



2026

ANNUAL

REPORT Advancing Rural Health
Through Advocacy

2025–2026

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Land Acknowledgment



The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC) acknowledges that we are a national organization working across the diverse lands and territories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples throughout Canada.

We honour the enduring relationship Indigenous Peoples have with their lands, waters, cultures, and communities, and recognize the generations of stewardship that have shaped the places where we live, work, learn, and provide care.

As an organization dedicated to strengthening rural and remote healthcare, we recognize the important role of Indigenous communities and Indigenous healthcare providers in the health of rural Canada. We also acknowledge the ongoing inequities experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada's healthcare system.

SRPC is committed to advancing reconciliation through our education, advocacy, partnerships, and our work to promote culturally safe and equitable healthcare in rural and remote communities. We reaffirm our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We recognize that reconciliation is an ongoing journey. We remain committed to listening, learning, building meaningful relationships, and taking action.

2026

Message from the President



My term as President has now come to an end, and as I was asked to prepare this message for the annual report, I found myself reflecting on what an honour it has been to serve the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada. While we accomplished a great deal during my time as President, more than anything, I find myself thinking about the people I have had the privilege of working with and the incredible community that makes SRPC what it is.

Rural medicine is, at its heart, about community. During my time as President, I have had the opportunity to connect with physicians, learners and health care providers from communities across the country. I have been continually reminded of the creativity, dedication and resilience of the people doing this work, often in challenging circumstances and with limited resources. It has been inspiring to see how willing our rural community is to share ideas, support one another, and work together to improve care.

I have also been fortunate to work with an exceptional group of people within SRPC. Our staff bring an incredible level of commitment to their work, and our Board and Advisory Council members generously give their time, expertise and perspective. Their contributions are what allow SRPC to continue moving forward, and I am grateful to have been part of that team.

There is no shortage of challenges facing rural health care, and I am proud of the work SRPC continues to do to ensure rural communities have a strong voice. But I am equally optimistic about the future. There is tremendous energy within our organization and within rural medicine more broadly.

It is now my pleasure to pass the presidency to Dr. Sarah Giles. Sarah has been a strong advocate for rural and remote medicine and brings tremendous energy and commitment to the role. I know she will lead SRPC thoughtfully and enthusiastically, and I wish her every success in the years ahead.

Thank you to everyone who made my time as President such a rewarding experience. It has been an honour to serve SRPC, and I look forward to remaining involved and watching the organization continue to grow.

Most importantly, thank you to the rural physicians and health care providers across Canada who show up every day for their communities. It is a privilege to be part of this community.



Gavin Parker
President
2025–April 2026

2026



Message from the Executive Director

It has been a busy and productive year for the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada. As we reflect on the past year, we continue to see our organization grow and strengthen its presence in conversations around rural health care. This year, we put a real focus on government relations, getting out and meeting with Members of Parliament, government officials and health system leaders across the country. We are making sure rural physicians and rural communities are part of these conversations and that the realities of rural practice are understood.

Our advocacy continues to focus on three key priorities: developing a national rural health human resources strategy grounded in a clear understanding of our current workforce and future needs; securing sustainable funding to expand rural physician training; and advancing an approach to physician mobility and licensure to make it easier for physicians to practice across jurisdictions and support access to care in rural communities. These are not new challenges, but we are bringing renewed energy, stronger relationships and a louder rural voice to the conversations.

We also celebrated our biggest Rural and Remote Conference yet, welcoming more than 1,400 physicians, learners, health care providers and partners from across Canada and internationally. For the first time, to my knowledge, the federal Minister of Health attended and engaged directly with our members through a plenary with Dr. Sarah Giles and Dr. Parker, moderated by Dr. Sarah Newbery. It was a terrific reflection of the growing recognition of rural health care at the national level.

We closed the year by strengthening our own foundation, adopting updated bylaws and transitioning to a new governance structure with a Board of Directors and an Advisory Council. These changes position SRPC to better serve our members and ensure rural voices continue to shape our work.

None of this happens without the people behind the SRPC. We are a small staff, but we are incredibly fortunate to be supported by a Board of Directors and Advisory Council who bring ideas, expertise and passion to the table and help shape the work we do. And, most importantly, we are grateful to our members. You support us, challenge us, share your experiences and, whenever we put out the call for extra hands, you show up. That is what makes SRPC strong. The momentum is growing, and we are excited about what we can accomplish together in the year ahead.



