



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Faculty of Medicine

Southern Medical Program

UBC Faculty of Medicine Southern Medical Program 2024/2025 Rural Family Medicine Clerkship



Help train the doctors of tomorrow in your community today.



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Rural Family Medicine Preceptor Clerkship Overview

The Rural Family Practice Clerkship is a mandatory four-week rotation for third-year UBC medical students completed in a rural BC community. The focus of the clerkship is to showcase the wide range of skills, expertise, and advocacy that are core to the life of a rural family physician. Within the BC Interior, there are upwards of 150 rural family preceptors in 25 different communities.

The Southern Medical Program (SMP) is recruiting new preceptors to join our network of rural physicians to grow medical education opportunities across the Interior of BC. We sincerely appreciate your help in letting our students discover the rewards and challenges of rural practice.

Teaching Requirement

- A minimum requirement of 3.5 days per week in practice during the four-week rotation, but most students are very happy to have more clinical time.
- Teaching can be shared with other family practice preceptors who can participate in student evaluations.

Benefits of teaching

- Train and recruit future physicians for our province with a focus on rural medicine.
- Keep up-to-date with new trends from eager and enthusiastic learners.
- Experience the positive impacts teaching can have on your patients.

Timing

- Flexible and willing to work with you and your colleagues' schedules.
- Lots of availability throughout the year.

Remuneration

- \$2,968 for each student per four-week rotation (if you are a physician working on a contract, please contact us for payment clarification).
- Must have a UBC clinical faculty appointment. Our staff will assist with the appointment process.
- Associated UBC benefits (e.g. travel discounts, library services, etc.)

New to teaching?

- Numerous faculty development opportunities available.
- SMP staff will assist with clinical faculty appointment process and payments.

Rural Family Medicine Experience – Vivek Gill, Year 3 Student

In July of this year, I had the privilege of living and working in the Northern Okanagan region for my rural family practice rotation. I was placed at the Lumby Community Health Centre in the quaint village of Lumby with Dr. Moa Sugimoto. Working alongside her, I had the opportunity to discover the joys of full-scope rural family medicine while also exploring my picturesque surroundings.

Lumby is nestled at the foot of the Monashee Mountains and is home to approximately 2000 people, most of whom work in agriculture and lumber. Driving into town each day from my accommodation in Vernon, I never tired of the beauty of the region with its rolling hills, lush fruit orchards, and crystal-clear lakes.



However, the real beauty I found was in meeting the people of Lumby, who welcomed me to their community and shared their way of life with me. Much of my learning during my month-long rotation came from understanding the distinct pride that many people had to live in a tight-knit rural community. Equally as much learning came from hearing stories about difficulties accessing healthcare near to home. They told me about previously missed diagnoses in the past when they didn't have access to a family physician to years-long waitlists for specialist services. I was struck by the gratitude that many people shared even when they had to travel for access to primary and other specialist care. Many patients even expressed their appreciation for having medical students rotate through Lumby and provide them with care.

My experience was further enriched by the opportunity to work with and learn from Dr. Moa Sugimoto, whose dedication to full-scope rural family practice is both inspiring and humbling. Dr. Sugimoto has a wonderful ability to make each of her patients feel heard and valued. This made for incredible learning on thoughtful communication and practice, from refining an approach to sharing difficult news to handling sensitive exams in a trauma-informed and patient-centered manner.



Dr. Sugimoto's approach to teaching was equally personalized, encouraging me to build my comfort with performing new procedures, taking ownership over patients, and engaging in self-reflection on meaningful clinical experiences. It was clear that she was not just a physician but a deeply trusted member of the community, and I felt very privileged to learn from her.

The rotation in Lumby did not just teach me the principles of rural family medicine—it opened my eyes to the beauty of practicing in a close-knit community where the impact of care goes beyond individual patients and touches the entire town. The diversity of cases and the chance to see tangible

improvements in community health have fueled my desire to pursue more rural experiences in the future.

Rural Family Medicine Experience – Anastasia Martens, Year 3 Student

This past August, I was fortunate enough to travel to Lumby, BC for my Rural Family Medicine rotation. I loved taking in the beauty of the Okanagan valley as summer came to a close and was charmed by the warm sense of tight-knit community that Lumby has to offer. Nestled in the Okanagan valley close to the Monashee Mountains, the natural beauty and stunning clarity of the morning light made me never tire of my drive from my accommodation to Vernon.



The healthcare team that I was paired with at the Lumby Health Centre was outstanding because the community is so small. Lumby only has one health centre, where multidisciplinary care is provided by a large variety of health professionals (family medicine, lab work, public health nursing, physiotherapy). Everybody I crossed paths with was very kind and welcoming. They truly made me feel like part of the team.

Dr. Moe Sugimoto is such a kind and deeply caring family physician, who also has an incredible breadth of medical knowledge. In fact, her excellence has been recognized by various awards, including the 2024 BC College of Family Physicians “My Family Doctor” award, which is only awarded to five outstanding family doctors across our province each year. It was a fantastic experience for me to observe and learn from Dr. Sugimoto’s unique combination of warmth with patients, time-efficiency and clarity in communication. It was also highly evident that Dr. Sugimoto valued my experience as a learner: each day she would take the time to chat with me about my learning goals, incorporating dedicated one-on-one teaching time on topics that we both agreed were important.



I appreciated the independence that I was given with my rural rotation: I usually got to see patients on my own before reviewing with Dr. Sugimoto and then communicating our plan to the patients together. I also had some fun practice with suturing, punch biopsies and liquid nitrogen therapy! On Wednesdays, we often walked to the next-door assisted living facility, Monashee Mews, where she would see the residents. I liked this variability in scheduling –it was nice to be exposed to medical care on-the-go as well as in the usual clinic.

Although Lumby itself is a very tiny town, you certainly won’t be bored exploring the surrounding nature of the Okanagan valley – there are many nearby hikes and crystal-clear lakes to cool off in. My whole experience in Lumby was rewarding not just as a clinical learner but also being able to enjoy the richness and beauty of rural life and practice.

Rural Family Medicine Clerkship Experience – Dr. Moe Sugimoto

Family medicine is an amazing field that continually stimulates my curiosity in medicine. In Family medicine, we care for patients holistically, treating them as whole individuals rather than just a clinical presentation. My goal is to understand each person's life, values, and goals, and to determine how I can assist them in achieving their goals as their healthcare provider. It is always a collaborative effort with the patient. Despite years of medical education and practice, there is still so much I don't know and wish to learn to better support my patients. Family medicine will never bore me. Each day, I am awed by the depth and wonder of both medical knowledge and humanity. I feel privileged to serve as a family doctor in this beautiful country, and I hope that medical students who visit my office can also experience the joy and fulfillment that comes with working in family medicine.



Working with my students motivates and energizes me and it is fun. I was a trainee in postgraduate training for 11 years in multiple countries, and the interaction with other enthusiastic learners was an exciting and inspiring part of my professional life. It is also what I missed greatly after becoming an independent practitioner. I am delighted to have the opportunity and the privilege to teach students in my practice and introduce them to the skills and diversity of family medicine. They bring inspiration and excitement to my clinic days.