FAQs re COVID and Clinical Learning for Meds 2021 and 2022

As the COVID-19 pandemic remains a concern and risk in clinical learning, we wanted to provide you with key information as well as update commonly asked questions from students. While the guidelines from public health and our health care partners may and will change, these are the current recommendations. As always, you should consult with Public Health if you have any questions or reach out to Learner Experience.

Commonly asked questions.

**What does the Ontario government lockdown announced December 21st mean for me?**

If you travelled outside of the province and returned during the Province-wide Shutdown Period, which started 12:01 December 26, 2020, you will need to **self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival to the province.** [Provincewide Shutdown (ontario.ca)]

**If you suspect you have COVID 19.**

If you have symptoms consistent with a presentation of COVID 19 or fail the COVID screen for the health facility, please **STAY HOME, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.**

You will need to:

- Notify your rotation administrator, preceptor/clinical team, and Jennifer Cordick (London) or Bianca Vasapolli (Windsor) and Dr Northcott (snorthc2@uwo.ca) of any short-notice absence.
- Log the absence in the Schulich Hub ([https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca](https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca)). Jennifer, Bianca, and/or the Clerkship Leads will then guide you on your next steps.
- Arrange to get a COVID test as soon as possible as you may not be able to return to work without a negative test result. The turn around time for test results at the community assessment centres is normally 24 hours. You should notify them you are a medical student to facilitate the test turnaround.

In Windsor, please notify Employee Health at Windsor Regional Hospital at 519-995-1854 or 519-995-0324. Identify yourself as a Year 3 or Year 4 Medical Student with the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. Students based in London hospitals do not need to notify Occupational Health regarding a failed COVID screen. You would only notify them if you tested positive.
Students in a Distributed Education (DE) or community-based practice Family Medicine site, are recommended to contact the local public health unit, DE/ Clinical Department and faculty preceptor. Isolation would occur in a location discussed with Public Health and DE until their COVID swab is negative or positive. Students must notify the DE Office and the rotation clinical department Clerkship lead for the learning experience.

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 by criteria

If your status after screening is positive – you **MUST STAY HOME**, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.

If you are positive, you must notify:

- Your rotation administrator, preceptor/clinical team, Dr. Northcott (snorthc2@uwo.ca), Jennifer Cordick (London) or Bianca Vasapolli (Windsor).
- In London (LHSC/SJHC) notify Occupational Health at the hospital where you are working.
- In Windsor, please notify Employee Health at Windsor Regional Hospital at 519 995 1854 or 519 995-0324.
- The MD Program by registering the absence in the Schulich Hub ([https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca](https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca)).

Occupational Health and Employee Health will want to know all you have had contact with, particularly while not wearing PPE. If you have concerns about contacting Occupational Health, Drs. Tsui, Wyllie or Northcott can assist. Learner Experience is there to provide the supports you may need.

Students who are COVID-19 positive in a Distributed Education (DE) or community-based practice Family Medicine site, are recommended to contact the local public health unit, DE/ Clinical Department and faculty preceptor. Isolation would occur in a location discussed with Public Health and DE for 14 days and they are supported to return to learning by public health. Students must notify the DE Office and the rotation clinical department Clerkship lead for the learning experience on being COVID positive.

I learned that a patient for whom I had provided care has tested COVID positive. What do I need to do?

During your clinical rotations you should always have the appropriate PPE on when interacting with patients. This means if a patient is later diagnosed as being COVID positive you will be notified but **no action** is required. As long you were wearing your PPE and donning and doffing appropriately, you can continue in clinical learning. You will need to self monitor according to public health guidelines and seek care if your screening tool changes to positive.
If you have concerns about the PPE used or a break in your technique, you will need to stay home and get tested.

**I learned that a clinician or health professional with whom I worked closely with has tested COVID 19 positive. What do I need to do?**

During your clinical rotations you should always have the appropriate PPE on when interacting with patients, clinicians, other health professionals, residents and colleagues. This scenario of contact with a masked faculty or colleague who was COVID compliant in technique requires no action besides self screening daily.

If a team or health care worker is later diagnosed as being COVID-19 positive, you will be notified. If you were wearing the appropriate PPE and followed technique, **no action** is required (besides self monitoring) and you can continue to work in clinical learning.

If you have concerns about the PPE used or technique followed, you will need to stay home and get tested.

**What is a “Close Contact”?**

A close contact is an individual with whom you have had a high-risk exposure. This can include individuals living together in the same household while not self-isolating; direct contact with infectious body fluids (cough, sneezed on); close (<2m) or prolonged, unprotected contact.

The definition of a “Close Contact” was recently changed by the CDC to read:

*Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.*


**What do I do if I have had “Close Contact” with someone who is COVID positive?**

At this time Public Health recommends asymptomatic close contacts of a confirmed case should **quarantine for 14 days** and get COVID-19 testing as soon as possible after identification of the case.
If you have had contact with someone who is COVID positive please email Dr. Northcott (snorthc2@uwo.ca) and report this as an absence (even if you do not have mandatory or in-person sessions) via The Hub (https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca).

