

## 2025 Drug Policy Research 101: Student Training Program

### Information Package

#### OVERVIEW OF THE ODPRN

The Ontario Drug Policy Research Network (ODPRN), established in 2008, aims to foster an innovative drug policy research program supported by a network of scientific thought leaders from across Ontario with the capacity to generate scientifically sound research for the purpose of informing drug policy decisions. 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 aims to engage with students to develop capacity in drug policy research in Ontario. Trainees involved in this one-year collaborative program will work towards obtaining a drug policy training research certificate through the ODPRN. Through this program, trainees will have access to online training aimed at providing information around drug policy, engagement with individuals with lived/living experience throughout the research process, and methodological concepts.

This program will also act as a networking opportunity for prospective drug policy trainees who will have a chance to liaise with scientific academic researchers, ministry representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. There is no cost to participate in this program.

The main objectives of the program are:

1. To provide trainees with knowledge in drug policy research, pharmacoepidemiologic methods, patient-oriented research, and knowledge translation strategies.
2. To establish a multidisciplinary environment that allows students to collaborate and network with individuals, including other trainees, academic researchers, clinicians, patients, and policy-makers.
3. To provide trainees with an understanding of real-life policy decision-making processes.

#### PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Trainees involved in this program must successfully complete the following 3 pillars:

1. **Learning:** View and complete all online drug training modules by June 30, 2025. A drug policy certificate will be provided upon completion of all modules.
2. **Skill-building:** Attend at least 5 of the 6 webinars (date/time TBD, hosted during business hours, Monday – Friday between 9:00am – 5:00pm).
3. **Networking:** Attend and participate in the Fall 2025 In-Person ODPRN Student Training Program Networking Event (location: Toronto) where students will have the opportunity to liaise with a multidisciplinary audience and discuss their own research. Students will also have 1-1 mentorship opportunities with members of the ODPRN Stakeholder Advisory Panel (SAP) to further their network across various disciplines (optional).

For a detailed overview of the program outline including webinar presentation topics, information on the online drug policy modules and networking opportunities, see page 3.

| APPLICATION TIMELINE     |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Applications open        | September 3, 2024 |
| Applications close       | October 29, 2024  |
| Notice of final decision | December 2, 2024  |
| Program start date       | January 2, 2025   |
| Program completion date  | December 31, 2025 |

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Must be enrolled in an Ontario post-graduate program (medicine, pharmacy, MSc, PhD, etc.) with a strong, demonstrable interest in drug policy research. Preference will be given to students who are currently involved in drug policy research and/or who describe specific plans for conducting drug policy-related research in the future.
2. Student engagement will be assessed throughout the course of the year. Students who do not participate in the minimum number of activities for each of the program components listed above will not receive a letter of completion.
3. Students must be available to attend 5 of the 6 webinars during business hours, Monday – Friday from 9:00am – 5:00pm and make all efforts to attend the Fall 2025 In-Person ODPRN Student Training Program Networking Event.

### APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please email the following documents to Samantha Singh and Dana Shearer (contact information below):

1. The completed and signed application form.
2. A detailed CV describing the following information: education, research experience, drug policy interest, awards/scholarships, relevant presentations and publications.
3. A one-page statement of interest describing your previous experience and/or interest in drug policy and research as well as its alignment with the ODPRN program. Please also describe how involvement in the Drug Policy Research 101 Program will benefit your current training and future goals.
4. Proof of academic enrollment, indicating start date and expected completion date.

**Please submit applications and/or direct any questions to:**

Samantha Singh & Dana Shearer  
Email: [Samantha.singh@unityhealth.to](mailto:Samantha.singh@unityhealth.to) & [dana.shearer@unityhealth.to](mailto:dana.shearer@unityhealth.to)

**PROGRAM OUTLINE**

**Learning Modules**

Students will complete **all of the following** online modules **within the first 6 months (by June 30, 2024)** of the program:

1. Introduction **(mandatory before attending first webinar)**
2. What is a drug?
3. Life of a drug in Canada
4. Introduction to drug research
5. Patient-oriented research
6. Drug policy research case examples

**Skill-Building Webinars**

Students will attend **at least 5 of the following** webinars:

- |    |          |   |
|----|----------|---|
| 1. | January  | Introduction to the Program and Drug Policy Research <b>(mandatory)</b> |
| 2. | February | Hot topic Session: Group Discussion(Topic TBD)                          |
| 3. | April    | Methods (Topic TBD)   |
| 4. | May      | Drug Approvals and Price Negotiations                                   |
| 5. | July     | Patient Engagement and People with Lived/Living Experience              |
| 6. | August   | Drug Policy: Evidence and Impact on Health Outcomes                     |

**Networking Opportunities**

Students are provided the opportunity to attend the following networking events:

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | In-Person Annual Fall ODPRN Networking Event <b>(mandatory)</b> | <p>Opportunity for students to come together and network with other students, ODPRN SAP members and industry professionals. The event includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A panel speaking to “how we got here” as an opportunity for students to hear and ask questions around different career paths.</li> <li>• Round table discussions with experts in the field focusing on different topics of interest to the students (e.g. tips for successful grant applications, careers in private vs. public sectors, how to make your research relevant to policymakers, effective engagement with the public, etc.).</li> <li>• A select number of 5-minute student thesis presentations providing students the opportunity to present their research and receive high-level feedback from a panel of SAP members.</li> </ul> |
| 2. | Mentorship  | Opportunity to virtually network 1-on-1 with members of the ODPRN SAP who can answer questions and speak with students around various topics, such as career advice, project feedback, or to learn about a specific industry or organization.   |
| 3. | TBD   | Additional networking and/or mentorship opportunities that become available throughout the course of the year (e.g. attending ODPRN Strategic Planning Meetings).   |