



Northern Ontario
School of Medicine

École de médecine
du Nord de l'Ontario

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INNOVATIVE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOR A HEALTHIER NORTH

Supporting Rural Generalist Medicine in Healthcare Systems: Why and How?

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Disclosure:

I am a full time employee of:

- Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)

which is funded by the Government of Ontario

I sit on the Board of Directors for the following non-profit public sector organizations:

- NOSM (CEO of NOSM Corporation)
- Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC)
- Associated Medical Services (AMS)
- Institute of Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES)

Rural Health Status

- more avoidable deaths
- more serious injuries
- rural specific illness
- lifestyle related illnesses

Rural Health Services

- access is the major issue
- “safety net”
- local services preferred
- limited resources
- workforce shortages
- different from cities

Sustainable Rural Health Services

“Three Legged Stool”

- requires strength in all three legs:

- health service authority/agency
- health care providers
- community participation

Rural Practitioners

“Extended Generalists”

- wide range of services
- high level of
clinical responsibility
- relative professional isolation
- specific community health role

Recruitment Facilitators for Rural Practice

- rural upbringing
- positive undergraduate
rural clinical experiences
- targeted postgraduate training
for rural practice

Generalism

“a philosophy of care that is distinguished by a commitment to the breadth of practice within each discipline and collaboration with the larger health care team in order to respond to patient and community needs”

RCPSC 2011

Rural Generalist Medicine

“broad scope of medical care
in the rural context”

- comprehensive primary care
- in-patient and/or secondary care
- emergency care
- extended service to sustain local health services among network of colleagues
- population health approach
- ‘system of care’ aligned and responsive to community needs

Cairns Consensus 2014

Interprofessional Teamwork

- Much talked about in the cities
- Actually happens more frequently in rural communities

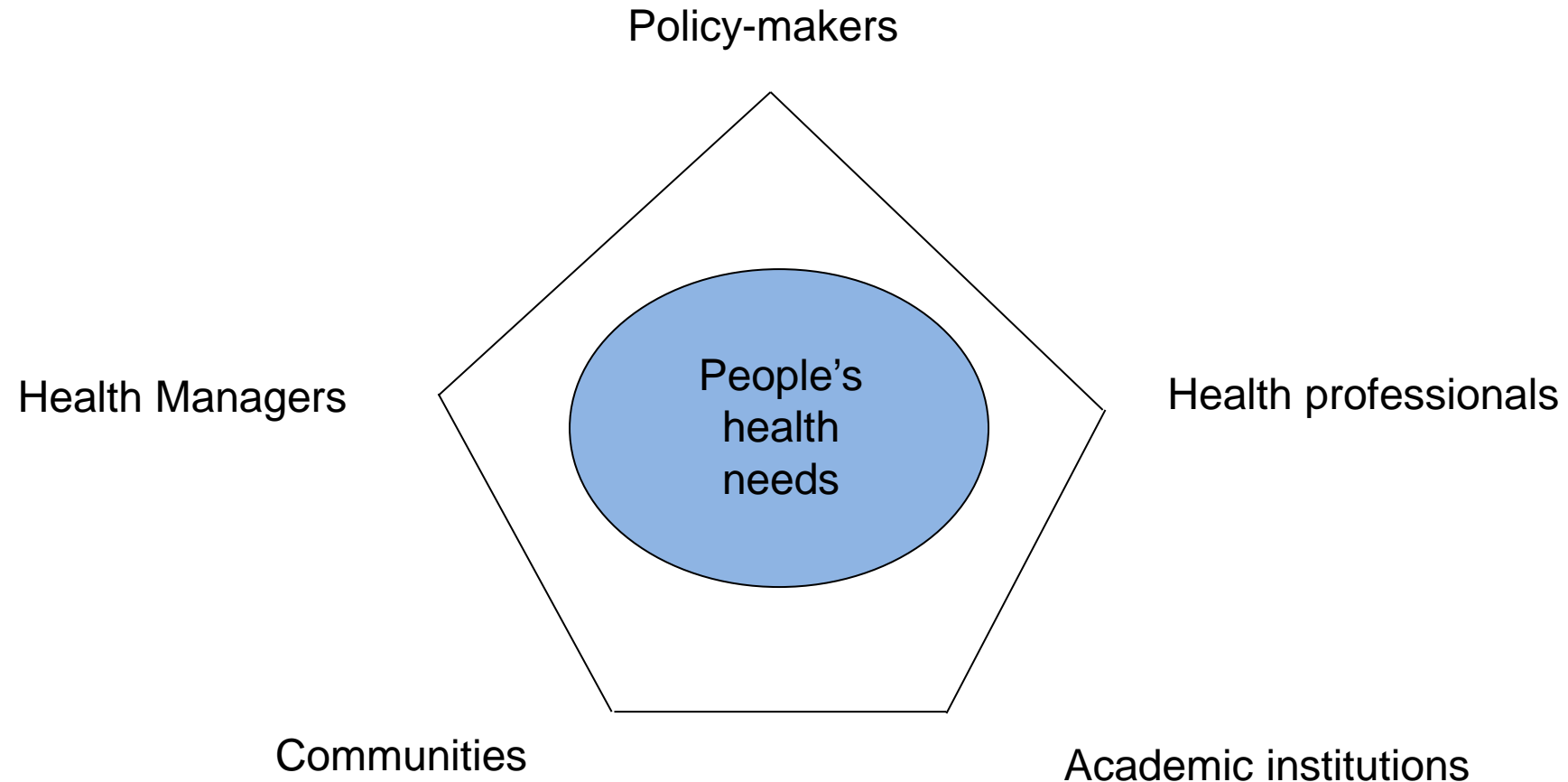
- workforce shortages
- community relationship
- respond to community needs

