April 2019

Supporting Rural Health Systems through Family Practice Anesthesia

Family physicians have a proud history of supporting rural hospitals and enhancing rural health care delivery in communities across Canada. After reading the recent CBC article by Mr. Michael Gorman, we acknowledge the need to improve the capacity of health care services in rural Nova Scotia and specifically in the domain of anesthesia for surgical procedures and obstetrics in rural and underserviced communities.

Through the Family Medicine Professional Profile the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) outlines the many roles family physicians provide for their communities. Community adaptiveness is a concept describing family doctors’ practices that change based on the needs of their communities. Mr. Gorman’s article describes several Nova Scotia communities that need anesthetic services, and this is a care gap that family physicians can fill.

The CFPC upholds a rigorous standard for its certified members including a Certificate of Added Competence in Family Practice Anesthesia. It is awarded to members who have demonstrated competence or have undergone an accredited university residency training program to enhance their competence in this area.

Access to health care services continues to be a barrier for many Canadians and particularly for those living in rural areas. Family physicians provide generalist care over a variety of clinical domains, including anesthesia, while working collaboratively with other members of health care teams. We would like to express our support for family practice anesthetists who are competent to provide quality care and able to enhance access to care closer to home for rural Nova Scotians.

Dr. Ruth Wilson
Co-chair, Rural Road Map Implementation Committee
Past President, College of Family Physicians of Canada

Dr. Victor Ng
Physician Advisor, Professional Development and Practice Support, College of Family Physicians of Canada

Dr. Gavin Parker
Co-chair, Collaborative Advisory Group for General and Family Practice Anesthesia
Society of Rural Physicians of Canada

Dr. Anthony Wiens
Co-chair, Collaborative Advisory Group for General and Family Practice Anesthesia
College of Family Physicians of Canada