Jennifer Barr
Executive Director

2026



Governance Transition

2026 marked an important step in SRPC's transition to a new governance structure, following more than a year of planning and work behind the scenes. The bylaw review focused on modernizing governance language, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and strengthening accountability. We are grateful to the members and staff who contributed their time, ideas and expertise throughout this process.

SRPC engaged members throughout the transition by sharing the proposed governance model, holding a member town hall to answer questions, and communicating the proposed bylaw changes in advance of the Annual General Meeting. An early call for Interim Directors was also issued in anticipation of the new structure.

At the 2026 Annual General Meeting, members approved the updated bylaws and the transition to a Board of Directors and Advisory Council model. A Board was subsequently established, bringing together experienced SRPC members and new perspectives to guide the Society's governance, strategic priorities and mission.

While the updated bylaws and new Board mark an important milestone, the governance transition is not yet complete. Work will continue in the coming year to refine roles, processes and relationships within the new structure, with a continued focus on transparency, accountability and effective governance.

A Year of Transition

● 2025–26 | Planning and preparation

A year of work went into developing and refining the proposed governance structure, including discussions, review of the bylaws and preparation for the transition.

● Member engagement | Questions and feedback

Members were kept informed of the proposed changes and invited to provide input, including through a member town hall focused on the new governance model.

● Early 2026 | Preparing the new Board

SRPC invited members to express their interest in serving as Interim Directors in anticipation of the proposed bylaw changes and the establishment of the new Board.

● Spring 2026 | New Board established

A Board of Directors was established, marking an important milestone in SRPC's governance transition.

● 2026–27 | Continuing the work

A Board of Directors was established, marking an important milestone in SRPC's governance transition.

2025-2026 Board of Directors



Dr. Gavin Parker
BSc, MSc (Med. Ed.), M.D.,
CCFP (FPA), FRRMS
President
Pincher Creek, AB



Dr. Sarah Giles
MD, CCFP (EM), FCFP, FRRMS
President Elect
Kenora, ON



Dr. Merrilee Brown
MD CCFP FCFP FRRMS
Treasurer
Port Perry, ON



Dr. Stacy Desilets
MD, FCFP
Director
New Liskeard, ON



Dr. Leigh Beamish
MD, CCFP
Director
Hinton, AB



Dr. John O'Connor
MD, FRRMS
Director
Edmonton, AB



Dr. Nicholas Potvin
MD, CCFP, CCFP (EM), CCFP
(OSS), FCFP, PHD
Director
Clinton, ON



Dr. Anchaleena Mandal
MD, CCFP
Director
Ottawa, ON



Dr. Brian Geller
CCFP (EM), CCFP (ESS),
FCFP, FRRMS
Director
Regina, SK

SRPC STAFF

Jennifer Barr

Executive Director

Colinda Siroski

Membership and Administration Lead

Diana Chavez

Marketing Officer

Kristen Kluge

Project Coordinator

Stacey Thomson

Finance Officer

SRPC COMMITTEES

Anesthesia

Dr. Jane Bishop
Sechelt, BC

CJRM

Dr. Peter Hutten-Czapski
Haileybury, ON

Communications

Dr. Kerry-Lynn Williams
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL

Education Reform Taskforce

Dr. Kristy Penner
Coleman, AB

Emergency Medicine

Dr. Sean Moore
Keewatin, ON

Environmental

Dr. Regan Taylor
Calgary, AB

First Five Years in Practice

Dr. Kimberley Chang
Nanaimo, BC

Global Health

Dr. Steve Ferracuti
Haliburton, ON

Maternal and Newborn Care

Dr. Sarah Gower
Elora, ON

Nominations and Awards

Dr. Gabe Woollam
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL

Research

Dr. Margo Wilson
St. John's, NL

Resident

Dr. Tara S Freeman
Chetwynd, BC

Dr. Nkechi Ikeaba
Toronto, ON

Rural Surgery

Dr. Mark Prins
Edmonton, AB

Rural and Remote

Dr. Michelle Lajzerowicz
Chelsea, QC

Dr. Nicholas Potvin
Clinton, ON

Specialists

Dr. Sivaruban (Ruban) Kanagaratnam
Swift Current, SK

Student

Katherine (Kasia) Babyn
Edmonton, AB

Jessica Telizyn
Calgary, AB



Provincial and Territorial Representatives

Across Canada, Connected by Rural Medicine

SRPC's Provincial and Territorial Representatives provide a connection between the Society and rural physicians across Canada, bringing local perspectives and experiences into the national conversation.

