



Transforming the Field
Education Landscape

Atlantic Canada Discoveries – Promising & Wise Practices in Field Education

Presented by

Amy Martin, BSW, RSW

(Memorial University Master of Social Work Candidate and TFEL Student Research Assistant)

Jamie Maher BSW, RSW

(Memorial University Master of Social Work Candidate and TFEL Student Research Assistant)

Sheri M. McConnell MSW, PhD, RSW

(Assistant Professor, Memorial University School of Social Work and TFEL Co-investigator)

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We would like to respectfully acknowledge that the land on which we completed our research is in the traditional unceded territory of many Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of all the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Innu, and Inuit Peoples of these areas.

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Transforming the Field Education Landscape

“The Interviewing on Promising and Wise Practices team is collecting interviews from multiple regions across Canada. Promising practices are approaches that show potential for enhancing social work field education. Wise practices are considered approaches that are locally relevant to diverse Indigenous groups and can be implemented in field education. Interviews are being conducted with field education professionals, each of whom has shared promising and wise practices they have encountered in their field education practice. Each region is completing a regionally-specific coding process of each interview, outlining the key themes from participants. The Interviewing project will provide ample knowledge about current promising and wise practices that can we can further implement to transform field education” (TFEL, 2020).

Transforming the Field Education Landscape (TFEL) is a partnership project that aims to better prepare the next generation of social workers in Canada by creating training and mentoring opportunities for students, developing and mobilizing innovative and promising field education practices, and improving the integration of research and practice in field education. <https://tfelproject.com/>

Atlantic Canada Provinces





Review of Literature

A literature review was not completed for the Atlantic Canada study, as the student researchers involved in the TFEL National Study will be conducting a comprehensive literature review.

Methodology

Data Collection

- Qualitative Interviews
- Ten Participants were Field Education Coordinators and Field Instructors
- Gift Certificates were provided to Interview Participants by TFEL
- TFEL Stream 2 Letter of Initial Contact, Consent Form, and Interview Questions
- Semi-Structured Interviews with Stream 2 National Study Questions
- Interviews Completed via Cisco Webex - Video and Audio Recorded
- Interviews Transcribed for Analysis

Methodology

Data Analysis

- Atlantic Canada Interviewer Discussion and Consultation of Common Themes
- Consultation with Fellow TFEL National Study Stream 2 Student Interviewers
- Development of Atlantic Canada Thematic Codebook
- Tally and Percentile Spreadsheet of Thematic Codes

Atlantic Canada Codebook – TFEL Stream 2 Research Interviews

Martin, A., Maher, J., & McConnell, S.M.
Memorial University School of Social Work

CODES	FULL DEFINITIONS
<u>Accommodation</u> (ACC)	Creating space for social work students who require specific circumstances and support to complete their field practicum.
<u>Advocate</u> (ADV)	The need to advocate for field education, people involved with field education, and/or more field education resources.
Field Education, In General (ADV-FEG)	Any field education advocacy required, outside of advocacy by Field Instructors, Field Coordinators, and Students.
Field Instructors (ADV-FIN)	Advocacy related to agency field instructors.
Field Coordinators (ADV-FCO)	Advocacy related to university Field Education Coordinators.
Students (ADV-ST)	Advocacy related to Social Work Students in field education.
<u>Barriers to Change</u> (BAR)	Challenges impeding implementation of promising practices.
Bureaucracy (BAR-BUR)	Missed opportunities for increasingly flexible and/or self-directed practicums. Structured practicum model.
Challenges with Finding Placements (BAR-CFP)	Various challenges in the realm of placing students in agency practicums - competitiveness in securing particular agencies, lack of placements, challenges meeting accreditation standards.
IPT System (BAR-IPT)	The IPT system described as a challenge/barrier.
Lack of Post-Secondary Institution Support (BAR-LPSIS)	Lack of support from the post-secondary institution.
Students Viewed as a Burden (BAR-STB)	Field agencies and field instructors indicating that providing a practicum is too much, as they are not paid for their time, or they may not have the staff/resources available to do so.
<u>Benefits of & Valuing Field Education</u> (BV)	Aspects of field education that create opportunities to move forward with promising practices described by respondents.
Valuing Field Education within Social Work Education (BV-FE)	Valuing field education within social work education. Valuing field instructors. Valuing students.
Benefit of Students to Field Instructors (BV-STFE)	How the students improve, add to, and aid the field instructors in their own learning and development.
Benefits of Students to University Leadership and Administration	How students improve, add to, and aid the university administration and leadership in their own learning and development.

