



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

## **Media Release**

### **System Not Training Doctors What they Need to Practice Rurally**

HAILEYBURY ON Feb 18, 2002 - A study published today shows that we need to do a better job of training doctors for rural medicine. Newly trained doctors are lacking the skills to provide the comprehensive care needed in rural areas. Dr Peter Hutten-Czapksi, president of the Society of Rural Physicians says that we need significant reform in the training programs to prepare doctors for the challenges of rural medicine.

“We cannot afford to train primary care specialists for the city and expect them to be able to function in rural areas. Isolated towns need family doctors that can deal with heart attacks and attend births and surgeons that can remove an appendix and set bones. The 30% of Canadians who live in predominantly rural areas need doctors trained to that standard by design and not by accident.”

Current examination standards are such that general surgery specialists are not required to show proficiency in setting bones, or doing cesarean sections despite that these are skills required in rural general surgery. Similarly family physician examination standards are such that graduates do not require proficiency in attending births nor looking after hospitalized patients.

The study by Dr Ben Chan Senior Scientist at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences was published today in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

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**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 1,100 of Canada's rural physicians and comprising 5 regional divisions spanning the country