

Women in Rural Family Medical Practice: THE CALGARY COMMITMENT

Adopted at 4th Wonca World Rural Health Conference
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Preamble

We, the rural health professionals of the world, meeting in Calgary at the 4th World Rural Health Conference, recognise and celebrate the special essential contribution which women in rural practice have made and continue to make to the health of their communities.

Based on the well-founded knowledge that the equal contribution of women to public policy is essential to secure the future of life on this planet and enhancement of the human condition, the Calgary Commitment to Women in Rural Medical Practice will make visible the work of women.

This is particularly important given the increasing presence of women in rural medicine, the challenges facing women in rural practice, and the inequities of commitment to and resources for these issues around the world.

We will recognise the diversity of women's contribution to rural health by supporting the development of practice, policy, funding and research initiatives that reflect the following principles:

Principles

- Rural medical practice must be structured to reflect the way women experience their lives.
- Sustainable rural practice for women must be flexible, safe, locally developed and culturally appropriate.
- The promotion of women's involvement in policy development is essential to ensure the contribution of women is included.
- The work which women do as rural doctors, at the request of their patients, must be appropriately valued and financially rewarded.
- The many contributions of women to rural medical practice must be included in core medical curriculum.
- Women want diversity and flexibility without pressure to conform to existing professional, training and practice structures.
- Local teamwork and partnerships are necessary to ensure that initiatives are developed which are appropriate to the local area.

Commitment

This Conference commends the WONCA Working Party on Rural Practice for the work done to implement recommendations from the 2nd World Rural Health Congress concerning issues identified by women. In particular, we note the inclusion of many of the recommendations in the Policy on Rural Practice and Rural Health, and women in the scientific program of conferences.

To continue the essential work of restructuring rural practice to attract women, this Conference commits to working towards the equal representation of women on the WONCA Working Party, conference organising committees, and other working parties developing policy on issues in rural practice.

In order to advance issues that have been identified by women, this Conference supports the development of a WONCA Policy on Women in Rural Practice.