

ODPRN Summer Student Application Information

Overview of ODPRN

The Ontario Drug Policy Research Network (ODPRN) involves leading clinical researchers from five medical schools across Ontario. Its primary objective is to generate scientifically sound evidence on drug utilization, safety, and effectiveness for the purpose of informing drug policy decisions. The three core principles of the ODPRN are: scientific rigor, timeliness, and policy-relevance.

Please visit our website for more information about ODPRN and our research: <http://www.odprn.ca/>

Overview of the Student Training Program

The ODPRN Student Training Program is seeking a motivated and hard-working Master's or undergraduate (including medicine and pharmacy) summer student with a strong interest in drug policy research. The successful candidate will receive **\$6000 for three months**. This does not cover potential costs associated with project-dependent resources that may be required.

The main objectives of the program are:

1. To allow the opportunity for students to conduct drug safety and policy research
2. To train students in the processes involved in using the administrative databases available at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) when relevant to their project
3. To support trainees in their endeavours to work through a drug policy-relevant research project
4. To establish a multidisciplinary environment that allows the students to collaborate with individuals, including other trainees, researchers, physicians, and policy-makers
5. To expose the trainees to real life policy decision-making processes

Program Components

The successful candidates will be involved in the following program components:

- The main aspect of the training program will involve the undertaking of an independent drug policy research project such as a systematic review, economic analysis, observational study, etc.
- Projects may involve use of Ontario healthcare databases housed at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) if data already exists or if projects can be covered by external funding
- Attendance of webinars where Stakeholder Advisory Panel (SAP) members, clinicians, scientists and/or policy-makers will present on a specific research area
- Involvement in a drug policy experience, which may include attendance at policy meetings or telephone correspondence with policy-makers

Application Timeline

- Submission deadline: April 3, 2018
- Notice of final decision: April 27 2018
- Program/funding start date: May 8, 2018 (flexible)

Eligibility Criteria

- Must be enrolled in a Master's or undergraduate program (including medicine and pharmacy) with strong interests in drug policy research
- Must be able to commit to working on ODPRN project full-time (40 hours/week) throughout the summer term
- For students interested in conducting an ICES project, their supervisor or co-supervisor must be an ICES Scientist and have funds and/or existing data to support the project work
- Must identify a SAP member who is willing to support the application and agrees to act as a key resource throughout the program (please visit our website at www.odprn.ca to find a list of our SAP members)

Application Instructions

Please email or mail the following documents to Emma Hahn (contact information below):

- The completed and signed application form
- A detailed CV describing the following information: educational attainment, research experience, awards/scholarships received, relevant presentations and publications
- A one-page statement of interest describing:
 - How research interests are consistent with the program
 - A proposed drug policy research project (please see Appendix on descriptions of drug policy projects)
- Copies of all university transcripts (do not need to be official transcripts)
- A letter from a SAP member with a declaration that they are willing to supervise you in their capacity working with ODPRN (this is in addition to the reference letters unless SAP member is already your primary supervisor)

Please submit applications and/or direct any questions to:

Emma Hahn, BA
ODPRN Student Training Program Coordinator
Room ELL-220-04, Victoria Hospital
800 Commissioners Road East
London, Ontario N6A 5W9
Phone: 519-685-8500 x77845
Email: emma.hahn@ices.on.ca

What Constitutes a Drug Policy Project?

A project that is relevant to Ontario Public Drug Program's policy-makers may include:

- Drug plan costs as a function of drug policy decisions. For example, addition / removal from a drug formulary, change in listing status of drugs on formulary (e.g., limited use to general benefit), or impact of changing the prescribing of a drug (e.g., policy which allows only certain health care providers to prescribe a specific drug).
- Changes in drug utilization, including studies examining predictors of changes in drug utilization, temporal utilization trends and geographic distribution, particularly related to high-cost drugs.
- Understanding utilization, adherence and provincial plan costs of drugs within a specific class to understand the implications of adding a new expensive drug to the formulary within that class/with a similar indication. Appropriateness of characteristics of patients using particular drugs and the physicians who prescribe them (e.g., proportion of drug use that is being used for the approved indication compared to off-label use).
- Economic evaluations of selected drug therapies, including budget impact analyses as well as traditional health economic evaluations (the model estimates may come from population-based administrative databases at ICES).
- Assessment of system level interventions to determine if they have had an impact on improving the health of populations with respect to drug efficacy, safety, and cost.
- Knowledge translation initiatives. For example, testing interventions to increase awareness and uptake of study results by physicians and patients.

Other projects with clear policy relevance will also be considered.

These projects may also include some clinical aspects (e.g., comparative effectiveness and/or drug safety); however it is important for them to include policy aspects as well in order to demonstrate relevance to Ontario Public Drug Program's policy-makers.