



News Release – for immediate distribution

June 15, 2016

Awards of Excellence in Rural Medicine recognizes rural interprofessional healthcare teams, physicians

VANCOUVER – Three British Columbia rural physicians and two rural community interprofessional health care teams were recognized and feted for their accomplishments and contributions to rural medical practice at the Rural Coordination Centre of BC's (RCCbc) [Rural Emergency Continuum of Care \(RECC\) medical conference](#) held in Prince George, BC on Thursday, June 9, 2016.

Three physicians – Drs. **Jel Coward** (Pemberton), **Norm Lea** (Nakusp), and **David May** (Powell River) – were honoured for contributions that greatly elevated the health and well-being of their respective communities.

For the first time in the history of the Awards of Excellence in Rural Medicine, two interprofessional health care teams were nominated for recognition. The integrated physician-nurse practitioner team at **Waneta Primary Care Clinic** in Trail, BC was given the “Sustained Community” award for its work in sustaining the health and well-being of the community over many years. The “Resilient Community” award recognized the work of 21 physicians, nurses, allied healthcare professionals and administrators at the **Cascade Medical Centre** and **Princeton General Hospital**. This group worked hard in the face of several challenging situations to substantively improve the health and well-being of the community of Princeton.

2016 marks the third year that RCCbc has recognized healthcare practitioners for their contribution and dedication to rural medical practice in British Columbia. In 2014, ‘Outstanding Mentors’ were recognized for their training and mentorship support of new-to-practice rural doctors. In 2015, RCCbc recognized ‘Rural Opinion Leaders’ who facilitated best clinical practices, embodied personal and professional excellence, and demonstrated lifelong dedication to their communities.

[A call for nominations was issued in April 2016](#) through *BC Rural Update*, the eNewsletter of the RCCbc. A committee consisting of representatives from RCCbc and the University of British Columbia selected the 2016 recipients.

The Awards of Excellence in Rural Medicine are made possible through the generous funding provided by the [Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues](#) (JSC). The JSC is a joint collaboration between the BC government and the Doctors of BC that provides policy oversight as well as funding for rural physician programs to increase recruitment and retention of doctors in British Columbia.

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BACKGROUNDER

Rural Coordination Centre of BC

rccbc.ca

The Rural Coordination Centre of BC (RCCbc) works to enhance rural education in British Columbia and advocates to improve the health of rural BC residents.

Working at the direction of the JSC, and in collaboration BC's health authorities, post-secondary institutions, practitioners, and rural communities, RCCbc identifies gaps and overlaps in rural services throughout the province and creates initiatives to address shortfalls. It works to increase and sustain recruitment and retention of rural healthcare professionals to BC and to provide high quality, in-community healthcare to rural British Columbians.

Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues

rccbc.ca/rccbc/about-the-jsc/

The Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues (JSC) is a BC-based entity that includes representation from the BC Medical Association (BCMA), the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the health authorities. The JSC advises the BC Government and the BCMA on matters pertaining to rural medical practice and develops programs and policies for BC's rural physicians.

ADDENDA

A booklet with the submitted biographies of all 2016 Awards of Excellence in Rural Medicine winners is available upon request.

Photographs of the award winners from the Plaque ceremony are available upon request.