



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

The
Medical
School

Medical Student Community Placements

Monday 20th November – Thursday 14th December 2023

E-project student workshops on Fri 15th December 2023



Key Information for Prospective Organisations

This handbook is intended to give prospective organisations interested in offering community placements to medical students, a brief overview of the Medical School's aspirations for the community placement scheme. It provides further information about what is involved, processes, next steps and key contact details.

Aspirations

As part of a wider initiative to ensure that the University of Sheffield's education, research and business activities meet priority health needs in the Sheffield City Region, the Medical School is keen to ensure our student doctors think more broadly about medicine and health. We want them to fully integrate an understanding of the wider determinants of health, including an appreciation of health inequalities and how they can negatively affect people's health, by working with local community partners. **The focus should be on a project that you design based on the requirements of your particular organisation.**

In 2015 the Medical School introduced placements within our local community based organisations who are involved in organising and delivering services that seek to address identified needs and improve the health, well-being, and life chances of people living in communities across the Sheffield City Region. The aspiration being to provide students with practical learning experiences away from clinical settings. This enables them to see how a wide variety of professionals from different health, education, social work, youth work, community development, housing and other backgrounds work together to address the health and well-being of local communities.

In exchange we would like students to work alongside local community partners to complete a piece of negotiated project work that will make a tangible contribution to that organisation's activities and/or the health and well-being of a local community or specific client/service user groups.

In 2023 we are seeking to build on previous success and place all of our third year medical students (approximately 330) in local community organisations. We would ideally like to place students in pairs/groups of no more than 8, so that they can work together on a project and provide each other with mutual support and companionship for critical reflection. We recognise that organisational capacity issues may affect the number of students each organisation is willing and able to support and are happy to discuss arrangements with you.

Due to Covid-19 your working practices and services may have changed and hybrid working has become the new norm for many. We know from experience that students benefit most from meeting your clients or pupils in person. However, we do not want to exclude organisations who are working using a hybrid model. Please contact us by email in the first instance if you wish to discuss your plans further.

Learning Outcomes

The General Medical Council (GMC) sees these types of opportunities as invaluable in the education of future doctors because they afford the opportunity for students to develop practical skills in relevant organisational settings, build professional relationships, and experience working with others.

The community placement will enable students to learn more about:

- How to engage with and talk to different members of the public (often with complex and high levels of need) in non-clinical settings about their health and well-being alongside their experiences of local health and social care services;
- How health-damaging and health-seeking behaviours come about as a consequence of other factors in people's lives, including how different, often complex and overlapping, inequalities can negatively affect people's health, sense of well-being and overall life chances;
- How the local health and social care systems operate from a community perspective and how a wide variety of different organisations at a community level work (increasingly in partnership with primary and specialist healthcare services) to address inequalities and improve people's health and well-being;
- How to undertake and successfully complete a small piece of project work in partnership with an external organisation.
- Understand the relevance of the UN Sustainable Development goals and make links with their experience on placement and the environmental, economic, and social challenges in the local region.

Placement Dates

Placements will run for a total of four weeks from **Monday 20th November to Thursday 14th December 2023**. **Students are required to present their project in peer assessment workshops on Friday 15th December.**

Students will undertake this community placement on **a full time basis**; however there can be a reduced time commitment where capacity constraints exist or where an alternative pattern of student involvement is required. **Please specify your preferred time commitment and working pattern using the attached proforma** (see Appendix One for further information).

Student Eligibility to Participate

A community placement will be mandatory requirement of the University of Sheffield's Medical Degree for all third year medical students (*Phase 2b students*) who have recently completed their first clinical placement in a hospital setting and passed their first Observed Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).

Students who do not pass their OSCE will be required to undergo a second sequence of assessment on 21st November 2023 and may need a day or two off. This usually only affects a very small proportion of students and we will inform you if this occurs and discuss next steps with you.

What is involved?

The early days: [Short Introductory Video](#)

We very much hope that a community placement will help to inform students about the needs of different people and communities in the region and furthermore, provide them with an insight into the many challenges faced by community organisations who work to improve their health, well-being, and overall life chances.

Beyond that, we also want students to make a *meaningful contribution* to any organisation they are attached to; and for that reason, are entirely open to suggestions about what types of project activities they get involved in and are happy to accommodate each organisation's own specific preferences wherever possible.

We appreciate that consideration must be given to the level of support and time available to host students so the essential element is that this work is important to your organisation and that you negotiate placement outcomes with your student/students once you are matched together. We have created a placement project specification template (see Appendix One) for you to initially design your placement and outline how you envisage students contributing to your organisation.

