

**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
RURAL MEDICINE INTEREST GROUP**

A University of Alberta, Medical Students Association, student run interest group that works in cooperation with the University of Alberta Office of Rural and Regional Health, the Alberta Medical Association Section of Rural Medicine (ASRM), the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP), the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC), and the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC), to promote rural medicine to all University of Alberta medical students.

**Leadership:**

2007/2008 leader: Julie Kromm  
UofA Medicine Class 2010  
email = jkromm@ualberta.ca

2008/2009 leader: Kristen Rylance  
UofA Medicine Class 2011  
email = krylance@ualberta.ca

Leadership rolls over every year to a medical student entering their second year of the UofA MD program.

**Membership:**

All students enrolled in the Undergraduate MD program at the University of Alberta are considered members of the University of Alberta Rural Medicine Interest Group.

## **Mission**

To encourage and assist students in their pursuit of a career in rural medicine.

## **Objectives and Services to be Provided:**

- Promote rural medicine to all University of Alberta medical students.
- Inform students about training opportunities and lifestyle as they pertain to rural medicine as well as advantages and disadvantages of working in a rural setting.
- Act as a bridge between all medical students and rural administrations, including but not limited to the:
  - University of Alberta Office of Rural and Regional Health,
  - Alberta Medical Association Section of Rural Medicine,
  - Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan,
  - Society of Rural Physicians of Canada, and
  - Northern Alberta Development Council.
- Inform students of rural bursaries and awards including but not limited to the:
  - RPAP Rural Medical School Awards
  - RPAP Rural Medical School Bursary
  - NADC Bursary for Medical Students
  - ASRM Michael Tarrant Scholarship
- Plan lunch hour and after school talks on various subjects (see list of activities for upcoming year below)
- Help plan clinical skills day as a way to introduce students to rural medicine as well as various medical skills required by all doctors.
- Keep students up to date rural programs available to them (eg: RPAP summer student externship) and rural policies that pertain to them.

## **2007/2008 Year End Report**

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 the proper Medical Students Association (MSA) Club Leadership Application Form was submitted and approved, thus turning the leadership of the RMIG over from Glen Armstrong, to myself.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007 a description of the RMIG, its purpose, and future plans, was submitted to the Medical Students Association for the 2007/2008 Medical Students Handbook.

Throughout May 2007 I arranged for flyers pertaining to the RPAP Rural Medical School Awards and Bursaries to be included in the acceptance packages for all of the new medical students. These were mailed out early in June 2007.

In June 2007, I delivered a report to the Rural Initiatives Coordinating Committee (RICC) in regards to the current activities of the Rural Medicine Interest Group (RMIG), and future plans for the upcoming academic year. A request was made by David Kay with RPAP for the RMIG to submit a budget proposal for all RPAP expenses in the upcoming year as they pertain to the RMIG. A budget was drafted and submitted to Mr. Kay via email on August 11, 2007. Budget was approved on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Monday August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007: Class of 2011 Orientation

Sheila Brown with RPAP and I ran the Rural Medicine booth, where the students were informed about the RMIG, RPAP and the SRPC. There seemed to be a lot of interest by the students (first and second years) about rural medicine, RPAP programs, and the ICC. In conjunction to this I also ran a membership drive for the SRPC student group, in which the students were informed about the SRPC and given a membership package. This resulted in approximately 50 members from the UofA and a multitude of other members from all of the Canadian medical schools.

During the week of September 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2007 a multitude of separate emails were sent to the medical students in regards to:

- introducing myself and the RMIG
- introducing RPAP as well as Rosemary Burness as the RPAP Medical Student Coordinator, the RPAP website address was also distributed
- introducing the SRPC one last time, distributing the website address as well as calling for members one last time

September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007: Office of Rural and Regional Health Talk

Speaker: Dr. Konkin

Topic: Introduce the Office of Rural and Regional Affairs to the medical students, and answer questions.

Attendance Numbers: 50 students

Comments: There seemed to be a lot of questions about the Integrated Community Clerkship (ICC).

September 13<sup>th</sup> 2007: RPAP info night.

Speaker: Rosemary Burness and Dr. Konkin

Topic: Rosemary introduced RPAP and all of the programs they offer to medical students. She answered various questions, handed out her contact information as well as the RPAP website address. Dr. Konkin was also there to differentiate between the Office of Rural and Regional Affairs and RPAP, and discuss the proper process for rural shadowing.

Attendance Numbers: 49 students

Comments: Food organized by RMIG and paid for by hosting organization RPAP.

September 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>

RPAP was able to sponsor one student to attend the seventh annual Peace River Regional Medical Conference. The feedback I received from that student was very positive.

I met with three representatives of the NADC in late September to discuss some possible strategies for getting their organization more exposure to the medical students. Subsequent emails were then sent out to the medical students informing them of the NADC, directing them to the website and Audrey DeWit for more information and a talk for second semester was booked.

An email was sent out to the second year medical students informing them of the option of doing their twelve hour elective in a rural setting. Rosemary's contact information was distributed for those interested in setting it up.

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007: The RPAP Clinical Skills Day in St Paul

Objective: introduce students to rural medicine as well as various medical skills required by all doctors.

Attendance: 150 students were interested in attending it unfortunately we were only able to accommodate 47

Comments: The Clinical Skills Day was a huge success thanks to Rosemary Burness, RPAP and the staff at the St. Paul Hospital. I received nothing but positive feedback from the students, as well as Dr. Woytiuk the host physician. Everything paid for by hosting organization, RPAP.

An email was sent out to the students in early and mid October informing the students once again about the RPAP awards and bursaries, directing them to the website and Rosemary for more information, and informing them of the deadline.

