



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

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rural Doctors Endorse Latest Ministry Offer

GRAND BEND ON / March 10th 2005 / - Rural physician leaders met this weekend to discuss the latest offer from the Ontario Medical Association. Dr Peter Englert, chair of the Ontario Region of the Society of Rural Physicians says "We endorse this offer. It is good for rural practice and good for the profession." All the rural friendly provisions in the old contract have been retained plus changes were made to allow even more rural doctors to bill fee for service and get rewarded for comprehensive care. The deal includes an immediate 2.5%(GP) and 2%(specialist) retroactive pay increase for all doctors. The new deal will make Ontario's doctors among the highest-paid in Canada, with physicians working in remote areas eligible for pay hikes of up to 35 per cent over four years. Dr Englert says "This offer should help stabilise the growing crisis in rural areas of the province by providing incentives for doctors to come and practice the broad spectrum general practice that is desperately needed in rural areas."

When the last offer was defeated many rural doctors were upset. Rural doctors lobbied successfully so that gains in the last offer would not be lost. All the provinces doctors will take part in a telephone referendum March 22-28. There are over 140 underserved areas in this province. While this deal does improve the attractiveness of rural practice, Ontario needs also needs more doctors than are currently being trained.

-30-

Contact: Dr. Peter Englert
Chair
Ontario Society of Rural
Physicians
Office 519 238-2362

Dr Steven Arif
Member at large
Ontario Society of Rural
Physicians
(807)-597-1499

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>