(BV-STUA)	
Benefits of Students to the Agency (BV-STAG)	How students improve, add to, and aid the practicum agency. Student capacity to contribute to the agency.
Benefits to Field Instructors - Student Development (BV-FISD)	Field instructor satisfaction in supporting student development.
<u>Collaboration & Relationships</u> (COL)	The need / importance of relationships and collaboration with all involved in field on an ongoing basis to improve field education and related processes.
Collaboration between Stakeholders (COL-STAK)	Collaboration between field education coordinators, field instructors, students, agencies. Field instructor relationships with students, individuals, communities, agencies.
Collaborate with Students (COL-STU)	Collaboration with students regarding their practicums. Students collaborating and building relationships with multiple and diverse organizations.
Communication (IPP-COM)	General need for clear communication between the different stakeholder involved with field education.
Relationship Building (COL-RB)	Field instructors (or other staff) relationships with people, students, communities, and/or organizations. The practice of relationship building.
<u>COVID-19</u> (COV)	How COVID has impacted the state of field education.
Technology for Remote Access (COV-TELROM)	Telehealth and virtual means for achieving field practicum requirements.
Access to Technology (COV-TECH)	Student and Field Instructor <i>access</i> to and <i>accessing</i> technology.
Quality of Placements (COV-QUALPL)	Impact of COVID on quality of placements – including where placements were cancelled or postponed or shortened or remote.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cancelled Placements (COVID-QUAPL-CAN) - Postponed Placements (COVID-QUAPL-POST) - Placement Hours Reduced (COVID-QUAPL-SHORT) - Remote Placements (COVID-QUAPL-REM)
<u>Field Education in Crisis</u> (CRIS)	The current “ <i>crisis</i> ” in field education.
Increasing Student Numbers (CRIS - ISN)	Increasing numbers of students entering social work programs and increased need for field education opportunities.

Lack of Social Work Values and Professionalism (CRIS-PV)	Challenges in field education due to the impacts of societal values that do not necessarily align with anti-oppressive or social work values.
Leadership (CRIS-LEAD)	Need for strong leadership in universities and in agencies -ensure field programs are centred, supported, and resourced.
Geography of Field Placements (GEO)	The places and relationships people have with their physical environment and location.
Northern (GEO-NOR)	North coast of Labrador and Nunavut
Indigenous (GEO-IND)	Areas predominantly populated by Indigenous peoples and communities.
Urban (GEO-URB)	Cities and towns that are densely populated, with ready access to major infrastructure.
Rural (GEO-RUR)	Geographic areas outside of towns and cities that experience isolation and lack of infrastructure.
If Only (IO)	If only – there was all that is needed, including resources, what would be possible and what would be done differently.
Innovative & Promising Practices (IPP)	“In this study, a promising practice is defined as an approach, intervention, initiative, program, service, or strategy that shows potential for enhancing social work field education. A promising practice may address a specific challenge experienced in social work field education. Promising practices are often in the earlier stages of being demonstrated as absolutely effective, yet are considered effective in achieving their stated aims with potential for replication” (TFEL, 2020). Innovating and bringing forward new ways and ideas as an important part of field education
Administrative Support for Field Coordinators (IPP-ADM)	Universities provide administrative support for field coordinators, so that they can pursue more meaningful aspects of their work.
Cohorts (IPP-COH)	Placing students in an agency simultaneously, in a pair or in groups - opportunities to share offices, work together, and provide each other support.
Community Needs (IPP-CMD)	Field education responding to needs of and supporting communities.
Creativity (IPP-CRE)	Creativity as a way forward for change.
Enhanced Resources (IPP-ER)	The creation, enhancement, or reassignment of resources.
Field Instruction as Teaching Role (IPP-FTR)	Field instruction recognized as a teaching role.
Field Instructor Recruitment via Alumni/Student Engagement (IPP-ASE)	Ensuring that alumni continue engagement with field education. Creating a culture where social workers take on field instructor role. Working with students to become future field instructors.

