

COVID-19 Protocols - Clerkship

The College of Medicine leadership, staff, and faculty will continue to work to ensure that all students progress through their program with minimal disruption while adhering to public safety guidelines. The health and safety of patients, students, and faculty is our priority. As developing health professionals, medical students are leaders and role models and as such are expected to exercise personal responsibility in their personal and professional lives by following all [Public Health COVID-19](#) related orders. Non-compliance with these health orders may result in a meeting regarding professionalism, with associated documentation, and may affect progress in the program.

Clinical Patient Interactions:

- Clerks will not participate in the health care to patients who are [confirmed](#) positive for COVID-19 (with exception of virtual care only, under the supervision of a preceptor).
- Clerks may participate in the care of patients who screen positive on the basis of symptoms using the [SHA screening tool](#), while those patients are awaiting COVID-19 test results, with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Clerks will not participate in aerosol generating medical procedures (AGMP) on COVID-19 positive patients (e.g., endotracheal intubation, protected code blue, etc.). AGMP participation on non-COVID-19 positive patients will be rotation-specific.
- Patients can be positive for COVID-19 and be asymptomatic or have mild symptoms. It is important that you use PPE as per the guidelines of the clinical unit in which you are placed, and frequently wash your hands.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance about protocols to follow related to COVID-19 for [University of Saskatchewan](#) medical students in Clerkship. Much or all of this information, *including the [self-assessment tool](#)* is on the Government of Saskatchewan website for [COVID-19](#). In every instance of suspected symptoms or exposure, students should follow the recommendations for engagement in clinical activities, as given by Public Health, via the 811 Healthline.

The [Saskatchewan Communicable Disease Manual](#) includes the goals of notification, case definitions, symptoms of the disease, transmission, treatment. Part of this manual contains the [Public Health Management of Contacts Based on Risk](#) table, which outlines directions for types of contacts and the public health recommendation around it. The Undergraduate Medical Program will use this as a guide for time away from program, based on individualized advice provided by Public Health. The program will also apply the [COVID-19 Return to Work Guide for Health Care Workers](#) for student return to clinical experiences.

1. What do I do if I experience viral-like symptoms (including, but not limited to cough, sore throat, fever)?

When you complete the [self-assessment tool](#), you will likely be advised to not to come to work/in-person sessions. Please adhere to this regulation and stay home, despite being partially or completely vaccinated for COVID-19. Please [contact the appropriate UGME administrative staff](#) to inform them of the situation and contact the 811 Healthline for more specific guidance about next steps.

2. What do I do if I am in contact with someone with viral-like symptoms but I do not know if they are COVID positive?

If you were in close proximity to the individual, it would be better to exercise caution and engage in self-monitoring for symptoms and your return to activities would depend on the risk level of proximity and

mitigating factors (PPE, vaccination, etc.). Refer to the [Contacts Definitions](#) (Table 5, page 21) and the [Public Health Management of Contacts Based on Risk](#) table (Table 6, page 26) and follow recommendations there. If you are unsure, please consult your Year Chair and appropriate UGME Admin Staff or call 811.

If you are self-monitoring and you develop viral-like symptoms (as above), then you should stay home, notify the appropriate UGME admin support and year chair, and contact the 811 HealthLine. During this time, if you are feeling well enough, you will be able to participate in all virtual learning that does not have in-person interactions.

3. What do I do if come into contact with someone who is COVID positive while on a clinical rotation or elective?

Please refer to the [Medical Student Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazard Policy](#) and follow the [COVID-19](#) Exposure Procedure.

- a. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, follow steps in Section 1.
- b. If you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, determine risk level of exposure:
Review the [Risk Classification for Asymptomatic HCWs with Potential Exposures](#) to determine your risk and follow recommendations found there. If you are unsure of your risk, please consult your Year Chair and appropriate UGME Admin Staff or call 811.
 - If you are fully vaccinated (you have had 2 COVID-19 vaccinations with the most recent at least 14 days prior) you will be considered to have a low-risk exposure/non-close contact. [Self-monitor](#) for 14 days following your last exposure to the case. Avoid close contact with individuals at high risk for illness during the self-monitoring period. If you develop COVID-19 symptom, self-isolate immediately and call 811.
 - If you are not fully vaccinated, whether you are required to self-isolate will depend on whether the contact is considered high risk/close contact.
 - Any advice from Public Health should be followed and supersedes this guidance.