Social Accountability

“Social Accountability of medical schools is the obligation to direct education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health concerns of the community, region and/or nation they have a mandate to serve”

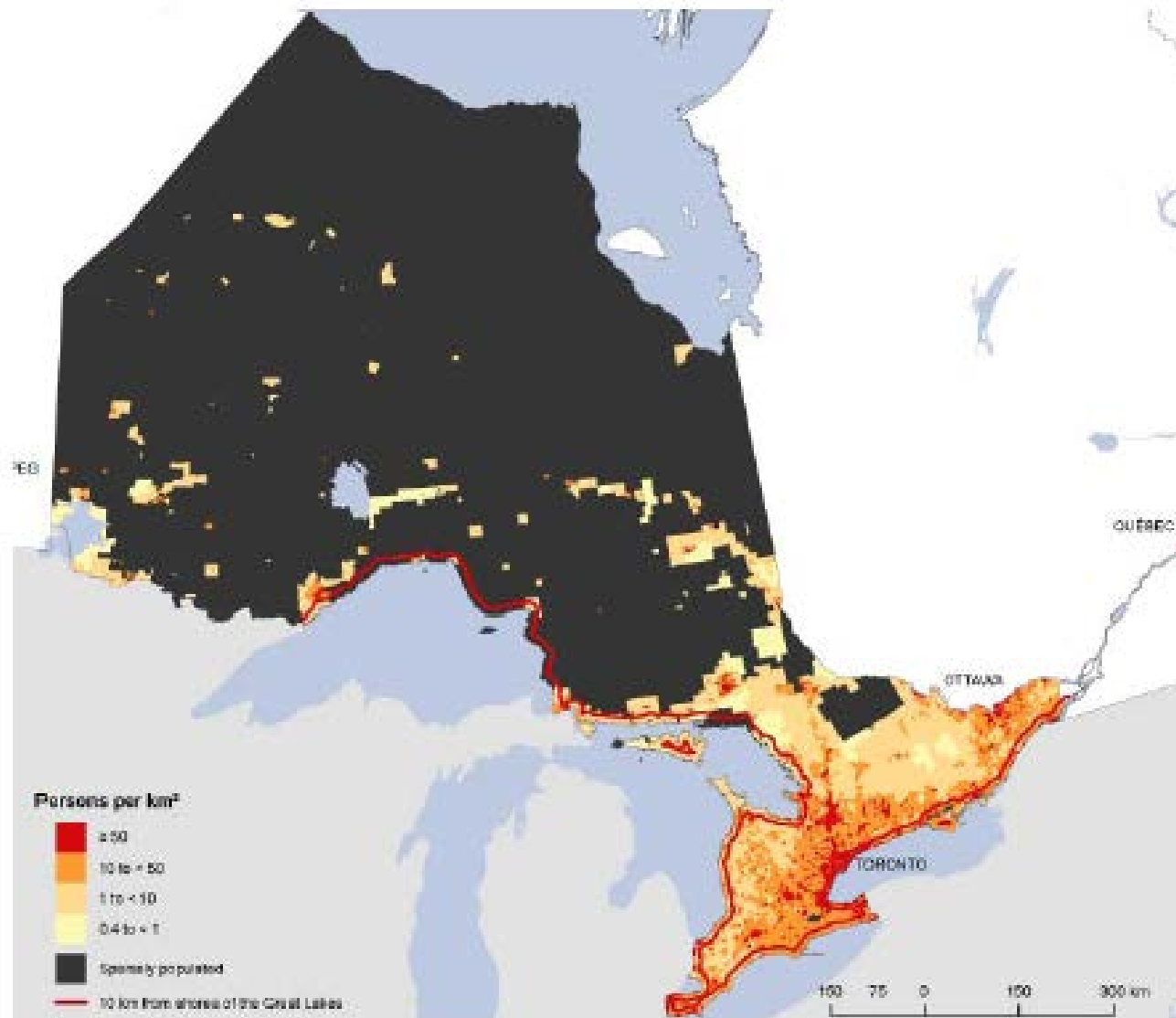
WHO, 1995

Partnership Pentagram





Ontario's Population Distribution by Dissemination Area, Census 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006

Northern Ontario School of Medicine

- Opened September 2005
- Faculty of Medicine of Laurentian
- Faculty of Medicine of Lakehead
- Social Accountability mandate
- Commitment to innovation

Generalism at NOSM

- broad holistic approach to activities, values and knowledge in educational, organizational & patient care activities
- broad scope of skills, attitudes and knowledge regardless primary care or other specialist
- role modeling of breadth of expertise is important component of medical education programs at all levels

