



WISE PRACTICES IN FIELD EDUCATION

Synopsis

The Prairie Report on Finding and Wise practices in Field Education study identifies innovative, growing, and wise practices throughout the Prairie Regions of Canada which includes Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with field coordinators, field educators, field supervisors and supervisors, and representatives of third agency partners. This report summarizes the key interview findings on wise practices in social work field education in the Prairie region.

INTRODUCTION

Field education is an integral aspect of social work education that provides students with direct practice experience and enhances their ability to integrate social work theory, research, and knowledge into direct practice. In Canada, social work field education is in a state of crisis. Social work programs have been contending with resource scarcity and financial cutbacks that when paired with increasing student enrollment are negatively impacting both social service agencies and educational institutions. Field education provides students with valuable work experience, an avenue for self-learning, and the opportunity to explore multiple areas within the social work profession and as such is an integral part of social work education. Wise practices in social work field education were defined as indigenous, combined practices that are flexible, locally and culturally relevant, that respect all forms of understanding including lived experience, traditional knowledge, and the use of theory. Wise practices are relational in nature and encourage mutual respect, reciprocity, and collectivity.

OBJECTIVE

To identify wise practices in social work field education within Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba that can generally guide the development of sustainable models of field education in the future.

METHODOLOGY

- 25 semi-structured interviews were held and recorded on Zoom or Microsoft Teams between July and December 2020.
- Thematic information and recruitment notices were published in the FEE monthly e-newsletter posted on the FEE website, advertised on social media (Facebook/Instagram), and also distributed through email and sent to members of the FEE network comprised of co-investigators, partners, and collaborators to further promote the participatory researcher.

ANALYSIS

Twelve wise practice were identified to develop sustainable models of social work field education in the future (figure on the right).

