



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Overview

The *Praxis Report on Promising and Wise Practices in Field Education* study presents the findings of a research study designed to identify innovation, promising, and wise practices in social work field education throughout the Prairie regions (provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba). This fact sheet summarizes the key findings on innovative practices as identified in the study.

INTRODUCTION

The current crisis in the Canadian social work field education exists due in part to resource scarcity and increasing student enrolments. These challenges could be addressed by introducing innovative practices that have the potential to enhance field education and address some of the challenges in the field. These innovative practices were identified by experienced social work field educators in the Prairie region.

OBJECTIVE

The aim of this fact sheet is to present new, creative, and innovative practices that have the potential to enhance field education.

METHODOLOGY

- Between July and December 2020, 35 semi-structured interviews consisting of 20 open-ended questions were conducted virtually on Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms. Participants were social work field instructors, field coordinators/supervisors, and Social Workers in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.
- All interviews were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed by student research assistants under the supervision of experienced researchers.

FINDINGS

- Innovative practices have the potential to enhance field education while addressing existing challenges but are not currently considered evidence-based. This is due to the fact they have not been tested yet.
- The study identified five themes on innovative practices: technology, flexible options, creativity, macro-level placements, and taking risks.

ANALYSIS

1. TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS (THE USE OF ONLINE PLATFORMS) IN FIELD EDUCATION



"[...] We've actually seen things like Zoom (and) Microsoft Teams to be able to be the way that we connect right on. The students are really eager, and they're interested in that, and that's what we're here for to help them achieve their learning goals."

2. A VARIETY OF FIELD EDUCATION OPTIONS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE STUDENTS

"I think organizations need to be more flexible and offer more placements to students."

