

June 11, 2020 Agenda/Summary Notes

1. Welcome

The purpose of this 3 meeting series: As we move forward in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we wish to support the planning, coordination and delivery of student practice education experiences through the following objectives:

- To share information in a timely manner;
- To provide opportunity for dialogue, questions and clarifications;
- To identify potential issues or concerns;
- To gather suggestions, ideas, solutions, and improvements.

On the horizon:

- Adapt our coordination and planning processes to respond to the increased need for innovation and flexibility.
- Exploring the feasibility of a provincial student practice education website, to be a common resource for all.

2. Provincial Updates and Opening Remarks

- Joanne Maclaren, Executive Director, Nursing Policy Secretariat, Ministry of Health (MoH)
 - A Student Practice Education Guideline for Healthcare Settings During COVID-19 has been developed collaboratively and is currently in the final review stage and will be published shortly.
- Lorrie Cramb, Director, Allied Health Policy Secretariat, Ministry of Health
 - The Ministry has established new organization structures that are helping to facilitate work across health and education provincially. A new Allied Health Education Planning Council will be launched in the next few weeks.
- Melanie Nielsen, Director, Health and Medical Education, Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST)
 - AEST is also supporting ways to convene with post-secondary institutions to address issues at a systems level. In addition to these formal mechanisms, please also reach out to Melanie directly, if needed.

Question & Answer Session (grouped by topic):

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Q: With the recent policy communique regarding N95 use, will Health Authorities still require PSI students to have N95 certification prior to their placements? What about the students who have not had their mask fit? (Re-visited from May 28, 2020).

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A: The [Policy Communique](#) has been updated regarding the requirement for fit testing. It now instructs that if an HCO is facing an imminent shortage, the requirement for fit-testing is two years; if not facing an imminent shortage, the requirement for fit-testing is once again annual renewal. There are also several additional measures for HCOs to mitigate the demand for N95 respirators, including adjusting staff-patient assignments so that staff with current/valid fit-testing are assigned to care for patients where an N95 respirator is required, so as to minimize the extent of fit-testing for staff that must be done.

The existing Practice Education Guideline on [Respiratory Protection](#) is still applicable. It outlines when fit testing is required for students, depending on role, setting and task:

“Respirators must be worn in designated high risk areas and for high risk respiratory procedures in which the likelihood of the generation of aerosolized particles is considered to be high (See Appendix A: Where Airborne Infectious Agents May Be Encountered).”

Where both PSIs and HCOs have historically applied the fit testing requirement to most students, we will need be more specific in determining which students require fit-testing for specific placements in accordance with the guidance on when N95 respirators are required.

Further guidance can be found in the Respiratory Protection document on BCCDC:
<http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Respiratory-protection-COVID19.pdf>

NOTE: The following key updates on PPE were not addressed during our meeting but were posted June 11th:

- http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_PPEsupplyAssessmentDistributionProtocol.pdf
- http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_PPEBulletin3.pdf
- http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_PHSAPCN_N95_3M_1870%20.pdf

Q: This past weekend a clinical site told us students needed to provide their own eye protection/face masks shields. Please clarify whether HA is providing PPEs?

A: HA will provide PPE. HAs are taking steps to make sure this messaging goes out to all the sites. If there are any discrepancies, please let student practice know about the specifics and we will connect with site. A list of HA student practice contacts is in the slide presentation.

Q: Should universities start purchasing additional PPE now for current practicum students in case of future PPE shortages if a future pandemic surge hits?

A: In general, no need for universities to do this. It is the HA responsibility to provide PPE.

Note: this document published June 11th, outlines the current assessment and distribution process for PPE: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_PPEsupplyAssessmentDistributionProtocol.pdf

Q: We are hearing concerns about access to PPE in private clinics and doctor's offices. Concerns about supply, procurement process, as well as who will pay.

A: It is expected that PPE will be provided by the practice education placement setting. PSIs/students will not normally be asked to provide PPE for use in practice education settings. However, where PPE access may be an obstacle to a placement being offered, PSIs are encouraged to work cooperatively with practice partners to ensure students have access to the PPE they need to continue the placement. Work is continuing to support PPE supply chains.

Orientation

Q: With new students entering programs, will there be HA guidelines re CPR and N95 requirements? No services available at this time.

A: CPR: all placements can proceed, students must work within their skill level and communicate with their preceptor. Students should obtain their certification as soon as possible when sessions resume. Some community sessions have already begun, (e.g. <https://basiclifesavingskills.com/nursing-students-cpr-bls-mask-fit-testing/>) please explore your local options.

N95 Fit-testing: (See PPE above). This should be limited to only those students who will be on placement in a high risk area and need to obtain competencies in aerosol generating medical procedures. Some PSIs may be continuing to provide fit-testing, or sending students to community-based options. The availability of fit-testing in communities varies. Please contact your HCO student education representative if the student does not have current fit-testing and will be on a placement that requires it, to discuss available options.

Q: Sites that are supporting allied health students are wondering about Zoom accounts for students who will be delivering virtual visits. (Re-visited from May 28th)

A: Students can participate in Zoom virtual health visits without having their own Zoom for Healthcare account. An account is only required if the student will be hosting the virtual visit and these accounts are available as needed. Some students have also required remote access to health authority networks and this can be requested/provided as needed.

Planning and Coordination

Q: How should we approach Fall placement requests submitted pre-pandemic & how are these prior requests to be handled by the HA?

A: Requests are in and have been released to destinations on May 19th. HAs will respond back to schools by June 30th. Schools are asked to provide HA with student name assignments by July 31 which will allow for network and clinical systems access and provisioning prior to the student's start date. HAs are in discussions with their teams to ensure that additional coordination and escalation processes are in place to monitor and respond to the fall requests.

Q: If there is a second wave, is there a possibility that students on placement will be pulled again?

A: It is an ongoing conversation in the weeks and months ahead to make sure we have a good approach should this situation arise. We may need to make adjustments to care area, patient assignments etc. depending on the situation. Ongoing communication is key. This will be the focus of the work in the weeks ahead.

LTC Facility Staff Assignment Order

Q: My question was about time needed between LTC to LTC placements, not LTC to Acute Care

A: An individual (who is not exempt from the Order in Section G of the Order) cannot be at two identified sites in the Order, in any role, simultaneously. Consecutive placements are permitted as there is currently no specified requirement for time in between one site named in the Order and a second site. Medical health officers at each HA can modify restrictions as needed for their jurisdiction.

Q: Are all the long term care sites going to be opening soon to students? (edited)

A: Depends on current status of the LTC sites. It is under the advisement of the Medical Health Officers.

Q: Any word on students in Providence LTC sites?

A: We do have an outbreak currently at Holy Family so these requests will be on hold for now. Brock Fahrni will also not be able to take students. YouVille is scheduled to implement CST in September/October, so because of the number of people on the units, there will be a reduction in student placements. Additionally, to comply with the Order, we will need to follow up with the schools to ensure that it is possible for instructors to also only be assigned to one site.

Q: is FHA holding clinical experiences for the next few months in LTC? There have been several LTC declines

A: In discussion with sites and we are waiting for operations to guide us.

Q&A for June 25th:

- 10 questions remained in the queue.
- The sli.do will remain open over the next two weeks.

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- Participants can review the current questions, ‘like’ a question (those with the most ‘likes’ move to the top of the queue), or add their question in advance of the next meeting on June 25, 2020.