We hope that a community placement will at least enable students to do some of the following:

- Work with an organisation involved in commissioning or delivering health and well-being related services and support to communities across the Sheffield City Region;
- Observe and participate in activities that aim to enhance people's health and well-being at a community level in non-clinical settings.
- Meet a wide variety of professionals from different health, education, social work, youth work, community development, housing and other backgrounds and observe how they work together to address the needs of local communities;
- Undertake and successfully complete a piece of project work for a community organisation, including designing and shaping part or all of that project with staff and communicating outcomes/results to all relevant stakeholders where necessary at the end of your placement.
- Understand the relevance of the UN Sustainable Development goals and make links with their experience on placement and the environmental, economic, and social challenges in the local region.

Student Preparation

You can expect our students to behave professionally at all times and be courteous and respectful in all interactions with members of the public and community partners. They are aware that they will be representing the medical profession and acting as ambassadors of the University of Sheffield and will be thoroughly briefed by Medical School staff about our expectations of them, including that they:

- Approach and prepare for their community placements in exactly the same way they would approach and prepare for a clinical placement which includes acting as the keen, enthusiastic, competent and committed self-starters that we know they are;

- Build a productive, friendly working relationship with their placement organisation and take ownership of the projects they will be asked to undertake on your behalf,
- Adopt and apply an altruistic *can do* attitude to everything that they do and continually reflect upon how their involvement, behaviour and actions may impact upon and effect perceptions of doctors and other medical or allied health professionals;
- Expect the unexpected, difficult or uncomfortable and actually embrace the challenge and discomfort that comes from the unexpected! This can be a great opportunity for learning.

They will approach their community placements without prejudice and value them as exciting opportunities to enrich their understanding of local people who may one day become their patients and increase their awareness of the health needs of the communities they serve.

Student Assessment

We plan to assess student's participation and completion of a community placement using the following three methods:

E-Project (10 minutes duration)

All students (working in groups) will be required to produce/submit an E-project that will encourage them to reflect upon their experiences of undertaking a community placement and communicate their learning (including how their learning will impact upon their future clinical practice) in creative ways. This encourages students to develop collaborative and creative outputs (for example, a short film, an e-poster or online presentation that picks out different aspects of a group of students' experiences). It is expected that students will complete this piece of assessed project work in their own time around their community placements. This will be presented at **Peer Assessment Workshops: 15th December 2023** all students will be required to attend and participate to showcase their creative e-projects to each other and to collectively vote on the best and most creative.

Feedback from Supervising Community Partners

All students will be required to ask their community placement organisation to assess them against the aims and objectives agreed for their community placement and a set of generic and specific criteria related to their professional skills development which are defined by the Medical School and the General Medical Council. Students must achieve a grade of satisfactory or above in order to move into the next phase of their medical training and will be referred for a student interview with the academic lead if they fail to do so. Students are responsible for ensuring that an assessment proforma is completed by their placement host and returned to the Medical School at the end of their community placement (see Appendix Three).

Individual written reflection

Students are required to submit a 750 +/- word reflection about their 4 week placement. This will cover what they have done, key aspects of their learning including links to wider determinants of health and specific social, environmental, and economic challenges in the region, and finally how they will take this learning forward into their future clinical practice. **This will be submitted on Monday 18th December 2023.**

A **thank you event** for participating community partners will be arranged in Spring as a gesture of thanks to showcase students' experiences in an informal setting.

Placement Allocation/Matching Timescales

We are keen to ensure that organisations have sufficient time to consider whether they would like to participate in this placement scheme and if so, to think about how students might constructively support your organisational needs. We are able to discuss ideas between now and August before you confirm participation in September.

We plan to advertise all available placement opportunities to students in late September, and following an internal matching and allocation process, hope to confirm all student-to-organisation matches by early-October. Students will then be asked to contact their allocated placement organisation (typically via email) mid-October to introduce themselves and discuss reporting instructions and any practicalities relating to the start of their placement.

At this point, it might be beneficial for both parties to discuss the activities and/or project work students will be undertaking so they are briefed well in advance about what they will be doing. It is unlikely that students will be able to meet with their respective placement organisations in advance of their placement start date due to full-time clinical placement commitments and examination preparation; however, we would encourage all students to at least telephone their primary point of contact for an informal, introductory conversation following that initial email introduction. **If for any reason, you do not hear from your allocated student or students by mid-October, please do not hesitate to get in contact with us and we will ensure they make immediate contact.**

A full timetable outlining steps up to and including the period between Monday 20th November and Thursday 14th December is included at the back of this handbook for your information.

