



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Medical Students support Drummond's proposals for improving medical education

OTTAWA, Mar. 20 2012 – Canadian medical students welcome the report from the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, chaired by economist Don Drummond. As tomorrow's physicians, medical students have a significant stake in the performance and sustainability of their health care system.

The Ontario Medical Association (OMA) has already commented on many of the strengths and limitations of the report's recommendations. These points must be taken into consideration as we make improvements to our health care system. While it is important to control spending and balance the provincial budget, physicians' primary concern is always for their patients' health and welfare.

The Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS) is pleased to read the Commission's recommendations regarding medical education. Systems-level education, including a discussion of costs, is absolutely essential to training competent, conscientious physicians. Additionally, better health human resources planning will be increasingly important as we enhance our collaborative health care model.

Medical schools already offer some systems-oriented teaching, and it is an important part of the accreditation process. However, there is much for medical students – and their future patients – to gain by making this more prominent within medical curricula. In order for future physicians to take on the CanMEDS role of Manager, they must possess the skills necessary to

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deploy limited health care resources where they will do the most good for their patients.

Health human resources planning – the allocation of medical trainees to appropriate specialties and locations – is vital to the long-term success of our health care system. While medical schools have an important role to play in this process, they lack the resources to take it on independently. Instead, medical schools should collaborate with professional organizations, patient advocacy groups, and provincial, regional, and municipal levels of government.

As the Commission's report acknowledges, none of its recommendations are particularly novel – many of these reforms have been discussed for years. It is time to finally act upon them, and to strengthen the health care system for the sake of tomorrow's patients and physicians.

The Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS) is a national organization that represents over 7500 medical students at 14 medical schools across Canada.

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