

## **Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (FRM) Guidelines for Clinical/Fieldwork Placements during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

*Note: These guidelines were initially developed in May 2020 and are presented as a 'living document' and are subject to revision or alteration in accordance with public health guidelines, as well as regulatory and University requirements. Any revisions incorporated into the guidelines will be adjusted as necessary and appropriate as the COVID-19 pandemic response continues to unfold in the various regions/provinces of the UofA FRM clinical/fieldwork placement catchment areas.*

*Date of most recent update: December 31, 2020*

### **Special Update RE: Clinical/Fieldwork Placements in Winter Term 2021**

Many FRM students will be completing placements in early 2021. The majority of these placements will occur in Alberta. These placements are supported by Alberta Health Services Environmental Public Health providing appropriate COVID-19 mitigation measures are followed for each specific location.

ALL students must:

1. Read and adhere to the current Public Health Measures that are in place in the jurisdiction where the placement will occur:
  - [Government of Alberta Stronger Public Health Measures – Gathering Restriction / Out of town travel / Visitors](#)
  - [Saskatchewan Public Health Measures](#)
  - See provincial guidelines for any placements outside AB or SK

*Note: Student mobility is permitted for the purpose of relocation for the placement period however if a student relocates and is living with others, the 'new' household that is established becomes the student's primary and only household for the duration of the placement. Students cannot then 'visit' their other household(s). This means that students cannot travel between two or more households during a placement, for example coming/going home on weekends. If you are living alone at your placement location you can come back and forth but if you are living with others during your placement, you should not be going back and forth. Please plan accordingly.*

2. Ensure all members of the placement household know the COVID-19 symptoms and complete [daily screening](#).
3. Have a [plan for self-isolating](#), if anyone in the placement household becomes symptomatic/COVID-19 positive.

Students should keep themselves aware of Public Health advice and changes to measures that may occur during their placements by visiting the government web pages and these FRM Clinical Placement Guidelines regularly.

### Winter Term 2021:

These Guidelines will continue to inform clinical/fieldwork placement practices within the FRM Professional Programs during the upcoming Winter Term 2021. Students completing placements within the Corbett Hall PT or CSD Student Clinics should also review the FRM In-person Instructional Activity Guidelines.

These FRM guidelines are informed by the following resources:

- Up to date directives from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and associated guidelines issued by provincial regulatory bodies
  - Alberta Health Services (AHS) Managing Students Involved in Placements during a Communicable Disease Outbreak, Epidemic or Pandemic Guidelines
  - AHS COVID-19 Response - Principles for Student Placements
  - National discipline-specific guidelines regarding clinical education during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - UofA Risk Management and Legal Council
1. The decision for a student placement will be based on a determination of the safety of the student, staff, and impact of care and safety of patients.
  2. Students who are uncomfortable completing placements during the pandemic period are able to request a deferral.
  3. Practicums serve as learning mechanisms; therefore, practicum placements may proceed where personal protective equipment (PPE) and appropriate training and precautions are available and deployed.
    - Placements should not put additional strain on the PPE needs of the healthcare system.
  4. Although some small risk is inherent in any placement, students should not be exposed to risks considered above the “norm”, or without protections and considerations that would be reasonably expected.
  5. If the patient care during placement includes student participation in aerosol-generating procedures or work with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients, students have the option to defer or to not participate in the learning experience. If the student chooses to participate, appropriate instruction, controls and/or PPE must be provided.
  6. All student learners must only attend community placements where screening processes for COVID-19 are in place and where appropriate PPE is available in order to safely assess and work with patients.
  7. The decision about any given student placement is based on the ability to meet the educational objectives of the student.
    - Placements on some units/programs may be disrupted due to staffing levels and/or redeployment of clinicians, affecting the ability to provide appropriate student supervision.
  8. The decision to permit a rehabilitation medicine student to complete a placement will be three-fold:
    - Site-related screening and preparation prior to placement matching (Appendix A)
    - Student-related screening prior to placement (Appendix B)

- Information/Orientation Materials for students re: COVID-19 prior to and during the placement (Appendix C)
- 9. Whenever possible, attempts will be made to minimize student travel or relocation for placements.
- 10. All placement offers will be used whenever possible to match a student. This may result in students within a cohort completing their clinical/fieldwork requirements at different times.
- 11. The ACCEs will guide students to review orientation materials and to complete or redo learning modules prior to starting placements. (Appendix C)
- 12. Some placement sites may have more specific screening processes and/or considerations. The ACCE may need to ask the student(s) for additional information to ensure compliance with site specific requirements.