Field Instructor Support (IPP-FIS)	Peer support opportunities for field instructors. Agency support - reduced caseloads or increases in pay to field instructors - acknowledge time and effort of working with students.
Field Instructor Training (IPP-FIT)	Ensuring that field instructors are properly trained - access to training and resources needed to supervise students effectively.
Initiative (IPP-IN)	Students taking initiative for their own learning - Distance students needing to contact agencies directly to secure placements. (in discussion – note connection to accreditation standards)
Intentional Practice (IPP-IP)	Students need to know how to be intentional in decision-making and provide rationales for their choices.
Interdisciplinary Teams (IPP-IT)	Students work with other students and professionals as part of interdisciplinary teams.
International Practicum / Collaboration (IPP-INTP)	Opportunities for development of international placements – and collaboration with the international community in field education.
Increase in Number of Field Coordinators (IPP-INFC)	Need for increase in field coordinators within the universities - increase effective student support, liaise with agencies, conduct research, etc.
IPT System (IPP-IPT)	IPT system as a tool for change / improvement.
Macro-Level Practice in Field (IPP-MLP)	Supporting more macro-level placements and macro-level activities in placements.
Multiple Instructors (IPP-MS)	Team or co-field instructors - enable a range of student training and experience - share student supervision.
Non-traditional Practicums (IPP-NTP)	The need for non-traditional set ups for practicum.
Peer Support (IPP-PS)	Student peer support models to expand student learning and well-being.
Research Practice in Field (IPP-RES)	Supporting more research-focused placements and research activities in placements.
Rotational Placements (IPP-RP)	Students are placed in more than one department or agency during their practicum.
Screening Process - Matching (IPP-SP)	Agencies/field coordinators create ways of assessing / screening student applications to ensure a goodness of fit between agency and student. Recognizing student skills, experience, lived experience as strengths.
Social Work Education Integration (IPP-SWI)	Integrating social work theory and practice is at the core of field education.
Technology (IPP-TECH)	Technological innovations in field education - online counselling and virtual learning.

Time and Duration Considerations (IPP-TD)	Considerations relating to length of practicum / number of hours in field.
Mental Health (MH)	Mental health of students.
Increased recognition of Mental Health (MH-REC)	Increased recognition and discussions of student mental health by students, field coordinators, field instructors, universities, agencies.
Challenges in Placement (MH-CH)	The impact of student mental health challenges in field practicum.
Preparation for Professional Practice - Concrete Skills (PPP)	Social workers graduate with different levels of concrete skills developed in field practicums - competencies needed for graduation or preparation for social work practice.
Lack Concrete Skills (PPP- LCS)	The lack of concrete skills demonstrated by social work students prior to graduation.
Possess Concrete Skills (PPP-PCS)	The presence of concrete skills demonstrated by social work students prior to graduation.
Suitability for Social Work Practice (ACC-SSWP)	Issues arising in field practicum in which students, field instructors, and/or field coordinators are querying a student's suitability for social work practice.
Values and Practices in Field (VP)	Values and practices essential to integrate into field education.
Critical Thinking (VP-CT)	Incorporating critical thinking.
Direct Practice (VP-CP)	Providing students with as much direct practice (including clinical) as possible.
Diversity (VP-DIV)	Importance of increasing awareness, skills, and approaches with diverse communities and populations.
Embrace Discomfort (VP-ED)	Students need to challenge themselves to move beyond their comfort zone - to support their personal and professional growth and development.
Excellence (VP-EXC)	Fostering excellent practice and practitioners
Hope (VP-HP)	Hope for the future, student hope/optimism, hope as a feature that maintains involvement in field education.
Observation/Shadowing (VP-OS)	The importance of students observing social work by the field instructor(s) and other team members - students observe themselves via video/audio-taped recordings - shadowing.
Openness to Opportunities (VP-OO)	Students being open to all kinds of practicum placements, agencies populations. Field instructors being open to various opportunities for students - open to the potential for innovation and responding to challenges.
Orientation to Field (VP-OF)	Students require a comprehensive orientation to field/agency/program/team members.

Passion (VP-PA)	The importance of igniting and fostering passion in students and field educators.
Realistic Expectations (VP-REX)	Students having realistic expectations about field practicums. Field instructors having realistic expectations about students.
Respect (VP-RCT)	Respecting and valuing students as individuals and as contributors to agencies.
Self Awareness (VP - SA)	Helping students cultivate self-awareness to aid in professional development.
Self Care (VP – SC)	Teaching / encouraging students to integrate self-care and maintenance of their well-being into daily practice during field practicum.
Social Justice (VP-SJ)	The importance of social justice in practice and practicum experiences. AOP, anti-racism, decolonization, reconciliation, social justice in field education.
Social Work Ethics (VP-SWE)	Valuing, modeling, and teaching students about social work ethics and ethical practice.
Wise & Indigenous Practices (WIP)	“A wise practice is flexible, locally relevant to diverse Indigenous groups, and respect all forms of Knowledge, including lived experience, traditional knowledge, and stories. Wise practices are typically relational in nature, involve respect for others, and working together” (TFEL, 2020).
Decolonization /Reconciliation (WIP-DR)	Decolonization and reconciliation are wise practices.
Historical Awareness/ Understanding (WIP-HIS)	Exercises and activities that deepen understanding of the history and colonization of Indigenous peoples.
Incorporating Indigenous Practices (WIP – IIP)	Incorporating exposure to/participating in Indigenous cultural practices. Explore and remedy challenges faced in incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being.
New Learning Contracts/ Objectives (WIP-LCO)	Incorporating Indigenous approaches to the learning objectives/contracts that facilitate students conceptualizing/communicating in culturally appropriate ways.
Perspective-Taking (WIP- PT)	Activities that support students to take on perspectives other than their own, and to develop awareness about their colonial and personal history.