AB **ALBERTA**
Dr. Rithesh Ram
Drumheller, AB

BC **BRITISH COLUMBIA**
Dr. Paul Mackey
Kamloops, BC

MA **MANITOBA**
Vacant

NB **NEW BRUNSWICK**
Dr. Fraser Mackay
Saint John, NB

NL **NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**
Dr. Andrew Hunt
Twillingate, NL

NT **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**
Dr. Kyle Sue-Milne
NT

NS **NOVA SCOTIA**
Dr. Olaide Odumosu
Westmount, NS

NU **NUNAVUT**
Dr. Meridith Penner
Iqaluit, NU

ON **ONTARIO**
Dr. Paul Cano
Grimsby, ON

PEI **PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**
Dr. Declan Fox
Tignish, PE

QC **QUEBEC**
Vacant

SK **SASKATCHEWAN**
Dr. Brian Geller
Regina, SK

YK **YUKON**
Dr. Lindsey Campbell
Watson Lake, YT



Advocacy Highlights

Advocacy & Government Relations

35

Meetings with provincial and federal MPs and staff

SRPC continued to strengthen its role as the national voice for rural and remote physicians, engaging directly with elected officials, government staff and parliamentary committees throughout the year. Our advocacy focused on strengthening the rural health workforce, improving access to care, and ensuring rural and remote perspectives are reflected in health policy and planning.

Bringing Rural Perspectives to Parliament

SRPC was invited to participate in federal parliamentary and committee discussions on issues directly affecting rural health care.

Federal Health Workforce & Immigration

SRPC provided input to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health on barriers to integrating internationally trained health professionals, highlighting the importance of considering rural and remote communities in health workforce and immigration policy.

Health Data & Digital Connectivity

Dr. Sarah Giles presented to the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology during its study of Bill S-5. She brought the rural and remote perspective to discussions on health data interoperability, highlighting how disconnected systems can affect continuity of care and access to health services in rural communities.



Dr. Gavin Parker met with Nancy Hamzawi, President of the Public Health Agency of Canada



Dr. Sarah Giles and Dr. Paul Cano met with MP Ted Falk (Provencher, MB) in Ottawa



Advocacy Highlights

Advocating for Investment in Rural Health Care

SRPC made federal and provincial pre-budget submissions, putting forward specific investments and policy solutions to strengthen rural health care.

\$25 million

National Advanced Skills and Training Program for Rural Practice

SRPC called for renewed federal investment in NASTP to expand access to advanced skills training for rural physicians and strengthen local health care capacity.

\$1 million

National Rural Health Workforce Strategy

SRPC recommended federal investment to begin developing a comprehensive strategy focused on the current and future rural and remote health workforce.

\$10 million

Ontario Advanced Skills and Training Program for Rural Practice

SRPC called for provincial investment in an Ontario program to support advanced skills training for physicians practising in rural communities.

\$750,000

Ontario Rural and Remote Health Workforce Strategy

SRPC recommended dedicated funding to support the development of a provincial rural and remote health workforce strategy.

SRPC also called for stronger government engagement with SRPC as a trusted partner in rural health policy and planning, and for a national forum to advance solutions to equitable access to emergency care in rural and remote communities.



Advocacy Highlights



Connecting Rural Health Leaders with Government

At the 2026 Rural & Remote Medicine Conference, SRPC hosted the Honourable Marjorie Michel, Federal Minister of Health, for a fireside discussion on the realities facing rural health care. Moderated by Dr. Sarah Newbery with Dr. Sarah Giles and Dr. Gavin Parker, the discussion focused on rural workforce challenges, scope of practice, health system resilience and the importance of advanced skills training.



