

November 13, 2025

Dear Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Board of Directors,

RE: Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice Grant Application

The Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice has had a recruitment and retention program for the last 5 years. We are a smaller organization with funding based on the number of physicians and nurse practitioners in our region. Since our budgets are smaller than most regions, we have focused our efforts on creating awareness and experiences for medical students in rural family medicine. We have found success with this model; just this year two medical students that came to our area in medical school signed on as permanent physicians in Mackenzie.

This has been our approach thus far:

1. Create social media posts on different platforms to create awareness about Rural Family Medicine and provide opportunities for physicians seeking opportunities,
2. Attend Rural Family Medicine specific conferences that medical students attend as well,
3. Host a dinner for medical students at conferences hosted by rural family physicians in our region,
4. Host two events per year in Vancouver where we bring rural physicians to Vancouver to speak to Vancouver medical students in a casual atmosphere about all things working and living in our rural communities. Two rural physicians are sent to the event along with one administrative person. This event is held in collaboration with North Peace Division and South Peace Division. Costs listed are shared costs for catering. At this event and conferences, students are invited to visit our communities and experience rural practice. The visits to communities are funded by the Rural Education Action Plan,
5. Our Division hosts an annual conference in Prince George. We invite students and their spouses to an evening with rural physicians where they enjoy a meal together, play a fun game and network with one another.

There are many things we do to recruit physicians, but these activities have been the core of our program with leadership from Dr. James Card. Dr. Card practices medicine in Valemount and is the Director of the Residency Program in Prince George and for Rural Immersion.

We are seeking funding to attend the two rural health conferences in 2026 along with hosting students at each conference and bringing rural physicians to Vancouver on two separate occasions to speak with medical students. The Rural and Remote conference will take place in Quebec City in 2026, and the BC Rural Health Conference takes place in Prince George. The Vancouver events are called our Rural Interest Group events, and we host these events in March and October. We are seeking a total of \$27,229.33 for the 2026/2027 year. On average, it costs 50K to 80K to recruit one physician in BC.

The following is a breakdown of the costs.

2026	Vancouver Rural Interest Group Visits March and October 2026/27	Rural and Remote April 2026 Quebec City, Quebec	BC Rural Health May 2026 Prince George BC	Total
Registration		\$3104.33	\$3675.00	\$6779.33
Travel	\$3000	\$2500	\$800	\$6300
Accommodations	\$1200	\$900	\$800	\$2900
Per Diem	\$450	\$300	\$300	\$1050
Catering	\$5000			\$5000
Room Rental	\$700			\$700
Medical Student Dinner at conferences		\$2500	\$2000	\$4500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,350.00</b>	<b>\$9304.33</b>	<b>\$7,575.00</b>	<b>\$27,229.33</b>

The success of this program can be proven in the many new grads the Fraser Fort George area has recruited in the last 5 years as well as the many students coming to our area to do electives and community visits.

The Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice has brought over 60 students to our region in the last 3 years with Rural Student Visits. When attending conferences, we speak with many attendees resulting in a list of contacts. There are usually 500 to 2000 attendees at the conferences. The dinners we host with medical students are maximum 20 to 30 students each conference. When meeting with Students in Vancouver, we meet with 25-35 students each time. With this method, we see students' multiple times where we can refine our message about rural practice. Many of the students that have come for a community visit have then taken electives in our region and have applied to residency in Prince George.

Our region needs more exposure to as many medical learners as possible to help build a solid foundation of family physicians in the Fraser Fort George region.

Sincerely,



Errol Winter

Executive Director, Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice