



**Society of Rural Physicians of Canada  
Société de la médecine rurale du Canada**

**Media Release [embargoed to 1305h April 11th, 2002]**

**Rural Doctors tell Romanow of need for a  
National Rural Health Strategy**

SUDBURY / April 11th, 2001/ - The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada presented expert testimony on the state of rural health care to the Romanow commission today. SRPC President Dr Hutten-Czapski says "No matter what the future of health care brings, we will have not served Canadians well unless they have access when they need it to a doctor in their community. Canadians deserve a national strategy to start making doctors and other health professionals for the places where they are most needed."

Rural Canada has 22% of Canadians but only 10% of Canada's doctors live there. Dr Hutten-Czapski adds "Why are Canadian taxpayers supporting a medical training system to excel in producing city doctors when the most dangerous jobs, the shortest life spans, the most disability, and the greatest needs for health care all occur in rural Canada."

Australia has successfully increased rural doctor numbers through a series of national student bursaries and reforms to its educational system so that it produces doctors, nurses and pharmacists who are ready for the challenge of rural medicine and who want to practice in rural Australia. Dr Hutten-Czapski says "We can learn from the success of the Australians in increasing the number of doctors for underserved populations."

Rural Canada deserves a fair share and needs a educational system that produces rural doctors, nurses and other health professionals by design.

Rural Canada is a highly diverse economy and society, from its coastal regions to its agrarian heartland. Canada's rural natural resources provide employment, forest products, minerals, oil and gas, food, tax revenue and much of our foreign exchange.

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Dr Peter Hutten-Czapski will be available for interviews on site after 2PM on April 11th



This press release with additional links can be found at [srpc.ca](http://srpc.ca)

**Backgrounder**

The Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada <http://www.healthcarecommission.ca>

**About the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada**

The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC) is the national voice of Canadian rural physicians. Founded in 1992, the SRPC's mission is to provide leadership for rural physicians and to promote sustainable conditions and equitable health care for rural communities.

On behalf of its members and the Canadian public, SRPC performs a wide variety of functions, such as developing and advocating health delivery mechanisms, supporting rural doctors and communities in crisis, promoting and delivering rural medical education, encouraging and facilitating research into rural health issues, and fostering communication among rural physicians and other groups with an interest in rural health care.

The SRPC is a voluntary professional organization representing over 1,300 of Canada's rural physicians and comprising 5 regional divisions spanning the country.