NOSM Academic Activities

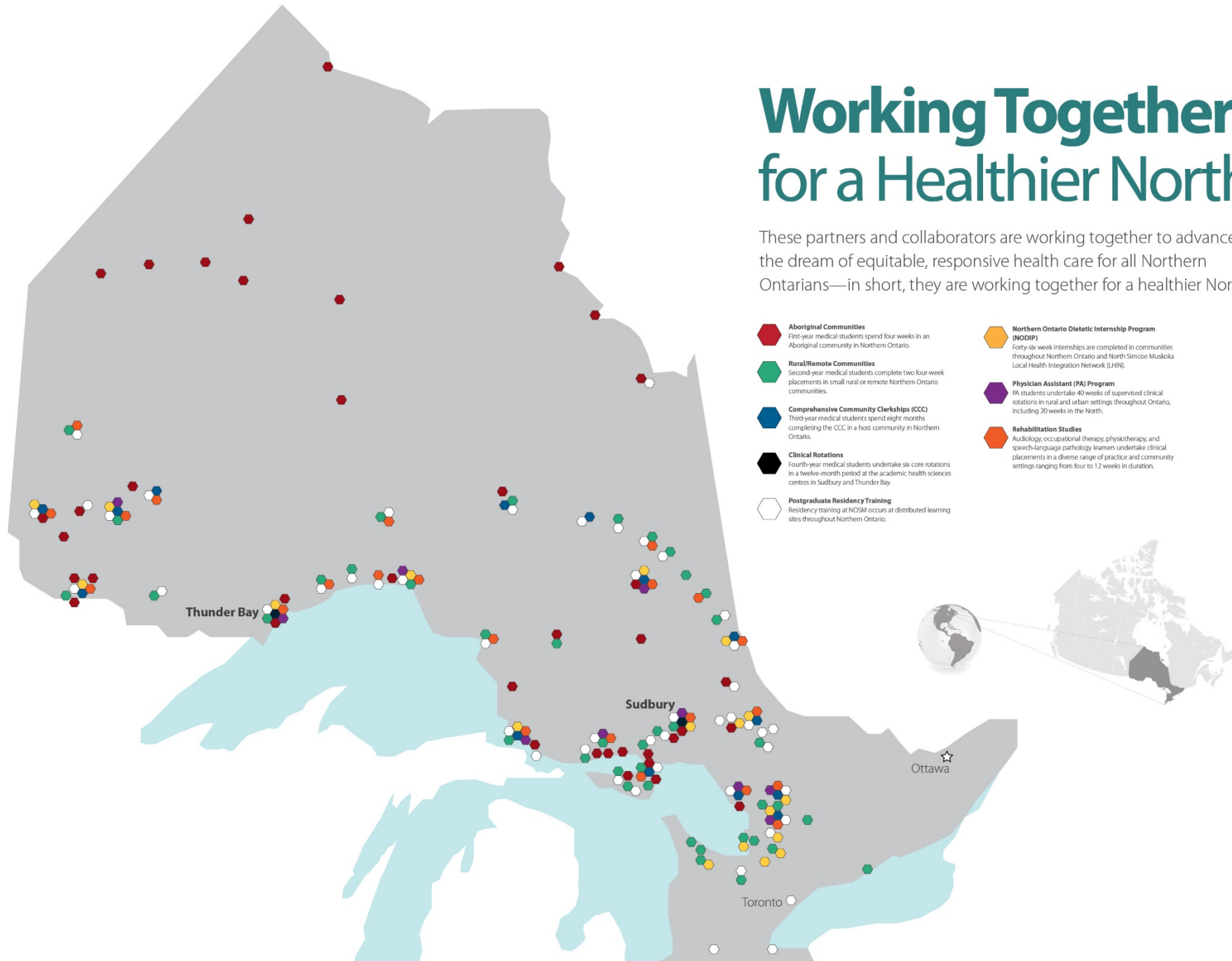
- Health Sciences Summer Camp
- Undergraduate Medical Education
- Postgraduate Medical Education
- Continuing Education
- Master of Medical Studies
- Health Sciences - Dietitians, Physician Assistants, Pharmacists, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Audiology, Speech Language Pathology, Radiation Physics.
- Interprofessional Education
- Digital Library Services
- Research

Distributed Community Engaged Learning

- widely distributed human and instructional resources
- over 90 different sites
- independent of time and place
- community partner locations distributed across Northern Ontario

Working Together for a Healthier North

These partners and collaborators are working together to advance the dream of equitable, responsive health care for all Northern Ontarians—in short, they are working together for a healthier North.



NOSM Career Directions

- 62% general practice, mostly rural
 - 33% general specialties
 - 5% sub-specialties
-
- 69% of NOSM residents stay in N Ontario (22% remote rural)
 - 94% NOSM MD plus residency in N Ontario (33% remote rural)

NOSM Student Experiences of Generalism in Rural Practice

- Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR)
- semi-structured interviews
- 37 graduating medical students
- 9 practising NOSM graduates

Student Experience Themes

- affinity for Northern Ontario environment
- recognition rural medicine involves a
broad scope of practice
- generalist care seen as a comprehensive service responding to the health needs of the community they serve

Student Experience Themes

- “doing everything” includes
 - knowing when to refer
- rural practitioners are “true generalists”
 - a complete package, ranging from promoting prevention to performing specialist tasks
- NOSM provides intensive clinical training through community engagement