The following steps apply **if determined that the [risk level](#) is high:**

- c. Immediately leave clinical setting and call 811 Healthline and indicate you are a healthcare worker, and self isolate unless advised otherwise by Public Health or OH&S. Follow advice for [self-isolation](#) and timeline for possible return to clinical duties. Notify the relevant individuals on the [Notification of exposure](#) list (include all below). Please advise if UGME office many notify Office of Student Affairs so they can reach out to you for support.
- d. Contact your local Incident Reporting Line to report your incident as a COVID-19 exposure:
 - Saskatoon Health: 306-655-0820
 - Rural (Toll-Free): 1-866-966-0820
 - Prince Albert: 306-765-6452 or 306-765-6497
 - Regina: Regina General Hospital: 306-766-4689 or 306-766-4431
 - Wascana Rehabilitation Centre: 306-766-5217
 - Pasqua Hospital: 306-766-2557 or 306-766-2518

- e. Complete the [University of Saskatchewan Incident Report form](#) Submit to the ugme.exposure@usask.ca.
- f. Notify relevant individuals on the [Notification of test results](#) list (include all below) and follow the recommendations from public health/OH&S on return to clinical duties. Work with year chair to schedule missed learning opportunities, following the [Clerkship Attendance and Absence Policy](#).
- g. Student will be contacted by UGME to provide support and follow up.
- h. Associate Dean, UGME is informed to ensure ongoing review of exposure incidents. UGME reports de-identified information on exposures and test results to University of Saskatchewan Safety Resources to support university tracking of trends in exposures and cases.

Notification of exposure/need to be absent:

- the UGME office administrator at your site.
 - note that the UGME office administrator may need to consult with Year Chair/Associate Dean or Program Manager on appropriate guidance.
 - UGME office administrator will notify OSA if you provide permission
- the administrative assistant and Rotation Coordinator in the department of current rotation or elective.
- hospital switchboard (note that switchboard does not need to know the reason you are going to be unavailable).
- preceptor or ward attending and any relevant supervising resident (note that they do need to know the reason you are going to be unavailable).
- appropriate Year Chair.

Notification of test results:

- the UGME office administrator at his or her site.
- the administrative assistant and rotation coordinator in the department of current rotation or elective.
- preceptor or ward attending and any relevant supervising resident (to advise of date of return)
- appropriate Year Chair.

Contingency plan for missed learning if self-isolation is required:

1. If learning cannot take place virtually – apply sick time from [Clerkship Attendance and Absence Policy](#).
2. If learning can be participated in virtually (i.e., telehealth) – student may not require additional time in rotation depending on whether objectives of rotation can be met.

All plans will be developed with the student by the UGME administrative staff and year chair in consultation with rotation coordinator.

4. What do I do if come into contact with someone who is COVID positive outside of a learning setting?

- a. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, follow steps in Section 1.

b. If you do **not** have any symptoms of COVID-19, determine risk level of exposure: Whether or not you need to self-isolate will depend on the risk of the contact based on your vaccination status, proximity to the individual and mitigating factors. Refer to the [Contacts Definitions](#) (Table 5, page 21) and the [Public Health Management of Contacts Based on Risk](#) table (Table 6, page 26) and follow recommendations there. If you are unsure of your risk, please consult your Year Chair and appropriate UGME Admin Staff or call 811.