**My housemate has been diagnosed with COVID. What do I need to do?**

You will need to self-isolate at home or in a separate residence and arrange for COVID testing. Your housemate will need to stay in a separate room away from other people and use a separate bathroom if possible. Please email Dr. Northcott (snorthc2@uwo.ca) and report this as an absence (even if you do not have mandatory or in-person sessions) via The Hub (https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca).

You can call the School for support if this arises.

**My housemate has symptoms of COVID and is awaiting test results. What do I need to do?**


If a household member has symptoms of COVID-19 but has not yet tested:
- All other household members should quarantine (i.e. not attend work, school, childcare, etc).
- If it is decided that the symptomatic individual will not get tested for COVID-19, all household members are to remain in quarantine for 14 days.

If a household member has symptoms of COVID-19 and has been tested:
- All household members are to quarantine (i.e. not attend work, school, childcare, etc) until test results are known.
- If test results are negative, non-symptomatic household members may return to their normal activities and monitor themselves for symptoms. The symptomatic individual must remain in self isolation until 24 hours after their symptoms have improved.
- If test results are positive, all household members will be contacted by Health Unit staff with further direction.

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you must remain at home and report this as an absence (even if you do not have mandatory or in-person sessions) via The Hub (https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca). You will need to be tested for COVID.

**What if my housemate/partner works in an outbreak site or ward?**
Your housemate/partner will need to follow the guidelines as outlined by Public Health and IPAC at their hospital and you should monitor daily for symptoms of COVID. You can continue to participate in clinical learning unless your housemate/partner is symptomatic and/or tests positive. If this occurs, you must quarantine as part of the new Home Quarantine Guidelines released by MLHU on December 7, 2020.

**My housemate received notification from the COVID Alert app that they were in contact with someone who has tested COVID positive or Public Heath has**
notified my housemate that they were identified as a “Close Contact” of someone with COVID. What do I need to do?

Your housemate will need to be tested for COVID-19. As long as you are asymptomatic, you can continue clinical learning and continue to monitor closely and regularly for COVID symptoms.

If your housemate develops symptoms you can continue in clinical learning but if you develop symptoms you must stay home and report this as an absence (even if you do not have mandatory or in-person sessions) via The Hub (https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca). You will need to be tested for COVID.

I received notification from the COVID Alert app that I was in contact with someone who has tested positive. What do I need to do?

As per Public Health Ontario, https://covid-19.ontario.ca/exposed, if you are notified by the COVID Alert app, or think you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you must get tested. Stay home and self-isolate until you get your result. If this requires you to miss mandatory clinical or learning time please report this as an absence via The Hub (https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca).

If your test is positive you will need to continue to self-isolate for 14 days and report this as an absence (even if you do not have mandatory or in-person sessions) via The Hub (https://hub.schulich.uwo.ca).

If your test is negative, you can return to learning but continue to monitor.

Are there arrangements for me if I cannot return to my housing where a housemate is COVID-19 positive or self-isolating?

If you have a situation of hardship for your living arrangements due to a housemate or family member with COVID-19, you can contact the MD Program or LE Office to inquire about supportive temporary hotel housing.

Can I participate in Virtual Patient Care while self isolating or recovering from COVID-19?

According to the MD Program Guideline on students participating in virtual care, due to privacy regulations you are not allowed to be involved in virtual care outside of the health care facility structure. This would prevent you from undertaking this aspect of patient care.
When will I make up my clinical learning if I am off for 14 days?

Your curriculum has been created to allow for time away from clinical learning due to the Pandemic and individualized advanced clinical learning. You can complete your Clerkship or your Clinical Electives rotation/elective in April-May for Meds 2021 or July – August for Meds 2022.

Where can I get a COVID test as a medical student?

In London
As of November 19, 2020, London campus students can receive testing at the LHSC COVID-19 Testing Centre. To access testing for yourself, complete the perimeter screening tool and the appointment request webform and you will be contacted by the Centre by the next business day. The same webform is to be used for requesting a test for dependent children. The Testing Centre is located in Building 14 at VH, above the Wellness Centre and is open from Monday to Friday from 7:00 am - 1:00 pm

Additionally, you may attend one of the community testing centres. Information on the locations and hours of the centres (including Western’s testing centre) can be found here: https://www.healthunit.com/covid-19-concerns

In Windsor
Windsor campus students in need of a COVID-19 test can book an appointment through https://www.wrh.on.ca/COVID19AssessmentCentre. Please mention that you are a Schulich student as this may allow your results to be fast-tracked. You can also find information on the local testing centres here: https://www.wechu.org/cv/getting-tested-and-checking-results

Clinical learners that are being tested should connect with Employee Health so this can be tracked.

Ouellette Campus: Karen Watson – karen.watson@wrh.on.ca
Met Campus: Krista Miller- krista.miller@wrh.on.ca
Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare- 519-257-5111 x 73360

If you have any questions, please reach out to learner.experience@schulich.uwo.ca

Updated December 22, 2020