

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2016HLTH0082-002358  
Nov. 15, 2016

Ministry of Health  
Doctors of BC

### **New UBC chair to advocate for rural health care in B.C.**

PRINCE GEORGE – Health Minister Terry Lake announced a \$5-million endowment to establish a new chair at the University of British Columbia (UBC) to help enhance the delivery of rural health-care services across the province.

Dr. Dave Snadden has been appointed as the founding rural doctors' UBC Chair in Rural Health. Dr. Snadden was also the first leader of UBC's Northern Medical Program in Prince George.

The \$5-million endowment is funded through the Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues, a partnership between the Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC that advises the Province on matters related to rural medical practice.

In addition, operational funding of \$350,000 per year will be provided over the next five years to support the development of a distributed provincial network of rural health researchers and the establishment of a Dean's Advisory Committee on Rural and Remote Health. These components will form an integrated and innovative world-leading strategy to improve health outcomes for rural citizens.

Based out of Prince George, Dr. Snadden will provide academic leadership in rural affairs, establish relevant research, and address rural physician recruitment and retention.

The chair was created following a proposal by the Rural Coordination Centre of BC, which works on behalf of the Joint Standing Committee, and seeks to improve rural health education and advocates for rural health in British Columbia.

While the position falls under the UBC department of family practice, it is intended to be a resource to the university's faculty of medicine as a whole, including specialty departments and other professional education schools.

Prior to his role as founding chair, Dr. Snadden was the executive associate dean of education with the UBC faculty of medicine. Before that, he spent eight years overseeing the expansion of UBC's medical education and training programs to northern B.C, including the Northern Medical Program, a partnership between UBC and the University of Northern British Columbia. He trained and worked in Scotland as a rural practitioner for a number of years before furthering his training at the University of Western Ontario. Upon his return to Scotland, Dr. Snadden developed a collaborative master's program in primary care and helped create the first integrated undergraduate and postgraduate department of general practice in the United

Kingdom. He is a fellow of the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. His three-year term is effective Nov. 1, 2016.

The Rural Doctors' UBC Chair in Rural Health is one of many solutions to address health-care access challenges in rural communities. The ministry is committed to improving rural health care in B.C. by: understanding population and patient health; developing quality and sustainable care models; recruiting and retaining engaged, skilled health-care providers; and providing strong tools and processes that allow flexibility in responding to the diversity of geographies in British Columbia.

**Learn More:**

Doctors of BC: [www.doctorsofbc.ca](http://www.doctorsofbc.ca)

Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues: [www.rccbc.ca/rccbc/about-the-jsc/](http://www.rccbc.ca/rccbc/about-the-jsc/)

Rural Coordination Centre of BC: [www.rccbc.ca/](http://www.rccbc.ca/)

**Contact:**

Ministry of Health Communications  
250 952-1887 (media line)

Sharon Shore  
Senior Manager, Communications & Media Relations  
Doctors of BC  
604-638-2832

Brian Kladko  
Communications Manager  
UBC Faculty of Medicine  
604-827-3301

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [www.gov.bc.ca/connect](http://www.gov.bc.ca/connect)

**Quotes:**

**Terry Lake, Minister of Health –**

“British Columbians in rural and remote communities face unique challenges in accessing health care. I’m pleased to see that Dr. Snadden will continue his work in the area of rural health with this new appointment, collaborating with researchers and practitioners on ways to improve our systems of care in these areas of the province.”

**Donna Barnett, Minister of State for Rural Economic Development –**

“I congratulate all of the partners involved on the creation of this innovative appointment. I’m confident that with his experience in rural practice, Dr. Snadden will excel in the role and will continue to champion rural health-care research.”

**Shirley Bond, MLA Prince George-Valemount –**

“The creation of the Rural Doctors’ UBC Chair in Rural Health will further highlight the work of the exceptionally talented health-care professionals we have in Northern B.C. As the first rural chair in Canada, Dr. Snadden’s work will allow us to better understand and advance health-care service delivery for rural British Columbians.”

**Mike Morris, MLA for Prince George-Mackenzie –**

“Rural British Columbia is a remarkable, diverse, and vital element of this province. The establishment of the rural chair will ensure that British Columbians in these communities receive quality health care close to home.”

**Dr. Alan Ruddiman, president of Doctors of BC –**

“Rural doctors know that our medical schools are the best place to give our educators and our doctors-in-training a realistic and informed appreciation of the complex rural framework. The announcement of our new rural chair – a doctor himself who can also provide academic leadership and a credible footprint in B.C.’s rural communities – means enhanced supports for rural doctors, and ultimately improved long-term health services and supports for the patients they serve. This new legacy once again confirms that British Columbia has the most comprehensive suite of programs to support rural physicians and the communities and patients that they serve.”

**Dr. Dermot Kelleher, dean of the UBC faculty of medicine –**

“For more than a decade, UBC has been working to improve rural health care by educating and training students and medical residents in all parts of the province. With the creation of this chair, we are expanding that commitment to include research, which will help inform and guide our collective efforts to close the delivery gap for health care between our small, more isolated communities and B.C.’s more populated centres.”

**Dr. Ray Markham, executive director of the Rural Coordination Centre of BC –**

“Rural medical practitioners are some of the most highly skilled health care providers in British Columbia. The endowment will afford learners the opportunity to practice medicine at this high standard as well as provide continuing educational supports to existing rural physicians to keep their skills current. Under the rural chair’s research mandate, health authorities, local governments, the university, and rural physicians will be able to collaborate to improve the health outcomes of rural and remote B.C. citizens.”

**Dr. Dave Snadden, founding Rural Doctors’ UBC Chair in Rural Health –**

“I am both humbled and excited to be appointed as the founding Rural Doctors’ UBC Chair in Rural Health. I will use this opportunity to explore the challenges faced by rural practitioners, as well as what’s working for them. With that knowledge, we can resolve the difficulties and replicate the successes. There is much for us to do to address the needs of rural patients, and it will take many of us working together to make a difference.”

**Dr. Granger Avery, president of the Canadian Medical Association and former executive director of the Rural Coordination Centre of BC –**

“This is a major advance, not only for rural British Columbia, but for Canada. Demonstrating the

successful collaboration between the university, government and the profession, it shows the way forward to improve our health-care system.”