



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

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rural Doctors Want Thunder Bay Regional Hospital Opened to the Region

SIoux LOOKOUT ON / March 9th 2004 / - The Ontario Region of the Society of Rural Physicians is calling on the government to keep regional hospitals open to the region. Dr Hutten-Czapski says "Rural patients need access to specialised services in the city as much as do urban patients."

Dr Yogi Sehgal, executive member ON-SRPC adds "Huge amounts of money are spent on sending our patients out of the province to Duluth and Winnipeg. If only a fraction of that was used to hire nursing staff at Thunder Bay regional hospital, we could keep the patients in Ontario."

Thunder Bay Regional Hospital, despite a large capital campaign for funding in the region, has been closing its beds to patients from outside the city most days. In Australia federal law prohibits regional hospitals from refusing patients.

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Backgrounder

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 1,800 of Canada's rural physicians and comprising 5 regional divisions spanning the country reference <http://www.srpc.ca>