BC Rural Health Awards recognizes innovation of rural physician-led primary care CHANGE BC team

VANCOUVER – A team of six primary care rural physicians received the Rural Coordination Centre of BC’s (RCCbc) Award of Excellence in Effective and Efficient Healthcare in Rural BC British Columbia at the BC Rural Health Conference in Nanaimo, BC.

Drs. Jocelyn Black, Brenda Huff, Gregory Linton, Matthew Menard, Wouter Morkel, and Onuora Odoh make up CHANGE BC, an innovative primary care-based lifestyle support program. The group uses a team-based approach to preventing chronic disease through the integration of nutrition and exercise interventions into primary care. Patients receive personalized dietitian and kinesiologist supports that are delivered via in-person and technology enabled visits. Patient-focused group classes are also made available.

The CHANGE BC program embraces the Five Partner approach developed from the Partnership Pentagram for socially accountable system transformation. This model involves bringing together multiple healthcare stakeholders for collaboration: Policy Makers, Health Administrators, Citizens, Contributors, and Health Providers.

CHANGE BC is supported by the Pacific Northwest Division of Family Practice, the University of British Columbia’s School of Kinesiology, Metabolic Syndrome Canada, and the General Practice Services Committee.

At its May 12 awards ceremony, RCCbc also recognized Dr. Geoffrey Appleton with the 2018 Award of Excellence in Rural Medicine: Lifetime Achievement, and Gabriola Island was honoured with the 2018 BC Rural Community Award.

2018 marks the fifth year that RCCbc has recognized BC physicians and communities for their contribution and dedication to rural medical practice with the BC Rural Health Awards (formerly the Awards of Excellence in Rural Medicine). Each year, RCCbc recognizes rural physicians within a themed category (e.g., Rural Opinion Leaders in 2015, Outstanding Mentors in 2014) as well as acknowledging long-term practitioners who have shaped and served their communities for more than 15 years. In 2016, RCCbc began to honour the valuable work of interprofessional health care teams in sustaining and/or retaining rural community health services in British Columbia.

A call for nominations was issued in December 2017 through BC Rural Update, the eNewsletter of the RCCbc. Recipients were selected by a committee consisting of representatives from RCCbc and the University of British Columbia. All award recipients receive a physical plaque, along with a $2,500 grant to be used for hosting a community celebration.

The BC Rural Health Awards 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.
Dr. Ray Markham, Executive Director
“RCCbc is pleased to recognize the pivotal role of rural physicians and interprofessional teams in providing excellent care for their communities. Many innovative advances in medicine are being pioneered by rural health providers wanting to serve their patients as fully as possible.”

BACKGROUNDER

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

ADDENDA

A PDF with the submitted biographies of all 2018 BC Rural Health Awards winners is available upon request.

Photographs of the award winners from the May 12 ceremony are available upon request.