



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

## **Media Release**

### **Rural Doctors Against Hospital Closures**

NEIL'S HARBOUR /JULY 4th, 2001/ - The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada cautions the New Brunswick government from centralising hospital services to the degree recommended by the Premier's Council. Dr Bernie Buffett, SRPC Atlantic chair says "Change is indeed needed but not by reducing services to the already underprivileged."

In a letter to the premier Atlantic SRPC chair Dr Bernie Buffett says "Our understanding of the community representations to the Quality council is that consistently you have been told that one does not improve services in a Tracadie Shelia by closing the hospital. You should listen to the people."

Dr Peter Hutten-Czapski, SRPC President says "Hospitals are like grocery stores, they deal with perishables." "Even if the distant hospital is of excellent quality, the results will not be as good for people who have to travel long distances to get to it."

Rural people should receive care close to their families and loved ones, why do they have to travel to be cared in City Hospitals by strangers? Dr Buffett points to studies of rural obstetrics that show that women who live in communities with poor local access to obstetrical services are more likely to have babies who are premature, have prolonged hospitalizations with double the costs, or both. While there is agreement that nurses can and should do more health care, why should rural doctors be forced by hospital closures to do less of their potential and threaten the care of their patients?

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## **Backgrounder**

### **Letter to Premier Lord**

The Society of Rural Physicians letter to Bernard Lord is at [www.srpc.ca/lox/exec/misc/lord.html](http://www.srpc.ca/lox/exec/misc/lord.html)  
The premier's council website is at [www.gnb.ca/op\\_cpm/phqc/english/papers.htm](http://www.gnb.ca/op_cpm/phqc/english/papers.htm)

### **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  
<http://www.srpc.ca>