Atlantic Canada	Code	Atlantic Canada	Code	Atlantic Canada	Code	Atlantic Canada	Code	Atlantic Canada	Code
Code Book	Tally	Code Book	Tally	Code Book	Tally	Code Book	Tally	Code Book	Tally
ACC	23	COV	19	IPP-ER	12	MH-CH	9	WIP-DR	7
ADV	1	COV-TELROM	8	IPP-FTR	10	PPP	1	WIP-HIS	4
ADV-FEG	3	COV-TECH	0	IPP-ASE	1	PPP-LCS	6	WIP-IIP	17
ADV-FIN	11	COV-QUALPL	0	IPP-FIS	1	PPP-PCS	6	WIP-LCO	1
ADV-FCO	12	COVID-QUAPL-CAN	3	IPP-FIT	6	PPP-SSWP	16	WIP-PT	2
ADV-ST	2	COVID-QUAPL-POST	0	IPP-IN	3	VP	1		
BAR	2	COVID-QUAPL-SHORT	7	IPP-IP	1	VP-CT	4		
BAR-BUR	8	COVID-QUAPL-REM	5	IPP-IT	6	VP-CP	23		
BAR-CFP	18	CRIS	1	IPP-INTP	3	VP-DIV	9		
BAR-IPT	1	CRIS-ISN	5	IPP-INFC	4	VP-ED	15		
BAR-LPSIS	15	CRIS-PV	2	IPP-IPT	0	VP-EXC	4		
BAR-STB	29	CRIS-LEAD	5	IPP-MLP	2	VP-HP	1		
BV	0	GEO	0	IPP-MS	12	VP-OS	2		
BV-FE	19	GEO-NOR	17	IPP-NTP	4	VP-OO	9		
BV-STFE	9	GEO-IND	11	IPP-PS	1	VP-OF	12		
BV-STUA	1	GEO-URB	1	IPP-RES	6	VP-PA	12		
BV-STAG	14	GEO-RUR	17	IPP-RP	12	VP-REX	9		
BV-FISD	6	IO	2	IPP-SP	12	VP-RCT	3		
COL	2	IPP	0	IPP-SWI	12	VP-SA	5		
COL-STAK	34	IPP-ADM	6	IPP-TECH	2	VP-SC	1		
COL-STU	10	IPP-COH	7	IPP-TD	5	VP-SJ	14		
COL-COM	9	IPP-CMD	10	MH	1	VP-SWE	0		
COL-RB	44	IPP-CRE	11	MH-REC	14	WIP	2		

Findings

Challenges

Crisis in Social Work Field Education

- Recognition and Impact of Student Mental Health on Field Practicum Experiences
- Students Viewed as Burden
- Competition for 'Clinical' Placements
- COVID-19 'Burnout'
- Field Instructors Querying Student Suitability for Professional Social Work Practice



Findings

Promising Practices

Collaboration

- Relationship Building in Field Education
- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- Placements in One Agency with Shared Field Instructors
- Placements with Multiple Agencies



Findings

Wise and Indigenous Practices

- Indigenous Field Practicum
- Northern and Rural Strengths and Opportunities

Challenges and Limitations

- A Segment of TFEL Stream 2 Interviews
- Small Scale Interview Capacity
- Lack of Student Voice in Interviews
- Two Peer Qualitative Thematic and Coding Interpretations

Opportunities and Recommendations

- Government and Agency Acknowledgment and Collaboration of Challenging Systemic Barriers that Nurture a Social Work Practice in 'Crisis', including Exacerbation by COVID-19 Pandemic
- Increased Support Opportunities and Education for Students and Field Instructors regarding Student Mental Health
- Reframing of Social Work Practice Ideas of 'Clinical' Field Practicum Opportunities
 - Recognition of Strengths in Grass-Root, Community Based Practice

Opportunities and Recommendations

- Inclusion, Accessibility, and Support of Geographically Northern and Rural Placements in Atlantic Canada
- Challenging Colonialist Social Work Practice Beliefs and Values by Increased Collaboration and Learning within Indigenous Field Practicums
 - Opportunity for Decolonization and Reconciliation of Social Work Practice
 - Community Inclusion and Immersion
 - Increase Presence of Personal Investment and Value of Field Education
 - Challenging Perceptions and Beliefs Regarding Suitability for Indigenous Field Practicums



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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING OUR WEBINAR AND SHARING IN OUR DISCOVERIES!

For more information
about the partnership please contact:
tfelproject@ucalgary.ca

@TFELProject



www.tfelproject.com

Dr. Julie Drolet
Project Director
jdrolet@ucalgary.ca