LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING #40

BETWEEN

ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES
(hereinafter referred to as the Employer)

- and -

HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
(hereinafter referred to as the Union)

RE: RURAL CAPACITY INVESTMENT FUND

In addition to the provisions outlined in this Collective Agreement, effective the date of ratification, the Employer agrees to extend the a Rural Capacity Investment Fund ("the Fund").

The Fund will be used to support initiatives aimed at addressing recruitment and retention challenges experienced by sites/programs/positions deemed by the Parties to be "difficult to recruit to" in the North, Central, and South Zones of signatory Employers to this Collective Agreement. The Parties may also mutually agree to target initiatives to "difficult to recruit to" rural sites that fall within the Edmonton and Calgary Zones.

"Difficult to recruit to" may be determined by indicators such as:

- high vacancy rates;
- vacancies that remain unfilled for longer than ninety (90) days;
- high turnover; or
- mutual agreement of the Parties.

All initiatives approved under the Fund will focus on producing a stable workforce and sustaining that stability over the longer term. Funded initiatives may target new Employees, may focus on site/program-specific concerns, or may address broader recruitment and retention challenges for the Employers. The Parties agree that payment of recruitment and retention incentives under this Fund will be conditional upon completion of a return-for-service agreement as agreed by the Parties.

The Parties agree that the recruitment and retention initiatives may vary, depending on the identified needs.

Operation of the Fund

A Rural Capacity Investment Fund Committee ("the Committee") shall be established within thirty (30) days of ratification.

The Committee shall be comprised of seven (7) Employer and eight (8) Union representatives, representing North, Central and South Zones. One of the eight (8) Union representatives shall be a member of the current bargaining committee as selected by the current bargaining committee.
The Parties may mutually agree to add additional representatives as necessary.

The Committee shall meet within sixty (60) days of ratification and thereafter on a quarterly basis until the end of the term of the Collective Agreement.

The purpose of these meetings is as follows:

- to share information on the sites/programs/positions the Parties deem to be “difficult to recruit to" based on the indicators listed above;
- to bring forward for consideration and discussion recruitment and retention initiatives;
- to assess the effectiveness of previous allocations of the Fund.

The Employers will endeavour to use the entire Fund within each fiscal year; however, funds can be carried over from year to year.

At the end of each fiscal year, the Employers will provide the Committee with a breakdown of how the funds have been allocated in that fiscal year to address rural and remote recruitment and retention challenges in North, Central and South Zone.

The role of the Facilitator is to:

- educate the committee on the consensus based decision making model;
- assist the committee in setting norms;
- chair meetings and lead consensus building sessions, and
- render binding decisions when the committee cannot reach consensus.

The Facilitator’s fees shall be paid from the Fund.

Administration of the Fund shall be in compliance with AHS Finance and Audit requirements.

The annual allocation for fund dispersal shall be as outlined below.

Fiscal Year	Annual Allocation
2024	$5,928,000.00
2025	$16,500,000
2026	$16,500,000
2027	$16,500,000