

One-Week Rural Placements for Pre-Clerk Medical Students

Rural Ontario Medical Program



Background

- Lack of rural physicians contributes to healthcare gap between rural and urban Canada ¹
- Targeted student selection, rural clerkship rotations and residency programs, and practice incentives have been implemented
- ROMP offers pre-clerk students a 1-week rural placement
- Aim: expose students to rural communities, medicine; provide early clinical exposure; increase interest in rural healthcare
- Study purpose: to investigate how ROMP Week influences students' attitudes towards, and interest in, rural healthcare

Methodology

- Surveys were sent to 407 physicians who are currently practicing in Ontario and who had participated in ROMP Week between 1999 and 2012
- The survey addressed: a) motivations for participating in ROMP Week; b) participants' ROMP Week experiences; c) rural clinical rotations; d) current practice location

Discussion

ROMP Week Experience

- Medical education/clinical skills were main motivating factors for participating in ROMP Week
- ROMP Week experience rated highly concerning learning about rural healthcare and communities

Rural Clinical Training

- 61% of ROMP Week participants did subsequent rural rotations
- 46% of who did rural rotations reported ROMP Week as very or extremely influential in their decision to do a rural rotation; 25% reported it as slightly or not at all influential
- Similar to motivations for participating in ROMP Week, 86.7% of participants who did rural rotations agreed or strongly agreed that the learning opportunity offered by a rural rotation was a motivating factor

Current Practice

- 21.3% are currently practicing in a rural area; 54.1% of those practice full-time, 16.2% practice part-time, and 29.7% locum
- 8.5% of those not practicing in rural areas reported that it is likely or extremely likely that they will practice in a rural region in the next year (82.2% reported unlikely or extremely unlikely)

Rural Background

- 22% of participants had lived in rural area during childhood or adolescence
- 95.5% of participants rated learning about rural medical practice during ROMP Week as good or excellent
- 89.4% reported ROMP Week leisure activities as good or excellent
- 95.6% reported the support from the community as good or excellent during their ROMP Week experience

Findings

- 40.3% response rate (164 surveys)
- 35 respondents (21.3%) were currently practicing in a rural area, and 97 had completed a rural clinical rotation during clerkship or residency (61%)
- 37 respondents (22.6%) reported having lived in a rural community during their childhood (median = 15, IQR = 8-18 years)

Figure 1. Current Practice

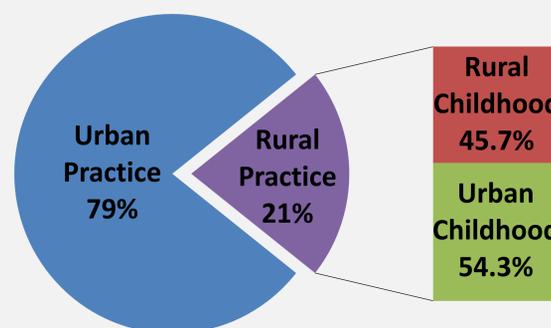


Table 1. Rural Clinical Rotations

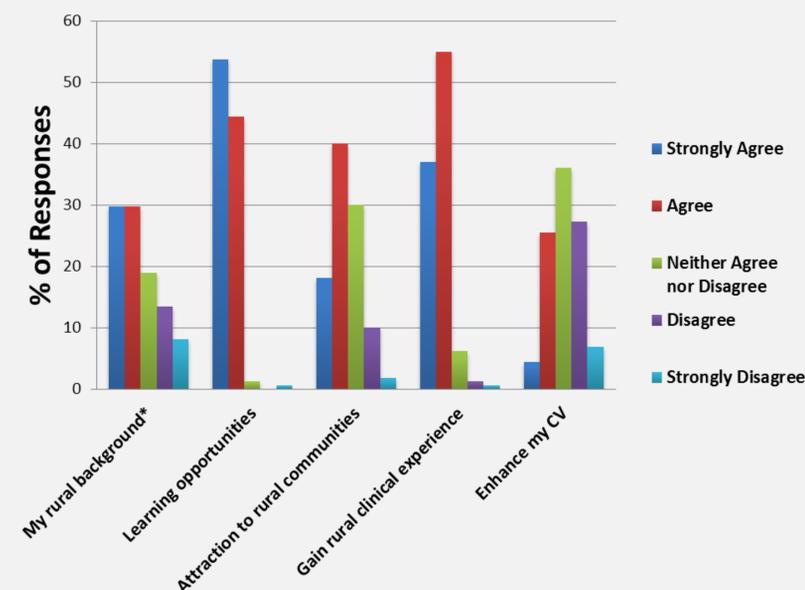
	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
Rural Rotation	97	61.0
→ROMP Rotation	82	51.6
No Rural Rotation Reported	62	39.0
No Answer	5	

Table 2. "How influential was ROMP Week in your decision to do a rural clerkship/residency rotation?"

	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
Extremely Influential	10	11.5
Very Influential	30	34.5
Somewhat Influential	25	28.7
Slightly Influential	14	16.1
Not at All Influential	8	9.2
No Answer	3	

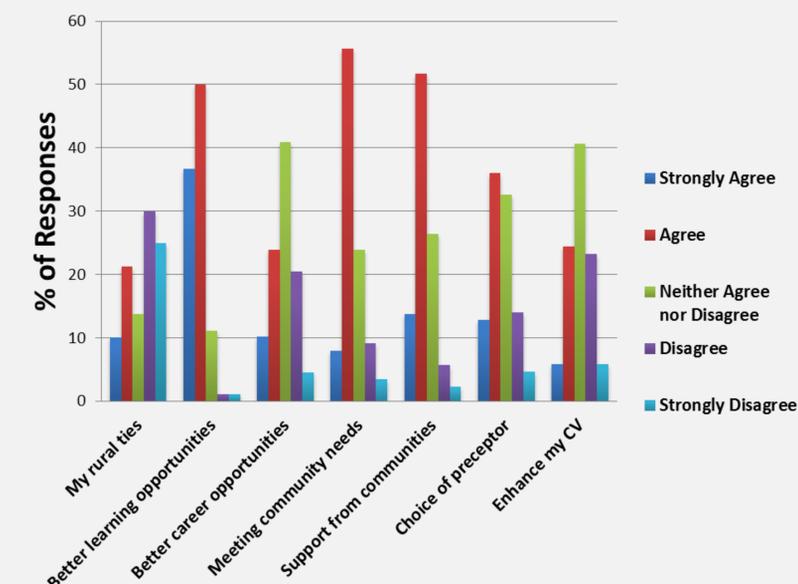
*Respondents who participated in rural rotations subsequent to ROMP Week

Figure 2. Participated in ROMP Week due to



*of respondents who reported rural childhood or adolescence

Figure 3. Participated in a rural clinical rotation due to



Conclusions

- ROMP Week is effective in drawing medical students and residents to rural clinical rotations, regardless of whether or not they have a rural background
- ROMP Week gives leaves a positive impression of rural communities
- Proportion of ROMP Week participants currently practicing in rural areas (13% full-time, 3.9% part-time, and 7.1% locum) is higher than the national average of 9.4% ²

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References

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