November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007: RPAP focus group

Speaker: Rhonda Crook from RPAP

Topic: Small group discussion in regards to what barriers (whether myths or not) students are aware of that inhibit them from pursuing a career in rural medicine. A wide range of issues were voiced. The question of what could be done to dispel some of the myths about rural medicine to the students was also posed, but unfortunately time ran out.

Attendance: There was only room for 12 students.

Comments: A follow up session is a possibility. Food organized and paid for by hosting organization, RPAP.

A report was drafted and submitted for the quarterly RICC meeting in November 2007. I was not able to attend in person. But the report was read by Dr. Konkin.

November 26<sup>th</sup> 2007: RPAP School Outreach Program

Speaker: Rebekah Seidel with RPAP

Topic: Introduce the RPAP school outreach program and called for volunteers.

Attendance: 20 students

Comments: A lot of interest was shown by the students and Rebekah was able to get an extensive list of volunteers.

A talk specifically for the second year medical students about the ICC was held on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007. At the talk Dr. Brenneis outlined the program, and answered questions. All of the third year medical students participating in the program this year were also brought in to talk about their experiences and answer questions.

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007: The first informal Office of Rural and Regional TGIF talk

Speaker: Dr. Konkin

Topic: The focus of the talk as chosen by the students was the ICC and rural shadowing issues.

Attendance: 62 students

Comments: Many issues about rural shadowing were raised, the two biggest being the confusion in how to set it up, and the difficulty of getting a hold of RPAP to get it set up. In response to these two issues Rosemary Burness was emailed and informed about the student's issue, and agreed to keep them better informed of the status of their shadowing request. The students were informed of this. The rural shadowing protocol was also extracted from the Office of Rural and Regional Health, RPAP's and the UGME's website and condensed into a step by step protocol and emailed to the medical students, so that they would have it first hand in a simplified straight forward manner.

Food organized by RMIG and Office of Rural and Regional, and paid for by host, Office of Rural and Regional.

An email was sent to the first year medical students in early January to inform them of the option of doing their twelve hour elective in a rural setting. Rosemary's contact information was also distributed for those students interested in this option.

On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008 an email was sent to the second year students on behalf of Dr. Allan Garbutt to inform them of the ASRM Tarrant Scholarship. Posters were also posted around the medical school.

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the required MSA midterm club report forms were submitted, detailing the RMIG's objectives, service, and activities held throughout the first half of the academic year.

January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008: Second Office of Rural and Regional TGIF talk

Speaker: Dr. Konkin and two doctors from Westlock

Topic: Life as a rural doctor. Various questions were addressed.

Attendance: 47 students

Comments: Food organized by RMIG and Office of Rural and Regional, and paid for by host, Office of Rural and Regional.

During February to April 2008, funding for students to attend the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual SRPC Rural and Remote Medicine Course in Halifax was organized. Once funding was confirmed all four years of medical

students were emailed the details about the conference, and asked to submit a paragraph detailing their interest in the conference and in rural medicine. Over 30 students submitted paragraphs. After reading through all of the applications, 6 students were then chosen (3 students were sent with funding from ASRM, 2 from the Office of Rural and Regional, and 1 from RPAP). These students were personally emailed to inform them about the details of their funding. A mass email was sent to the med classes informing them that recipients had been chosen.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 an email was sent out to the medical students informing them of the new contact for rural shadowing – Pam Nacinovich with RPAP.

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008 I delivered a report to the Rural Initiatives Coordinating Committee (RICC) in regards to the current activities of the Rural Medicine Interest Group (RMIG). Topics addressed included, RMIG talks organized since the last RICC meeting in November 2007, the current SRPC conference funding, future talks planned, as well as rural shadowing issues.

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (originally planned for Feb 15<sup>th</sup>): NADC Talk

Speaker: Audrey DeWit

Topic: Northern Alberta as well as its opportunities was discussed. The NADC was introduced, as well as the NADC Bursary for Medical Students.

Attendance: 34 students

Comments: Food organized by RMIG and paid for by hosting organization, NADC.

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008: Third Office of Rural and Regional TGIF Talk

Speaker: Dr. Lee Jones and his wife Danette Jones, and their two children

Topic: Alberta Rural Residency Program and rural life.

Attendance: 43 students

Comments: Food organized by RMIG and Office of Rural and Regional, and paid for by host, Office of Rural and Regional.

April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008: Real Emergencies in Rural Medicine

Speaker: Dr. Allan Garbutt, ASRM President

Topic: Real emergencies experienced by Dr. Garbutt during his time as a rural resident and doctor. His life as a rural doctor was also discussed.

Attendance: 46 RSVPed, 23 in attendance

Comments: Food organized by the RMIG and paid for by hosting organization, the ASRM.

Throughout the entire year I have also responded to countless emails in regards to various topics such as: rural shadowing, Rosemary's contact information, the RPAP summer externship program, ICC, Office of Rural and Regional Affairs contact information, etc.

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the required MSA year end reports was submitted detailing the RMIG's objective, service, and activities held throughout the entire academic year.

**Other Resources/Contacts:** (feel free to contact these individuals with any questions regarding what governments are doing to promote rural and family medicine)

-UofA Office of Rural and Regional Health:

Tel 780-492-0678

Toll Free 1-866-492-0678

Fax 780-492-8191

Email [rural&regionalhealth@med.ualberta.ca](mailto:rural&regionalhealth@med.ualberta.ca)

Website [www.ruralandregionalhealth.med.ualberta.ca](http://www.ruralandregionalhealth.med.ualberta.ca)

-The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan

Website <http://www.rpap.ab.ca/>

-The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada

Website <http://www.srpc.ca/>

-The Northern Alberta Development Council

Website [www.nadc.gov.ab.ca](http://www.nadc.gov.ab.ca)

Email [nadc.council@gov.ab.ca](mailto:nadc.council@gov.ab.ca)