- If you are fully vaccinated (you have had 2 COVID-19 vaccinations with the most recent at least 14 days prior) you will be considered to have a low-risk exposure/non-close contact. [Self-monitor](#) for 14 days following your last exposure to the case. Avoid close contact with individuals at high risk for illness during the self-monitoring period. If you develop COVID-19 symptom, self-isolate immediately and call 811.
- If you are not fully vaccinated, whether you are required to self-isolate will depend on whether the contact is considered high risk/close contact. If a close contact/high risk, [self-isolate](#) at home for 14 days from last exposure > call 811 to arrange testing (identify yourself as a contact of a case) > continue to self-isolate for the full 14 days even if your test is negative > if you develop any symptoms call 811.
- Any advice from Public Health should be followed and supersedes this guidance.

The following steps apply **if determined that the risk level is high:**

- c. [Notify the UGME program of your need to be absent](#) to self-isolate and that you are seeking testing (see [Notification of Exposure](#) below). Please advise if UGME office many notify Office of Student Affairs so they can reach out to you for support.
- d. Once you have test results, notify the UGME program (see [Notification of Test Results](#), below) and advise your administrator of the recommendations from public health on return to learning activities. Work with administrator and year chair to schedule missed learning opportunities, following [the Pre-Clerkship Attendance and Absence Policy](#).
- e. Student will be contacted by UGME to provide support and follow up. OSA may also provide support and follow-up.

Notification of exposure/need to be absent:

- the UGME office administrator at your site.
 - note that the UGME office administrator may need to consult with Year Chair/Associate Dean or Program Manager on appropriate guidance.
 - UGME office administrator will notify OSA if you provide permission.
- the administrative assistant and Rotation Coordinator in the department of current rotation or elective.
- hospital switchboard (note that switchboard does not need to know the reason you are going to be unavailable).
- preceptor or ward attending and any relevant supervising resident (note that they do need to know the reason you are going to be unavailable).
- appropriate Year Chair.

Notification of test results:

- the UGME office administrator at his or her site.
- the administrative assistant and rotation coordinator in the department of current rotation or elective.
- preceptor or ward attending and any relevant supervising resident (to advise of date of return)
- appropriate Year Chair.

5. What do I do if I, or anyone in my household, has a positive Home Rapid Antigen test?

Home rapid antigen testing (such as the SHA [Test to Protect program](#)) is designed for screening for COVID-19 in asymptomatic people.

Antigen testing has high specificity (if you have a positive screening test you likely have COVID) but it does not have a high sensitivity (a negative test does not exclude you having COVID) so it cannot be used as a test if you have symptoms. If you have [symptoms](#) that might be COVID-19, follow steps in Section 1.

If you OR anyone in your household has a positive home rapid antigen test, please do the following:

- a. Stay home and [self-isolate](#), despite being partially or completely vaccinated for COVID-19.
- b. Call 811 to arrange for a PCR test (diagnostic test) for COVID-19. When you call, advise that you are a health care worker and have a positive antigen test (or family member has a positive antigen test).
- c. [Contact the appropriate UGME contacts](#) (see [Notification of + home antigen test](#)) to inform them of the situation and your need to self-isolate. Please advise if UGME office many notify Office of Student Affairs so they can reach out to you for support.
- d. Continue to self-isolate until you receive your COVID-19 PCR test result.
- e. Once you have PCR test results, notify the UGME program (see [Notification of Test Results](#) below) and advise your administrator of the recommendations from public health on return to learning activities. Work with administrator and year chair to schedule missed learning opportunities, following [the Pre-Clerkship Attendance and Absence Policy](#).
- f. Student will be contacted by UGME to provide support and follow up. OSA may also provide support and follow-up.
- g. Associate Dean, UGME is informed to ensure ongoing review of exposure incidents.

Notification of + home antigen test:

- the UGME office administrator at your site.
 - note that the UGME office administrator may need to consult with Year Chair/Associate Dean or Program Manager on appropriate guidance.
 - UGME office administrator will notify OSA if you provide permission.
- the administrative assistant and Rotation Coordinator in the department of current rotation or elective.

- hospital switchboard (note that switchboard does not need to know the reason you are going to be unavailable).
- preceptor or ward attending and any relevant supervising resident (note that they do need to know the reason you are going to be unavailable).
- appropriate Year Chair.

