As a healthy child growing up in rural Quebec with no healthcare practitioners in my family, my view of the physician was limited to what I had experienced going to see my family doctor at her small clinic in a nearby town. As I have progressed through my medical training I have been exposed to a wide variety of different fields and practices however none share the same allure as the idea of primary care medicine in rural Canada.

I have greatly enjoyed living in Montreal these past years and the chance to work in tertiary care centres among top specialists in various fields has been a once in a lifetime experience and a source of great pride for me. Early on in my training however, I began to feel that although each specialty comes with a problem set that the practitioner becomes extremely adept at managing, they ultimately become increasingly unable to address even common problems that do not lie within their realm of expertise. This model works well for large tertiary centres where highly focused care is provided to patients with complicated or rare conditions requiring the attention of those best suited to treat them. This model is not however ideal or even plausible for the vast majority of healthcare settings in a country like Canada with a large geographic territory but relatively few densely populated areas.

During my rural medicine rotation I was exposed to the truly diverse practice of one rural family doctor. During my month I did daily rounds on inpatients with a variety of medical problems, I worked in an outpatient clinic seeing a wide variety of different patients, I followed pregnant patients and was able to participate in several deliveries, and I worked in the emergency department of the small rural hospital which served a population of approximately 20,000 people. The emergency department experience was particularly interesting for me because there was no telling what problems may present and without any consultant specialists in-house we had to be prepared to manage any problem that would arise.

With that in mind, the model best suited to meet the needs of much of the Canadian population is community based primary care- a system of physicians capable of performing a wide variety of different medical functions. A system of physicians who have been trained to understand the physiology of health, the pathophysiology of disease, and the fundamental skills necessary to care for the vast majority of the population in both health and disease. Finally, these highly skilled doctors, if need be, have the capacity to recognize when specialized care is necessary and the professional networks to see that it is delivered.

The reasons that I have chosen a career in family medicine are numerous. The diversity of practice and the ability to meet complex and diverse challenges in a variety of settings number among the top. I greatly look forward to a career in family medicine and hope that you will consider my application.