



Media Information

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BC Scores Brain Gain with New Leader of the Northern Medical Program

A Scottish expert in medical education will be arriving in Prince George in July to lead the Northern Medical Program, a key part of an expanded medical education program that is designed to help ease BC's doctor shortage.

Dr David Snadden, Director of Postgraduate General Practice Education and Acting Postgraduate Dean at the University of Dundee in Scotland, has accepted a joint appointment as Associate Vice President of Medicine at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) and Assistant Dean responsible for the Northern Medical Program at The University of British Columbia (UBC).

The Northern Medical Program is an integral part of BC's Medical School expansion and will accept its first 24 students in 2004. BC's Medical School is a partnership of UBC, UNBC, and the University of Victoria that is designed to ease the doctor shortage by doubling the number of medical student spaces by 2010.

"This is an outstanding appointment for the North and for the partnership between UNBC and UBC," says UNBC Vice-President Academic Deborah Poff, who co-chaired the joint UBC-UNBC selection committee. "Dr Snadden is a general practitioner with experience in northern Scotland, he has considerable experience in developing new models of medical education, and he is an avid mountaineer eagerly anticipating the lifestyle northern BC can offer."

"The development of the Northern Medical Program is key to the expansion of medical education in the province," adds John Cairns, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at UBC. "Dr Snadden has a combination of skill, vision, and enthusiasm that will contribute enormously to the momentum for the Northern Medical Program."

For the past 10 years, Dr Snadden has been with the medical program at the University of Dundee, involved with undergraduate and community programming, curriculum development, and graduate assessment. He has also been a member of several national medical education committees. One of his particular strengths has been to design and implement new developments concerning medical education and continuing education for practicing physicians. Dr Snadden spent some time in the early 1990s in Canada as a graduate fellow at the University of Western Ontario, where he received a master's degree in Clinical Science.

Currently, BC has the lowest per capita number of medical school spaces in the country. Only 128 MDs graduate from UBC per year. The expansion will allow BC to take responsibility for educating the physicians needed in the province. In addition, the partnership should help to ease the shortage of northern and rural doctors since studies show that doctors tend to practice in the regions where they receive their training.

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