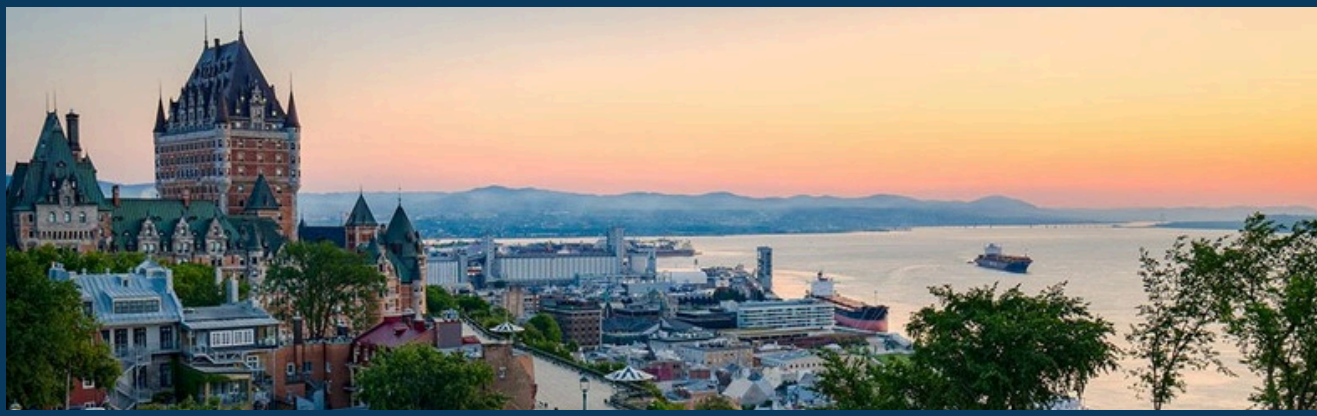
Honourable Marjorie Michel, Dr. Sarah Newbery, Dr. Gavin Parker, and Dr. Sarah Giles attending R&R 2026 in Quebec City.

A Stronger Voice for Rural Health

From parliamentary committees and pre-budget consultations to direct meetings with elected officials and government staff, SRPC continued to bring the realities of rural and remote health care directly to decision-makers. Through evidence-informed recommendations and concrete investment proposals, SRPC is working to ensure rural communities are considered in the development of health policy and solutions across Canada.



33rd Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Conference



R&R BY THE NUMBERS: ATTENDEE REGISTRATION



CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

Ontario	290	New Brunswick •	134
Alberta/Saskatchewan/ Manitoba	249	Nova Scotia • PEI • Newfoundland	
British Columbia	142	Northwest Territories •	22
Quebec	94	Nunavut • Yukon	
		International	35

Guided by the theme **The Creative Art of Rural Medicine**, the 33rd Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Conference brought physicians, residents, and medical students together in Quebec City to celebrate the innovation, adaptability, and community spirit at the heart of rural healthcare. Through learning, collaboration, and connection, participants shared knowledge, strengthened relationships, and celebrated the people and communities that make rural medicine so rewarding.



33rd Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Conference



Plenary Highlight: Moving Knowledge Through Art and Innovation



Dr. Rick Fleet delivered an unforgettable plenary presentation titled **When Evidence Alone Is Not Enough: Living Labs and Arts-Based Knowledge Translation for Rural Health Care Transformation.**

Breaking away from traditional academic formats, Dr. Fleet blended science, storytelling, and performing arts into a creative, play-like presentation. The session featured powerful performance excerpts from the Urgence rurale 360 (Rural Urgency 360) tour, brought to life alongside artists Anne-Fay Audet Johnston and Méganne Fleet, and produced by the world-renowned collective Les 7 doigts de la main under the direction of Patrick Léonard.

Presented to a record-breaking crowd of over 1,000 healthcare professionals, this innovative session demonstrated how creativity and multi-sensory communication can bridge the gap between clinical data and real-world practice, moving knowledge in deeply impactful ways to transform rural emergency care.

[Watch plenary recording here.](#)





R&R 2026 Reviews ★★★★★

“

Thank you to you and the team for such a wonderfully organized event. It was my first time attending SRPC's Rural and Remote Conference, and it truly exceeded my expectations. everything ran seamlessly, and the socials were a lot of fun.

