

In-Person Practicum Pause extended to Monday, July 6, 2020

Message sent on behalf of Professor Dionne Gesink, Acting Associate Dean, Academic Affairs

Dear Students and Faculty,

Yesterday afternoon, the VP of Education at Unity Health, announced on behalf of the TAHSN-Education committee, that the **hospitals are extending the suspension of in-person practicum placements until Monday, July 6, 2020** (original message below and attached). I'd like everyone to note this decision, regardless of whether you work directly with the hospitals, because it is an indication of the state of the COVID-19 epidemic in Toronto.

This announcement is also important for all other in-person practicum placements (i.e. outside of the hospitals) because DLSPH will use the hospital policy to determine the status of all in-person practicum placements.

- This means all in-person practicum placements are suspended until Monday, July 6, 2020.
- We are looking into what this announcement means for in-person essential service placements.

Regardless of whether this announcement was anticipated, we appreciate that it will create additional stress and uncertainty for many students who are waiting to begin in-person practicum placements with the hospitals and beyond.

Here is what we are doing to provide options around practicum placements:

1. The University has struck a subcommittee to specifically address issues arising around practicum placements. DLSPH has four representatives on this subcommittee so the unique needs of the various practicum placements across the School are voiced and considered in the development of solutions.
2. First year MPH students will be allowed to meet their required practicum placement one of three ways (note that a solution for Nutrition and Dietetics students is still being developed):
 - a. A remote practicum placement of 12-16 weeks during the summer term of 2020.
 - b. A practicum placement starting July 6, 2020 of 8 weeks duration if in-person placements are permitted to begin.

3. Note the shortened practicum duration will reduce the number of credits associated with the practicum placement.
 - a. A 12-16 week practicum placement in Year 2.
4. Note that if the required practicum is pushed to year 2, the credits associated with the year 1 practicum can be earned either through coursework during the summer, fall, or winter terms, or by taking a second practicum in the summer of 2021. This latter option will not cost additional tuition or fees for 2 year MPH programs, but will delay graduation to November. We are looking in to the financial impacts of this latter option for 16 month MPH programs.
5. We are working on a variety of Plan B's for practicum placements for the summer 2020 term. Many practicum placements have been lost; however, new ones are emerging.

We are taking an account of the number of students who may need/want to take remote elective courses this summer term. Please let your program lead know if this is you. This information will be used to determine if we need to add courses to the summer timetable and if so, how many.

We will send a Plan B decision message about practicum placements by April 20, 2020, though you can start to make decisions based on the information in this current message. **Any new or additional summer course offerings will also be posted by April 20, 2020** so there is time to learn about the courses and enrol before the course enrolment deadlines: May 4 (May-June (F) and May-August (Y) courses), and July 6 (July-August (S) courses). [Click here](#) for 2020 Summer Session: Important Dates and Deadlines.

Please direct any questions to your Program Director or Practicum Placement Coordinator.

Please make use of the student and faculty mental health resources available to you:

- [Well-being & Support Resources – March 27, 2020](#)
- [Staying Well](#)