Notification of test results:

- the UGME office administrator at your site.
- the administrative assistant and rotation coordinator in the department of current rotation or elective.
- preceptor or ward attending and any relevant supervising resident (to advise of date of return).
- appropriate Year Chair.

6. What do I do if there is a COVID-19 outbreak on the clinical unit where I am placed?

The SHA outbreak management guidelines can be found [here](#); section 4.8 is relevant to College of Medicine learners. The SHA outlines that once a unit is declared to have an outbreak that all learners will be re-assigned within facilities to reduce the number of individuals on an outbreak unit at any given time. These students **will not be permitted to continue their placement** in the outbreak unit/department and are to contact their College of Medicine clerkship administrator and site/year chair immediately, if currently placed in a COVID-19 outbreak unit. If the learner is scheduled to begin on a COVID-19 outbreak unit, the clerkship team will work expediently to adjust the learner's placement.

The SHA will contact the managers of the UGME, Saskatoon and Regina with updates of SHA Outbreaks. The manager will then reach out to the appropriate clerkship administrator and year site/chair to notify the affected learners and facilitate the appropriate changes for the learner. The clerkship team will work with the affected student, rotation coordinator, departmental clerical support and identified preceptor(s) for notification and re-deployment. If there is a delay in student re-deployment the clerkship team will work with the rotation director/preceptor(s) for a reasonable solution of how to achieve learning objectives with an alternative placement/ learning experience, or through rescheduling the learning experience.

Program Contacts:

List of Year and Site Chairs & Program Director:

Year 3 Chair	Dr. Schaana Van de Kamp	Saskatoon	schaana.v@usask.ca
Year 3 Site Coordinator	Dr. Joelle McBain	Regina	mcbainjoe@me.com
Year 4/5 Chair	Dr. Joelle McBain	Regina	mcbainjoe@me.com
Year 4 Site Coordinator	Dr. Ashley Selvig	Saskatoon	ashley.selvig@usask.ca
SLIC Director	Dr. Tara Lee	Estevan, Meadow Lake, Melfort, LaRonge	tara.lee@usask.ca

Please see the list of UGME Administrative Staff to contact at your home site below.

Saskatoon – Carolyn Blushke; Carolyn.Blushke@usask.ca, Tami Golding; Tami.Golding@usask.ca and Tangy Epp; Tangy.Epp@usask.ca

Regina – Annie Ethier; Annie.Ethier@saskhealthauthority.ca

Prince Albert – Nicole Toutant; Nicole.Toutant@usask.ca

Meadow Lake – Bailey Edelman; Bailey.Edelman@usask.ca

Estevan – Kristin Dupuis; Kristin.Dupuis@saskhealthauthority.ca

Melfort – Mabel Ryhorchuk; Mabel.Ryhorchuk@saskhealthauthority.ca

LaRonge - Janice Skilliter; Janice.Skilliter@usask.ca

Departmental and Rotation Clerical Support Staff:

Name	Elective Specialty	Elective Location	Category	Email
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COVID-19 Protocol Change History

Date	Change
October 6, 2020	Clerkship COVID-19 protocols developed and posted to website
December 10, 2020	Staff/Faculty contacts updated
December 23, 2020 (applied when clerks returned to rotation January 4, 2021)	<i>Clinical Patient Interactions</i> updated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification that clerks may see patients who screen + on basis of symptoms using SHA screening tool, but may not participate in care of COVID-19 confirmed + patients - Clarification that clerkship participation in AGMPs will be rotation-specific
January 13, 2021	Link to SHA document "Risk Classification for Asymptomatic HCWs with Potential Exposure" updated due to update to SHA document and link
Feb 8, 2021	Addition of new section related to procedure if a student is scheduled or participating in a learning experience on a clinical unit where there is a COVID-19 outbreak
July 12, 2021	Updated for the 2021-22 Academic Session
Sept 27, 2021	Addition of section on exposures outside of learning setting Addition of section on rapid antigen home testing