

U of C First Year Medical Student Site Visit Olds - May 10, 2011

Submitted by Mel Giles

On Tuesday May 10, 2011 our Physician Attraction & Retention Committee hosted a group of 16 first year medical students from the University of Calgary. This marked the second consecutive year of the event which is designed to enable these young medical students to make better informed choices with regards to Rural & Family medicine practices. In a small but not insignificant way our community is doing its' part on a provincial level to help increase the number of practicing physicians in rural Alberta.

The site visit was conducted by four members of the committee, Bernice Lynn, Kathy Doyle, Mary Turner, and Bonnie Giles. The students were met at the Boston Pizza parking lot and driven to the Hospital where they were met by Colleen Simon who conducted a comprehensive tour of the facility with brief introductions to numerous staff and doctors on their way. This venue tour lasted for an hour then the group were taken over to the CLC and given a tour of both the college and the new high school.

Next stop on their busy agenda was a visit to the Wild Rose Medical Centre where the students were met by Kim McLennan and given a short discourse on the operation followed by a tour and a chance to mingle briefly with some of the physicians. Then it was back into the vehicles and a tour of our town which included the west side development in commercial and residential weaving our way eastward through town and the college campus and into Uptowne Olds. Boston Pizza was the final destination for a 6pm informal get together with pizza.

Three of our community physicians attended this gathering, Dr Martha Ingles, Dr Allan Hoeve, and Dr Steve Turner. This portion of the visit is quite an exciting time for these young students as they get an opportunity to ask numerous questions around career opportunities, owning a private practice, working in a hospital in emergency, living in a rural community, and various other details of becoming a practicing family physician.

Many thanks to the students for taking the time out of their busy schedules at school, but also for recognizing the value of experiencing rural community opportunities and helping themselves to make better informed decisions on their future. Make no mistake; our future is in good hands with these young people!

My thanks also, to our committee members and the medical personnel who greatly enriched this visit with their experience and words of enlightenment.

