

April 30, 2020

Alberta Health Investment in Rural Healthcare

Alberta Health has announced increased support for the provision of healthcare in rural Alberta

Alberta Health has **announced** a plan to address continued access to healthcare for rural Albertans by investing an estimated \$81 million this year to address rural physician recruitment and retention through various programs. RMA is pleased to see this investment and looks forward to ongoing engagement in this issue of vital importance. The announcement includes:

- Removing the \$60,000 cap for physicians under the Rural and Remote Northern Program
- Freezing medical liability rates for rural physicians
- Increasing on-call rates for rural physicians
- Providing a \$6 million grant to support medical students who commit to practicing in rural Alberta

“Our members have clearly expressed that rural healthcare is of primary importance to support our communities, and the residents and businesses that operate in rural Alberta. The Government of Alberta’s action to reverse previous decisions that would have significant negative impact on the provision of quality healthcare in rural Alberta is appreciated. We encourage all parties, including RMA, to work to a long-term solution that will ensure that rural healthcare is accessible moving forward.” Al Kemmere, RMA President

In addition to this announcement, RMA has also requested to be engaged in discussions with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to provide a rural perspective on their forthcoming implementation plan. The AHS implementation plan is in response to a **performance review** released on February 3, 2020, with the AHS implementation plan expected to be released in mid-May. RMA is seeking to work with AHS to ensure this implementation plan addresses the unique role of rural healthcare and provides a sustainable system for rural Albertans to access health services in their communities.

More information on RMA’s position on rural healthcare can be found in our **health position statements**.

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