#### References/Resources:

- AHS Managing Students Involved in Placements during a Communicable Disease Outbreak, Epidemic or Pandemic [Guidelines](#) (November 2014)
- [Key messages](#) approved by the AH Deputy Medical Officer of Health (Email received from Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions March 2020)
- [AHS COVID-19 Response](#) - Principles for Student Placements (April 2020)
- [Joint Statement](#) to Ontario Medical Students (UofT, April 2020)
- Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada [Ten Guiding Principles for Medical Education](#) (April 2020) & Canadian Council of Physiotherapy University Programs [Ten Guiding Principles](#) (May 2020)
- AB Government COVID-19 Information: [Guidance for Post-Secondary Institutions](#)
- Alberta Health [Workplace Guidance for Community Health Care Settings](#) (May 2020)
- [Alberta College of Occupational Therapists](#) COVID-19 Information
- Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP) Principles Guiding Fieldwork Education during COVID-19 Pandemic
- [Alberta College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists](#) COVID-19 Information
- [Physiotherapy Alberta College & Association](#) COVID-19 Information

## **Appendix A**

### **Site-related Screening & Preparation:**

Purpose & Person Responsible: This checklist will be used by ACCE (and/or other clinical education team members) to determine site viability and readiness for student placements during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. These questions will be asked of sites that have made an offer.

#### **Questions:**

- ☐ Can an appropriate learning experience be provided? Are there sufficient discipline-specific roles/activities in which student(s) can engage to meet the learning objectives for the placement?
- ☐ Does the site have procedures and protocols in place consistent with requirements of the regulatory college and directives from public health?
  - ☐ Is there on-site COVID-19 screening protocol for patients/clients in this setting?
  - ☐ Are there currently patients with known cases of COVID-19 in this practice setting (site/service)? Will the student(s) be working directly with these patients?
  - ☐ Is there adequate PPE available for student use?
  - ☐ Is there a protocol and/or an orientation for PPE? How will the student(s) receive instruction/training prior to placement or on site?
- ☐ Is there anything that we have not asked about that could elevate the risk for this student(s) in this practice setting? (Note [from guidelines above]: Students should not be exposed to risks considered above the “norm”, or without protections and considerations that would be reasonably expected.)

## Appendix B

### **Student-related Screening & Preparation:**

Purpose & Person Responsible: Once a student is tentatively matched to a placement, this information will be requested from the student by the ACCE 3 weeks prior to the placement start date. This schedule will provide time allowance for discussion and/or resolution (as needed based on student responses and including a 14 day isolation, if required) for the placement to proceed safely and as scheduled. These questions will be asked using a google form and ACCE will follow up directly as needed.

#### **Questions:**

Failure to provide a thorough disclosure to the following questions could result in cancellation or delay of your placement.

Student Name:

Email address:

Date Completed:

Course #:

Placement Site:

Placement Dates:

Have you been tested for COVID-19? Date? Result?

Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is awaiting test results for COVID-19?

- If so, when did the contact(s) occur?

Are you immunocompromised or in any way considered high-risk re: COVID-19 (eg: existing respiratory condition)?

Do you have any known allergies or sensitivities to the materials used in personal protective equipment (PPE)?

Will you be residing with persons known to be vulnerable or high-risk re: COVID-19 (eg: grandparents, immunocompromised, etc) during the placement period?

Have you experienced or are you currently experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (<https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>)? (If answer Yes then will be referred to <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/journey/covid-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>)

Have you travelled internationally and returned to Alberta/Saskatchewan/NWT (pls circle whichever applies) since March 2020?

- If so, which country(s)?
- If so, date of return?

- If so, did you follow self-isolation protocol for 14 days in accordance with the Chief Medical Health Officer's directive?
- Date self-isolation period was completed?

Have you travelled to other provinces in Canada and returned to Alberta/Saskatchewan/Manitoba/NWT (pls circle whichever applies) since March 2020?

- If so, which province(s)?
- If so, date of return?
- If so (if applicable), did you follow self-isolation protocol for 14 days in accordance with the relevant provincial directive?
- Date self-isolation period was completed?

Have you been complying with social-distancing measures (inside and outside your home) in your personal lives, including with your peers/classmates?

- If not, note exceptions including any essential 'frontline' work and/or volunteer environments (eg: food bank, homeless shelter, grocery store, etc).

Is anyone whom you will be residing with during the placement period a healthcare worker (including other students completing fieldwork) or engaged in essential or 'frontline' work and/or volunteer environments where it is difficult to comply with social-distancing measures (eg: working inside homes of other people)?

## Appendix C

### **Information for Students re: COVID-19 and Clinical Placement**

- Prior to placement every student must review the UA COVID-19 Student Placement Information Advisory June 2020
- If the student is unsure or it is unclear how COVID-19 protocol or PPE is being used at their placement site, then they must ask their preceptor and/or consult their ACCE immediately.
- If the student experiences any symptoms of COVID-19 (including fever, acute respiratory or flu-like symptoms) at any point during the placement period they must stay home and notify their preceptor and their ACCE immediately.
- If the student is uncomfortable continuing their placement, they should contact their ACCE to discuss alternative options, including postponement.

### **Resources for Student Orientation for use prior to and during placement**

- UA COVID-19 [Student Placement Information Advisory](#) June 2020
- [AHS PPE and You](#) learning module
- [AHS Hand Hygiene](#) resources including instructional videos
- [FRM Free Telerehabilitation Video Resources](#)
  
- [AHS COVID-19 Self Assessment](#)
- [AHS Daily Fit for Work](#) Screening Questionnaire
- [AHS COVID-19 Return to Work](#) Guide
- [AHS COVID-19 FAQs](#) for AHS Staff