

# Who Makes Canada's Rural Doctors?

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## **Abstract**

### **Objective:**

To determine the proportion of Canadian graduates who were in rural practice locations two years after exiting training.

### **Design:**

Retrospective cohort analysis of the Canadian Post-MD Educational Registry (CAPER) databases matched against the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) masterfile.

### **Results:**

Practice location postal codes 2 years after exit from training were determined for 3088 of 3662 physicians exiting Canadian Family Practice (FP) training programs and 4380 physicians exiting specialty programs 1994 to 1998. Overall 20.9% of family practice trained physicians and 4.4% of specialty trained physicians practised in rural areas (population < 10,000). Significant associations with rural practice included Memorial FP residency program at 46% and Université Laval FP residency at 41.7%. The Université Laval FP program produced 18% of Canadian trained rural family physicians in the study period. Significant associations with urban practice included University of Toronto Family Practice residency at 95.4% and Emergency medicine training program at 93.5%. Among family physicians, gender was not significantly associated with any practice local.

### **Conclusions:**

There is more program to program variation in rural practice locations than can be explained just by personal characteristics of trainees. A socially desirable increase in rural outcomes is likely to be achieved by review and reform of training programs to emulate the successful ones.

Key words / MeSH: Career Choice, Medically Underserved Area, Physicians/sd [Supply & Distribution], Physicians, Family/sd [Supply & Distribution], Professional Practice Location, Rural Health, Schools, Medical/sn [Statistics & Numerical Data]