I know how much work goes on behind the scenes to make something like this come together so smoothly, and it really showed. Looking forward to the next one!

- Rifka

Great job!

I wanted to say thank you for inviting me back as a speaker this year. The information was well received and interestingly involved many of the spouses and partners of learners to attend.

The discussions were meaningful and relevant to all participant experiences.

-Adri-Anna Aloia

Thank you so much for yet another amazing conference. Truly always the best conference (and the only one I ever make a point to attend every year!)

-Mira Pavan

It was a pleasure to contribute to R&R 2026.

The conference was a success and the workshops and speakers were incredible.

-Leanne Brisson

Congratulations on a well run meeting!

It just gets better and better!!

-John Wooton

Thank you to you and everyone involved in putting on such a great event - I'm still coming down from all of the great energy and connections made last week in Quebec City.

You all did an amazing job on putting on this rural conference. I hope you all get to put your feet up this week after such a successful event.

-Nicole Cullen

Friends,

Great Course, Great Content. Great Food! A great Team! What more can you ask for?

-Gordon Brock

This was such a wonderful conference. My first R&R but definitely not my last. Thanks for having me.

-Laurel Charlesworth

I am exactly where I need to be



SRPC AWARDS

Recognizing Excellence in Rural Healthcare

On April 17, 2026, SRPC honoured rural physicians, learners, mentors, and community leaders through its Awards Program at the Centre des congrès de Québec in Québec City. Their achievements reflect the commitment, adaptability, and excellence that continue to shape rural and remote healthcare across Canada.

A total of 45 members were recognized through the Rural Service Award, Rural Long Service Award, Fellowship of Rural and Remote Medicine of the SRPC (FRRMS), and Lifetime Member Award, acknowledging years of service, professional achievement, and dedication to rural and remote medicine.

The Nomination-Based Awards program **received 15 nominations**, with seven recipients selected to recognize leadership, mentorship, advocacy, and contributions that have strengthened rural healthcare communities across Canada.

SRPC also celebrated excellence among learners through its essay and research competitions, receiving 19 submissions in the Student and Resident Essay programs and showcasing 35 research posters through the Student and Resident Research Poster competitions.

Additional information on the 2026 award recipients is available on the [**SRPC website**](#).



Recognizing Excellence in Rural Healthcare

*This one caught me off guard.
I've been selected to receive the 2026 Rural Service
Award from the Society of Rural Physicians of
Canada.*

*The truth is... this one feels different.
Because rural medicine isn't just a job.*

*It becomes part of your life.
It's the early mornings.
The long days.
The moments where you're figuring things out in
real time with limited resources.
The responsibility that comes with being part of a
community that depends on you.*

*Over time, you stop thinking about it as "work."
It just becomes what you do.
Who you are.*

Any impact I've had has never been mine alone.

*It's been shaped by the teams I've worked with, the
community I've been welcomed into, and the
patients who trust us with their care every day.*

*That's what makes rural medicine meaningful.
That's what makes this recognition so special.*

Grateful and honoured to be part of it.

*—
Dr. Rithesh Ram
Rural Generalist | Drumheller, Alberta Doctor*

Rural Service Award Recipient



**The responsibility
that comes with
being part of a
community that
depends on you.**

2nd Annual Mini Rural and Remote Medicine Conference



Rural and Remote
Medicine Conference



The Second Annual Mini Rural and Remote Medicine Conference, held in **Regina, Saskatchewan**, brought together rural physicians, residents, and medical students for a focused program of learning, connection, and practical skills.

The event featured a range of educational sessions, including hands-on learning opportunities designed to support the realities of rural practice. The program also welcomed Dr. Alika Lafontaine among its speakers, contributing to discussions on rural healthcare and the future of family medicine.

With a smaller and more intimate format than SRPC's Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Conference, the Mini Rural and Remote Medicine Conference provided participants with meaningful opportunities to learn, connect with colleagues, and engage with topics relevant to rural and remote practice.

69 Attendees

14 Speakers

10 Exhibitors

1 Family





WEBINARS

Throughout the year, SRPC continued to provide opportunities for learning, connection, and professional development through webinars and virtual information sessions. From clinical education and Indigenous health to financial planning, advocacy, medical-legal issues, and rural residency, the 2025–26 program brought a diverse range of topics to our members and broader rural healthcare community.

