



### President's message. ACRRM/SRPC/CJRM

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Rural doctors are true generalists with broad, enhanced competencies in many procedural skills. We enjoy our work and we can take pride in being real generalists. We continue with the struggle to increase the number of rural docs and to enhance our skill sets so that the patients in our rural communities can have the same access to services that other Canadians take for granted.

We can learn a lot from our Australian colleagues who have similar challenges with geography and the rural–urban divide. Rural physicians in Australia have blazed their own trail, forming the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), which this year was legislated as an accrediting body for rural medicine. We in Canada do not have any accreditation for Rural Medicine. Dr. Dennis Pashen, the president of ACRRM, will be speaking at our next Rural and Remote Medicine Conference, April 17–19, 2008. At the conference we will have a forum to discuss the future of rural medicine in Canada and I hope many of you will attend, bringing with you your passion for rural medicine. I always find the Rural and Remote Medicine conferences invigorating, and I inevitably leave the conference with a pride in my chosen profession and feeling a sense of belonging to a group of physicians who are doing a great job in rural medicine.

The SRPC continues to grow, with an increase in membership of 25% in the past year, bringing us to our current total of 2500 members. Attendance at our

annual Rural and Remote Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, April 17–19, 2008 is expected to be over 400 this year. This attendance is tremendous considering that our members are dispersed to all corners of Canada, remote, rural and urban. We appreciate our urban members whose hearts and souls remain in rural Canada, for their ongoing support of rural health care. SRPC has always stated that if Canadians are to be proud of the Canadian medicare system, the benchmark for that success must be measured by how well the health care system is working in remote and rural Canada.

*CJRM* is the flagship of the SRPC. Dr. John Wootton has made a tremendous contribution to rural health as the founding scientific editor. During his tenure as editor, the journal was accepted into *Index Medicus*. After over a decade of service to *CJRM* as the scientific editor, John feels the need to pass the torch, thereby providing an opportunity for renewal. Over the next few months he will be overseeing the transition and SRPC will be looking for a new scientific editor. Thank you very much John for your contribution to our journal. We also need to acknowledge the continuing contribution of Suzanne Kingsmill who is a superb managing editor. The SRPC has organized a search committee to seek a successor to John. We look forward to maintaining the high standard of excellence in rural medical publishing that has been established by John and Suzanne.