Health & Safety

Organisations interested in offering a community placement should be mindful that the University of Sheffield is committed to safeguarding its students and their learning experience.

We do not want to put our students at risk and in an attempt to safeguard our students, ask that anyone interested in offering a community placement completes a brief health and safety checklist prior to acceptance of the placement. Placements cannot commence until we have received a satisfactorily completed checklist accompanied by any relevant documentation.

We would also ask that students receive a health and safety briefing on the first day of their placement (typically as part of other induction/introduction activities) and that each placement provider keeps records to confirm that such a briefing has taken place.

Safeguarding

The Medical Degree offered by the University of Sheffield's Medical School is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) Section 4(2) (Exemption) Order 1975 and the Department of Health Circular HC (88)9 guidelines regarding child protection and police checks. All medical students undergo an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check upon admission as a mandatory requirement of entry to Medical School. Students also sign an entry agreement stating that they are responsible for disclosing any subsequent arrests, cautions and criminal convictions.

DBS checks were undertaken by the Medical School for this student year group in August/September 2021 and these pre-entry checks cover students for the duration of their Medical Degree. The Medical School does not hold copies of students' enhanced DBS certificates and cannot provide copies of the checks. These are sent directly to students and it is their responsibility to retain them. We can provide a DBS reference number and the date that this was conducted.

We can however corroborate that checks have been undertaken and if need be, verify students' identity. All students have a University of Sheffield identity card (known as a UCard) with their photograph and student identity (registration) number which they will be able to show you when they meet with you. If you need to verify their identity further, you can contact us with this student identity (registration) number which we can then use to identify the student to you over the phone.

Placement Scheme Evaluation

Organisations are advised that we are keen to evaluate their experiences of working with our students and will invite them to participate in a brief evaluation exercise (likely to take the form of an online questionnaire) at the end of the community placement period to capture feedback. We would however encourage all organisations to keep in regular touch with us to let us know how things are going with planning or when the placement is operational.

Please get in touch

If hosting a placement is of interest or if you have any questions about the information in this handbook, please do not hesitate to get in touch using the emails below:

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Timescales & Key Dates

For ease of reference, it is important that any organisation interested in offering a community placement is aware of the timings associated with this pilot placement scheme and is able to work within the timescales set out below.

<p>May- August 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff from the University of Sheffield’s Medical School will meet with any organisations interested in hosting students to discuss placement and potential project ideas. ● Organisations will be asked to complete and return a brief proforma detailing the number of students they would like to host and the project ideas. The deadline for the return of this proforma is Friday 15th September 2023.
<p>September 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Once the proformas are collated we create a catalogue of placement opportunities. Staff within the Medical School will advertise community placement opportunities to students and undertake an internal matching and allocation process in late September. ● Students will be notified of the organisations they have been matched with and asked to contact their respective placement organisations in early October to introduce themselves and discuss key aims/objectives for their community placements; ● Organisations will similarly be notified of the students that have been matched to them at the end of September and will be provided with key student contact information in anticipation of receiving an introductory email from students.
<p>October 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will be expected to make initial introductory contact with their respective placement organisations in early October and wherever possible follow this up with an initial introductory telephone call or face to face meeting (where feasible around clinical placement commitments) ● Organisations are advised to confirm any relevant practical arrangements with students at this point and agree key aims and objectives with students for their placements.
<p>Early November 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will undertake preparation for their Observed Clinical Skills Examination (OSCE) on 7th November 2023. Organisations are advised that they may not hear from their prospective placement students during this time period;
<p>20th November - 14th December 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff from the Medical School will contact any organisation expecting to host a student who is required to take the second sequence of their Observed Clinical Skills Examination (OSCE). ● Intercalation Fair at the start of November. Students should ask your permission to attend this if they are thinking of taking a year out of Medicine to do research. ● Students will undertake their community placements and associated assessments
<p>Late December 2023 & early January 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participating organisations will be invited by students to assess their overall performance and contribution during their community placement using a standard Medical School student assessment proforma.
<p>Late December 2023 & early January 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff from the Medical School will invite participating organisations to take part in a brief evaluation exercise to capture their feedback and assess their experiences of supporting medical students through the pilot community placement scheme;
<p>Late December 2023 & early January 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Similarly, students will also be asked to participate in a comparable evaluation exercise to assess their experiences of undertaking a community placement and to capture any relevant feedback.