Conclusion

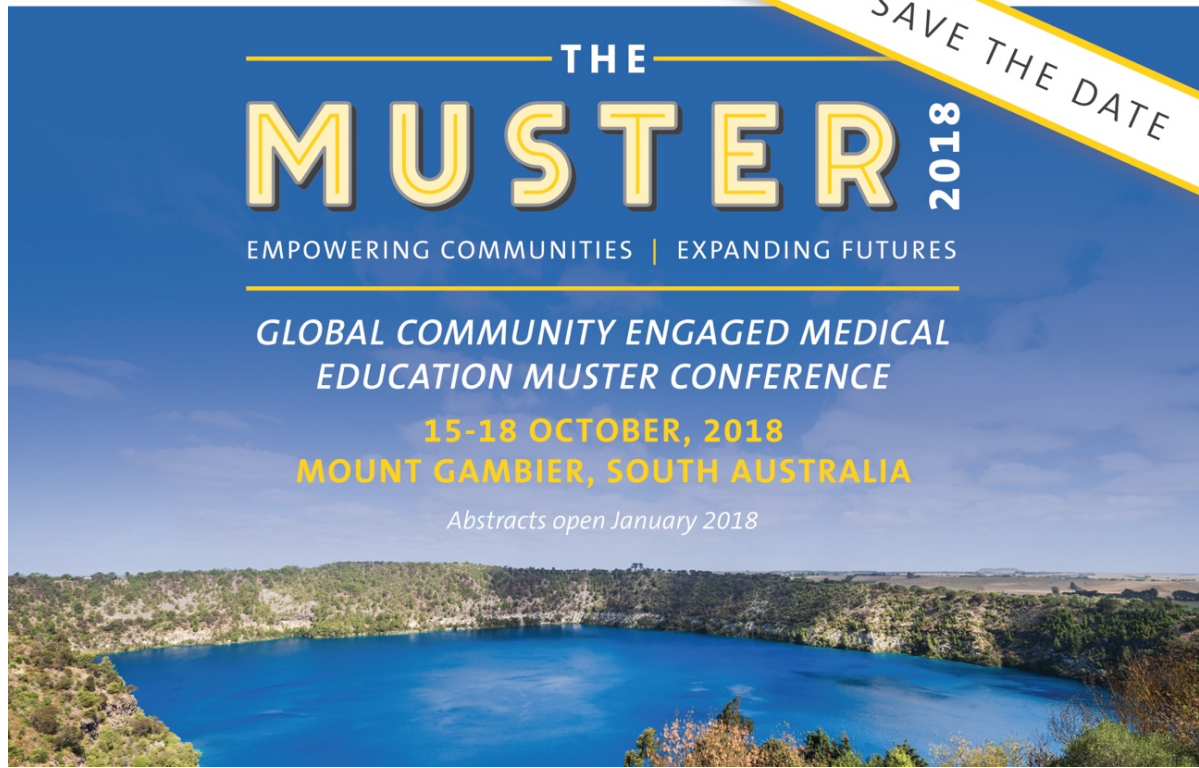
- Rural Generalist Medicine is
 - not an alternative to urban specialist care
 - explicit provision of quality healthcare within geographic, demographic and cultural context, and human and material resource constraints of rural communities
- NOSM experience shapes career choices
 - speciality, practice scope and location

Enablers of Rural Generalism

- challenge conventional wisdom
- focus on peoples' health needs
- context is critical
 - active community participation
 - rural generalist clinical services
- rural generalism role models
- government recognition of RGM
- standards and quality
- vision, mission and values

References

- Hogenbirk JC, et al. Milestones on the Social Accountability Journey: family medicine practice locations of Northern Ontario School of Medicine graduates. *Can Fam Physician* 2016; 62: e138-e145.
- Strasser R. Delivering on Social Accountability: Canada's Northern Ontario School of Medicine. *The Asia-Pacific Scholar*. 2016; 1(1): 1-6
- Cheu H. The Rural Challenge and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, 2015: https://youtu.be/gU3LE3vPt_4
- Strasser R, Cheu H. The Needs of the Many: NOSM Students' Experience of Generalism and Rural Practice. *Can Fam Physician* 2018 (in press)



For more information:
FLINDERS.EDU.AU/MUSTER2018



The Muster 2018 conference brings together an international audience to explore and discuss community engaged medical education, social accountability in health training, longitudinal learning, and rural medical education.

CONFERENCE ON THE MOVE
 13-14 October, 2018
 Adelaide, Kangaroo Island, Mount Gambier



Partners



* Abstracts open January 2018



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