Highlights

9

Webinars and information sessions hosted

200

Average registrants per session

1,802

Total registrations across all sessions

Number of Registrants by Month and Session

2025

July

153

Helping Patients Face a Serious Illness: 7 Keys for More Choice and Control

August

108

Guiding Your Financial Future: How Planning Today Can Create a Brighter Tomorrow

September

362

Indigenous Education Series: Indigenous Women's Determinants of Health and Illness in Medicine

October

143

Government Engagement 101

November

53

SRPC Student Committee Outreach: Rural and Remote Medicine Conference 2026

142

Virtual Exploring: Rural Residency

2026

January

494

Vital FM Updates for Primary Care

May

184

Pushing the Limits When Care Gets Complicated: Navigating Medico-Legal Risks, Accountability and Access in Rural Maternity Care

June

163

The Swiss Army Knife of Medicine: Is Rural ESS/OSS Right for You?





MENTOR PROGRAM

The SRPC Mentor Program continued to connect rural physicians with experienced mentors, supporting professional development, connection, and knowledge sharing across the rural medical community. In 2025–26, the program welcomed new mentees while strengthening its processes, resources, and overall participant experience.



Highlights



Strengthening the Mentor Program

In 2025–26, SRPC focused on enhancing the Mentor Program to make participation easier, improve the user experience, and support the program’s continued growth. Improvements included:



PROGRAM RESOURCES

Updated documents, processes and mentor profiles



ONLINE EXPERIENCE

Updated the webpage and improved participant experience



PROGRAM GROWTH

Launched the enhanced program and increased promotion



FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENT

Gathered participant feedback to support ongoing improvement

Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine



CJRM by the Numbers

12 articles published in 2025–26
1,072 average digital recipients per issue
60% average digital open rate

A New Home for CJRM

In 2026, SRPC launched the new CJRM Library, bringing 30 years of journal content together in one searchable space. Explore past issues, articles, editorials, and Occasional pieces all in one place: cjrm.srpc.ca

With Gratitude

For 30 years, CJRM has been shaped by the dedication of people who have believed in the importance of a strong scholarly voice for rural medicine.

SRPC extends its sincere thanks to Dr. Peter Hutten-Czapski for his years of service as Scientific Editor and to Suzanne Kingsmill for her longstanding leadership as Managing Editor. Their contributions have been an important part of CJRM's history and continued success.

As Suzanne retires, we thank her for her many years of service and wish her all the best in this next chapter.



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Years of Rural Scholarship

A scholarly voice for rural medicine.

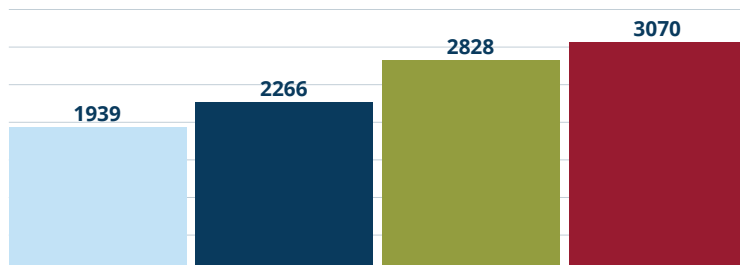
[Read article here](#)



