

Improving competence in maternity care

Women's Advanced Maternity Fellowship for Rural Practitioners

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We are pleased to announce that the Women's Advanced Maternity Fellowship for Rural Practitioners is now being offered through generous donations from Weyerhaeuser, Bank of Montreal, Bell Canada, Provincial Health Services Authority, Zellers, and Interior Health Authority. These organizations have offered support to further the provincial mandate of BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre to provide competent maternity care to all women and babies in British Columbia.

What does this initiative mean for the communities of British Columbia? First, it offers additional support for physicians to develop and maintain skills in maternity and newborn care and augments the Enhanced Skills Program offered by the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the Rural Education Action Plan.

Second, the initiative offers educational programs for nurses from communities in need. The program will be tailored to the needs of individual nurses and their communities and will include components from the British Columbia Reproductive Care Program, British Columbia Institute of Technology, and BC Women's Hospital nursing education programs. The initiative also can fund education for midwives or other health professionals providing maternity care. Sponsors aim to build and sustain the entire maternity care team, as all members are needed to keep maternity care in rural areas viable.

Finally, some funds in this initiative are dedicated to further development of Women's Telehealth: this means that the program will provide support for existing Telehealth connections and programs, curriculum development, and other Telehealth projects.

Funds will be distributed under the guidance of the Advanced Maternity Fellowship Committee, which includes Peter Newbery (Postgraduate Director, UBC Department of Family Practice), Laurie Seymour (nurse at BC Women's Hospital), Patty Keith (BC Reproductive Care Program), Gerry Marquette (Head of the Department of Obstetrics at BC Women's Hospital), Susan Harris, and Michael Klein. We are grateful for the support of our donors and partners in the development of the Women's Advanced Maternity Fellowship and look forward to improved maternity and newborn care in British Columbia. We hope that this enterprise becomes a model for other provinces and communities.

Further information and application forms can be found at <http://www.womensfoundation.ca>. ♦

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