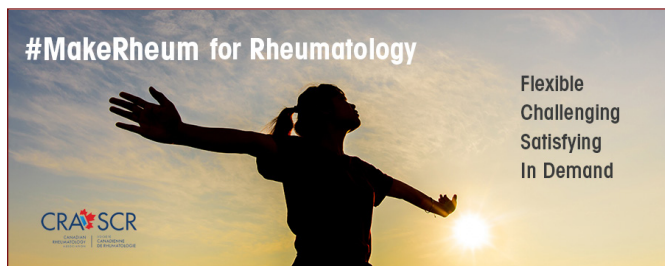


Training the Rheumatologists of Tomorrow (TROT)

By Diane Crasshaw, TROT Project Coordinator

"You can't KNOW rheumatology unless you DO rheumatology."

Canada faces a critical shortage of rheumatologists overall, and this shortage is even more pronounced in communities outside of large urban centres. To address this problem, the CRA has supported various initiatives, including Training the Rheumatologists of Tomorrow (TROT)—a pan-Canadian consortium of researchers who came together to survey and interview 103 learners and faculty/administrators in 11 Canadian rheumatology programs. The data obtained was used to identify key messages to relay to medical students and residents about rheumatology. This information was used to develop the #MakeRheum campaign, consisting of a range of material in French and English that includes posters, banners, PowerPoint slides and a Quick-Time video, available singly or as a collection that is posted on the CRA website under “educational resources”. The aim is to inform medical students and residents about rheumatology in an upbeat and interesting way and to encourage learners to consider an experience in rheumatology.



The uneven distribution of rheumatologists in Canada is a problem that to date has not been addressed in a comprehensive, national manner. One initiative that is being explored in Ontario is to partner with the Rural Ontario



Medical Program (ROMP), which provides distributed medical education training. This program has the infrastructure to facilitate experiences for all levels of trainees. There are similar programs nationally: the Rural Coordination Centre of British Columbia (RC-CBC), the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) and Manitoba's Office of Rural and Northern Health (ORNH). The Atlantic provinces are also in the process of developing strategies. Individual rheumatology programs would need to determine if they have generated learner interest and if there are community rheumatologists to facilitate these placements. This initiative will

need to create a toolkit for the mentors to facilitate their development as educators. This is a significant undertaking that might benefit from a coordinated and comprehensive national approach.

With the support of the CRA, TROT will continue to develop, implement and evaluate programs to address the shortage of rheumatologists in Canada. The pan-Canadian TROT team will continue its work to increase interest in rheumatology and to generate opportunities for student experiences within this subspecialty.

Finally, you can also encourage your undergraduate students and internal medicine residents to visit and join our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/MakeRheum-1071285439622810/>) and Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/MakeRheum>), so that they can find out more about this subspecialty and #MakeRheum for rheumatology!

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