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership Over the Years

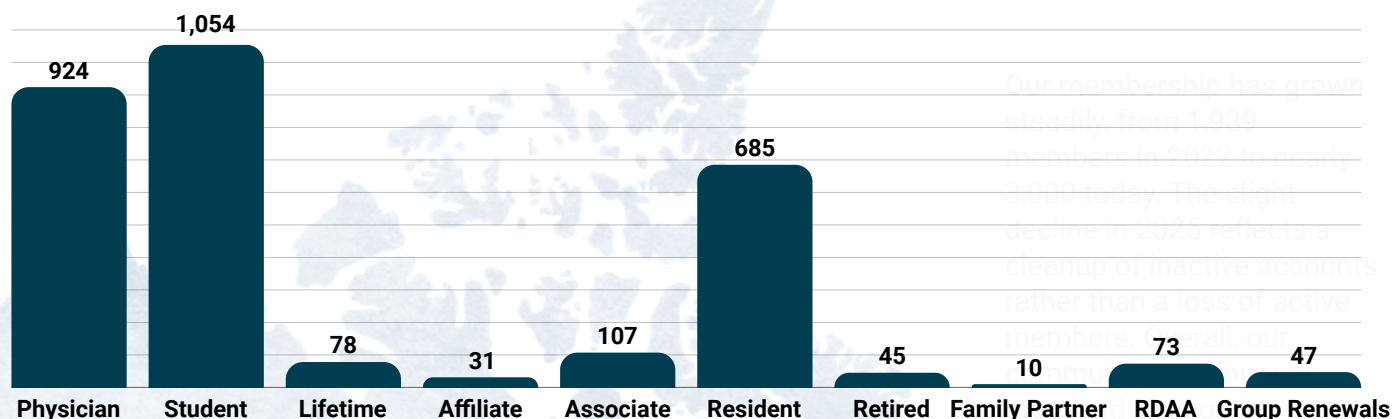
2022 2023 2024 2025-2026



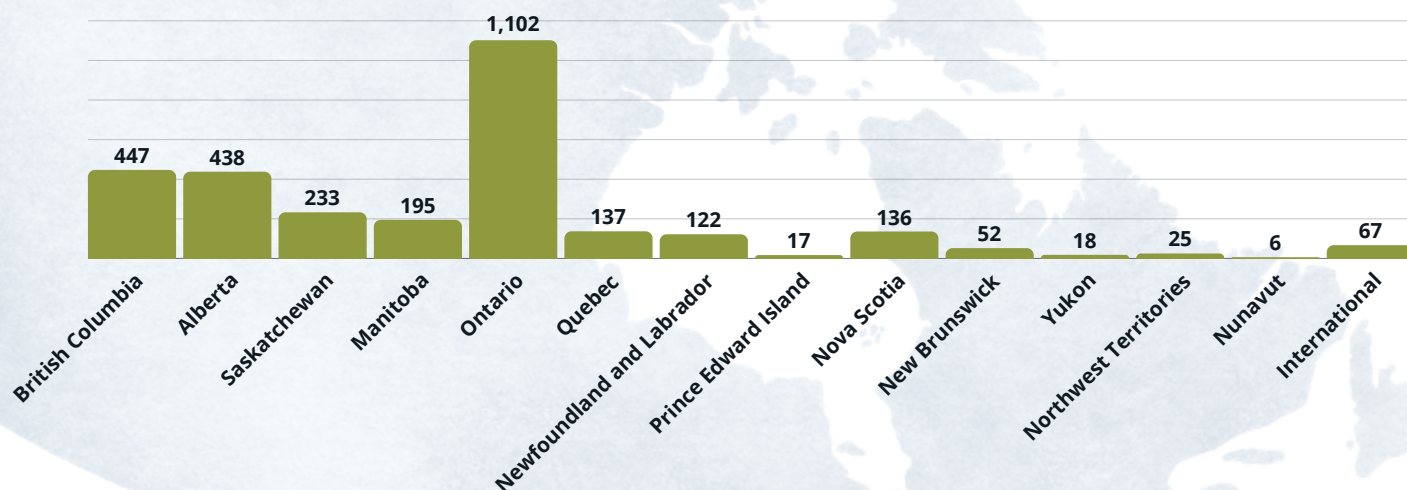
Membership continues to grow

Our membership has grown steadily, from 1,939 members in 2022 to nearly 3,000 today. The slight decline in 2025 reflects a cleanup of inactive accounts rather than a loss of active members. Overall, our community continues to grow and strengthen.

Membership Levels



Membership by Province and Territory



Please note that the data in this report is drawn from our Spring 2026 report and may not include all current staff members and volunteers in our database.

