and the Alberta Chambers of Commerce have announced that the Town of Rocky Mountain House was selected as the 2010 recipient of the Rural Community Recruitment and Retention Award. The award was presented in Lethbridge Saturday, May 15, at the Alberta Chambers of Commerce’s 72nd Provincial Conference and Policy Session.

This annual award recognizes a rural Alberta community that has best developed innovative and collaborative approaches and solutions resulting in successful physician recruitment and retention in their area. The Town of Rocky Mountain House was selected for its demonstrated success in recruiting and retaining physicians, its modelling of a successful AHS-practitioner-community collaboration, and for the use of best practices consistent with the learnings RPAP promotes as most likely to aid successful recruitment and retention.

Recruiting and retaining physicians in many rural communities is an ongoing challenge. While living and working in rural Alberta brings many benefits to physicians – such as practising a more comprehensive hands-on style of medicine, contributing to the fabric of a rural community and enjoying the quieter pace of rural living and the beauty of the rural landscapes – practising in small communities can also pose unique challenges for physicians. These may include higher workloads, demanding on-call schedules, limited access to specialists, and difficult strains on their spouses and children.

Rural communities can play an important role in co-managing their local physician resources by understanding the unique challenges facing physicians, creating physician-friendly environments, and by participating more fully in recruiting and retaining physicians.

*The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) is an independent not-for-profit organization funded by Alberta Health and Wellness. RPAP provides a provincially-focused comprehensive, integrated and sustained program for the education, recruitment and retention of physicians for rural practice.*

*The Alberta Chambers of Commerce (ACC) is a federation of 124 Chambers of Commerce in Alberta and which in turn represent over 22,000 businesses.*

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