



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Synopsis

The Transforming the Field Education Landscape (TFEL) partnership conducted a nationwide study to identify innovative, promising, and wise practices in social-work field education in Canada. This fact sheet summarizes the innovative practices identified in the Prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. The focus is on five key themes that were highlighted in the findings.

INTRODUCTION

Innovative practices are defined as cutting-edge practices that have not previously existed in social work, but have demonstrated to enhance field education while addressing existing challenges. Such practices include:

- The use of virtual technologies to build for learning and information exchange
- More flexible field placement options in virtual placements, self-directed education
- Creating additional macro-level placement options
- Encouraging risk taking under structured circumstances to foster the conventional culture of social work

OBJECTIVE

To identify innovative practices that have the capacity to expand, improve, and diversify the field education landscape in the Prairie region.

METHODOLOGY

Between July and December of 2019, 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted with field educators in the Prairie region. A purposive sampling approach was used to ensure key personnel identified in consultation with educators in Prairie provinces and to ensure a variety of perspectives, experiences, and understandings about the issue in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

FINDINGS

Key findings were identified:

1. Technology
2. Flexible options
3. Creativity
4. Macro-level placements
5. Taking risks



KEY THEMES

Technology

Technological innovations in field education



Flexible Options

Flexibility in field education options, such as virtual options



Creativity

Creative ways of implementing and encouraging change



Macro-level Placements

More support for macro-level placements



Taking Risks

Taking risks that support innovative practices



CONCLUSION

Social work is currently in a state of crisis, and more needs to be done to address the sustainability of quality field education practice. Innovative practices were identified as one treatment option that could improve the current state of social-work field education. One of 11 innovative practice categories identified in the Prairie Region report, this fact sheet targets at key themes that can be adopted in social-work education.

To find out more, visit <https://tfelproject.ca/>