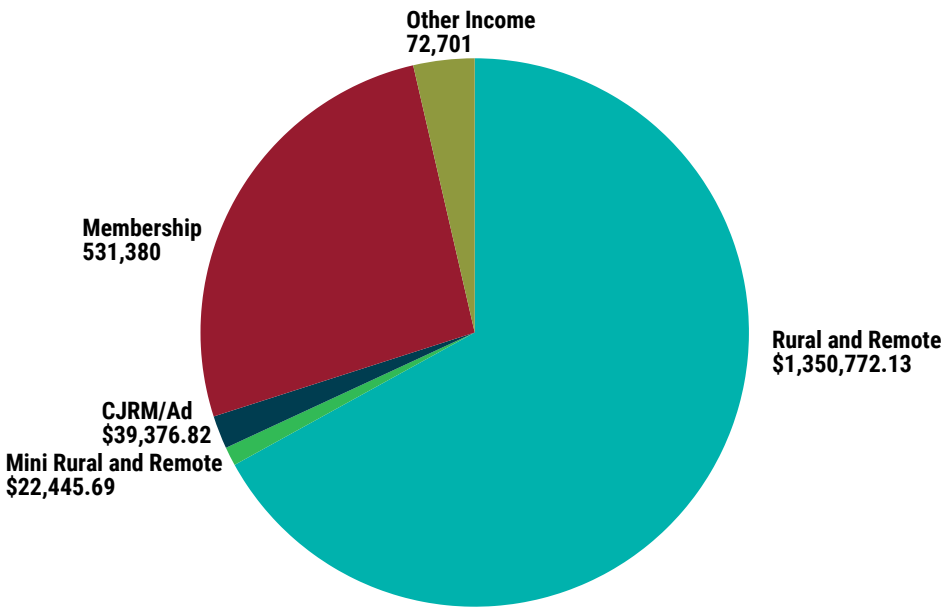


2026 Financial Overview

For the year ended June 30, 2026

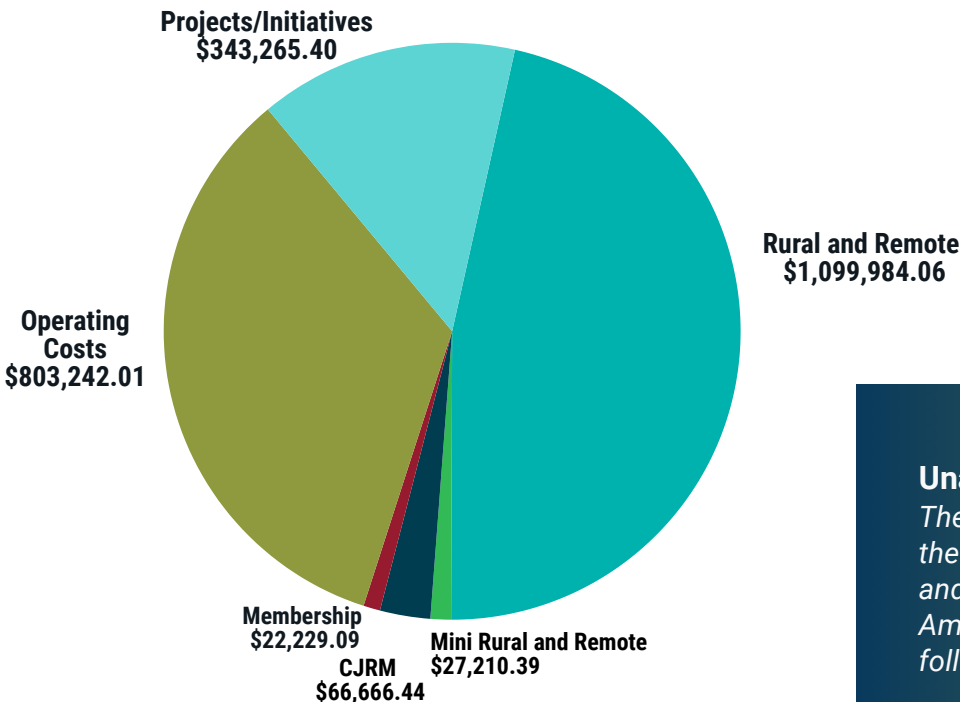
Revenue - July 01, 2025 to June 30, 2026

Total Revenue
2,016,675.64



Expenses July 01, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Total Expenses
2,362,597.39



Unaudited Financial Information.
The financial information presented for the year ended June 30, 2026 is unaudited and has not been independently verified. Amounts may be subject to adjustment following completion of the audit.



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Advancing Rural Health Through Advocacy