



Public Health and Preventive Medicine

Contact Information

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Elective Description

This elective is available to clerkship students from McGill or visiting universities and will expose the student to the specialty of Public Health and Preventive Medicine within a regional public health unit. The student will become familiar with foundational concepts in PHPM and their application in practice in a variety of domains including health surveillance, health protection (reportable infectious diseases, environmental hazards), health promotion and prevention.

Rotations at Montreal Public Health require a strong working knowledge of oral & written French.

Les stages à la Direction régionale de santé publique s'effectuent en français ; l'étudiant doit donc être en mesure non seulement de bien comprendre la langue, mais également de la parler aisément; les communications écrites devront également être produites en français.

Elective Duration


4 weeks (exceptionally 3 weeks in the context of the McGill PHPM Clerkship Rotation). For McGill students, elective dates must correspond with McGill's rotation block [calendar](#).

Given the longitudinal nature of the PHPM specialty and in order to ensure a quality experience of the specialty is available to interested students, requests for electives of less than 3 weeks in duration will be considered upon special request only.

Educational Objectives

At the end of this elective, students should have a foundational understanding of the specialty of Public Health and Preventive Medicine. They should be able to apply at least some of the following PHPM concepts – specific competencies will be of greater or lesser focus depending on the specific domain of their elective.

1. Demonstrate the skills involved in preventing and controlling an outbreak, including collaboration with public health authorities, schools, health institutions & physicians in various specialties as appropriate (MCC 78-5)
2. Recognize the implications of environmental hazards at both the individual and population level and the health impact of community level interventions (MCC 78-6)



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3. Describe interventions that will be effective in reducing environmental exposures and risk of disease (e.g. sunscreen for sunburns, bug spray for prevention of West Nile Virus infection) (MCC 78-6).
4. Discuss the importance of disease surveillance in maintaining population health and the approaches to surveillance (MCC 78-2)
5. Describe the determinants of health and how they affect the health of a population and the individuals it comprises (MCC 78-1)
6. Apply the concept of the natural history of disease, particularly with respect to possible public health and clinical interventions throughout the stages of life. Apply concepts of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention and harm reduction principles when appropriate. (MCC 78-1)
7. Discuss the role that physicians play in promoting health and preventing diseases at the community level (e.g. prevention of low birth weight, obesity prevention, cancer screening, smoking cessation and prevention) (MCC 78-3-E)
8. Participate in health quality improvement initiatives
9. Understand principles behind effective population health communications for prevention, health promotion and health protection
10. Discuss a community's health needs considering underlying determinants of health, evidence for effective interventions, and existing services
11. Understand how public policy can influence population-wide patterns of behaviour and affect the health of a population
12. Recognize the governance structures and organizational mandates of public health institutions (regional, federal, provincial roles and responsibilities)
13. Recognize and describe factors leading to effective management of working groups and teams, e.g., effective meetings, interprofessional collaboration, communication, documentation etc.

Application process

Prospective students must fill out the [online form](#).

Students will be asked to indicate their sector of interest (infectious diseases, environmental health, early childhood development, health promotion, occupational health). They will receive a response within two weeks of their application.



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