



JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL ISSUES (JSC)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Amended 2023

Cultural Safety

The Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues (JSC) gratefully acknowledges the lands of the indigenous peoples over which its programs and policies extend. Many of these lands are unceded. The JSC members and the communities it serves live and work across these lands. JSC recognizes the harms caused through the health system by colonialism and is committed to truth and reconciliation as a core part of its governance role.

The JSC values equity, diversity, inclusion, and respects cultural safety.

Interpretation:

If there is a disagreement regarding interpretation of the JSC Terms of Reference and the Rural Practice Subsidiary Agreement (RSA), the RSA will supersede this document.

Purpose:

Under the terms of the RSA between the Government, the Doctors of BC (DoBC) and the Medical Services Commission (MSC), the JSC is established to enhance the delivery of rural health care.

The goals of the JSC are to enhance the availability and stability of services provided by physicians in rural and remote areas of British Columbia by addressing some of the uniquely demanding and difficult circumstances attendant upon the provision of those services by physicians.

Reporting:

1. The JSC reports to the MSC for those programs directly related to the Available Amount.
2. All other parameters of the RSA are the mandate of the JSC.
3. The JSC must develop a work plan on an annual basis and report to the Physician Services Committee (PSC).

**Membership:**

- Five (5) voting Members appointed by Government
- Five (5) voting Members appointed by the DoBC. Voting members must be currently living and practicing within a rural community as outlined within the RSA. One voting member must be a specialist.
- A representative from each of the regional health authorities as well as the First Nations Health Authority. Health authority members may attend as a JSC appointed non-voting representative of the Committee unless they are appointed as a voting member by Government
- A representative from RCCbc (non-voting member)
- A representative from REAP (non-voting member)
- The Rural Doctors' UBC Chair in Rural Health (non-voting member)
- Each party may designate up to three (3) voting Alternate Members
- Alternate Members may attend with prior notification

The JSC may consult other stakeholders for advice on matters and appoint working groups/subcommittees, as appropriate.

Duration:

The JSC is appointed for the duration of the RSA.

Quorum:

A quorum is required for all meetings and consists of at least three members each from the Government and the Doctors of BC.

Voting:

The JSC must adopt appropriate procedural rules to ensure the fair and timely resolution of matters before it. The Committee endeavors to make all decisions by consensus. As needed, the Committee may vote to resolve an issue by which only voting members are permitted to participate.

Chair:

The JSC shall be co-chaired by a member chosen by the Government and a member chosen by Doctors of BC. Co-Chairs shall ensure a safe and inclusive environment for committee discussion.

Staff Support:



The Government and the Doctors of BC will each designate one staff member who is not a voting member of the JSC.

Meetings:

The JSC will meet a minimum of six times per year. At least one meeting per year is held in an RSA community. At least 50% of meetings are held in person.

The JSC must establish, before January 1 of each year, a schedule of meetings for the next 12 months. The time for any meeting may be changed only by mutual agreement. Either Co-Chair may call additional meetings. Any such additional meetings must take place within two weeks, unless otherwise agreed.

All documentation to support agenda items must be received by the JSC Secretariat at least two weeks prior to the meeting date. Any items received after that time may be added to the agenda under New Business for discussion only (no decision), as time permits, and/or may be included in the following meeting agenda, if necessary.

The Co-Chairs may meet in between JSC Committee meetings to make recommendations for Committee approval. Co-chairs may make funding approvals up to \$200,000.

Confidentiality:

The JSC agrees to abide by the confidentiality provisions of the PMA between the Government, the MSC and the Doctors of BC.

Expenses:

Each party will pay for the expenses of its own representatives.

Duties:

The duties of the JSC are to be in accordance with the terms identified in the RSA.

Practices and Procedures:

The JSC must establish practices and procedures appropriate with respect to decisions regarding disbursement of public funds, including conflict of interest guidelines. The practices and procedures adopted by JSC must include provisions that promote accountability, transparency and, consistent with the PMA.

Communication Protocol:



The JSC must follow the communication protocol developed by the PSC. The Co-Chairs must pre-approve any communication about JSC business and/or affairs.

Review Process:

A physician and/or Health Authority may appeal, in writing to the JSC, a decision of the JSC. The JSC may choose to hear the appeal in-person. If the JSC chooses not to alter its decision, the physician and/or Health Authority may request a review, in writing, to the MSC. At its discretion, the MSC may review the issue/case and make a recommendation to the JSC. MSC decisions regarding the Available Amount are binding.

Dispute Resolution:

In the event that the JSC is unable to reach a consensus decision with regard to any matter that it is required to decide, the Government and/or the Doctors of BC may refer the matter in dispute for adjudication by the Adjudication Committee in accordance with the PMA.

Budget:

The current budget of the JSC is allocated through the PMA for its non-utilization programs.

Expectations:

Committee members are expected to participate in all meetings; including working groups and ad hoc meetings when necessary. It is expected that committee members will familiarize themselves with the agenda package prior to each meeting so as to allow for substantive discussion during the meeting. All members are responsible for communicating and sharing information between the JSC and the organization that they represent. In cases where this is not feasible members must inform JSC staff as soon as possible in order to allow an alternate to be secured.