

Northern Ontario School of Medicine École de médecine

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Preparing yourself, your colleagues, and your patients for students training in their hometown

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Conflict Disclosure Information

The presenters have no financial or personal relationships to disclose with respect to this presentation



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Background

Traditional tertiary-based medical education provides a high degree of anonymity

What if the training is in familiar setting?

What are the challenge(s)/benefit(s) of the 'hometowner student (HT)'

 those undertaking clinical placements in the communities in which they grew up



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Community placements

NOSM MD program:

- 1st year students
 - 4 weeks in an Aboriginal community
- 2nd year students
 - 2 x 4 weeks in small rural communities
- 3rd year students
 - 8 months in a small/medium sized community

CCC: ~ 64 medical third year students are distributed across 14 CCC sites

Community Sites: 👙 •Bracebridge •Dryden •Fort Frances •Kapuskasing •Kenora •Hearst •Huntsville Manitoulin •North Bay Parry Sound •Sioux Lookout •Sault Ste. Marie •Timmins •Temiskaming

NOSM Campus:

- •Sudbury
- •Thunder Bay

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Hometowner Project

A study to explore issues around hometowner student Delphi with NOSM faculty

3 stages:

- Narrative responses
- Factors 1
- Factors 2

Study is in the final round



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Community selection & preparation

Perspectives from:

- Student
- Fellow students
- Faculty/Clinical Preceptors
- Patients
- Other

Note:

- Excluding special circumstances/accommodations



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Advantages for the HT student

• Maintain protective factors

- Positive friend/family support networks
- Comfortable routines
- Familiar places, things, and people
- Being valued/previous recognition
- Potential financial savings
 - Living at home, friends, etc..
- "Test run" of work site
 - Can evaluate potential future work location
- Comfort level with community/work environment
- Potentially, helps with stress management



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Disadvantages for the HT student

Fear of failure – "hometown hero" effects

- Will you feel comfortable in making mistakes?
- Imposter syndrome
- Transition
 - Community Kid \rightarrow Community Professional

Biased or poor assessment

- Do you have a relative as a potential preceptor?
- Is your preceptor a close colleague of your relative?
- Is your preceptor your family doctor?
- Working in a small town
 - Everyone knows everyone's business
 - Potential privacy/confidentiality breaches
 - Personal/family conflicts



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Disadvantages for the HT student

- What if you get sick?
 - Can you receive confidential health care
- Case studies from hospital charts
 - Might be someone you know?
- Possible negative perception by future program directors
 - that you were given special favour (i.e., they may discount your positive assessment)
- Potentially, missing out on professional networks
 - New sites, offer opportunities to meet new people
- Unrealistic social accountability
 - Expectation that student will return to hometown, despite their own professional/personal goals



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Advantages for fellow students

- Excellent source of resources/local knowledge
- Connections/Community knowledge





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Disadvantages for fellow students

- Potential group issues with your student colleagues
 - Favourtism/bias, jealously, rivalry.
- Competing Interests
 - family/friends vs peer networks
- Less Group Integration



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Advantages for preceptors

- Familiarity students are known, good/bad
- Potentially a better match
- Comfort level for preceptors





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Disadvantages for preceptors

Biased or poor assessment

- Is the student related to a colleague?
- Grudge against the family?
- What if your student gets sick? In crisis?
 - Can they access confidential healthcare
 - What resources can a student in crisis access?

• Boundaries

- transitioning from previous relationships
- role identity
- Transition
 - Community Kid \rightarrow Community Professional
- Privacy Risks
 - "You don't know what you don't know" ie: personal needs/issues of students
- Dealing with Academic Difficulty



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Advantages for patients

• Familiarity

- Students may know some patients, help with the understanding of health care issues
- Increased comfort due to familiarity
- Supporting a local physician 'champion'





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Disadvantages for patients

• Patients are uncomfortable

 Patients may not see local student as an objective professional in training. Thus, leading them to decline permission to allow intimate exams, or to hide embarrassing history.

• Students are uncomfortable

- Seeing people you did not expect to see, in situations you are not prepared for.
- For example:
 - Physical on your best friend's parent
 - Suicide attempt in the ER of a former classmate



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Solutions/Approaches

Prior to HT student's arrival

- Discuss with preceptor colleagues, identify issues, lay the ground work for constructive criticism/honest feedback
- Discuss with healthcare team
- Bring awareness to community
- Determine back up health care plans for students if there is a potential preceptor conflict





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Solutions/Approaches

- Upon/shortly after HT student's arrival
 - Discuss with student, clarify expectations
 - Determine appropriate personal/professional boundaries
 - Establish expectations/boundaries around patients
 - Open communication





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Solutions/Approaches

• Fellow students

- Be conscious of group dynamics
- Feedback on group process

• Patients

 Clarify expectations and understand their role (e.g., they can decline)

• Role of NOSM?

- Policies?



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Conclusions

Hometowner students challenge for LICs, and others

Many potential pitfalls and problems

But many advantages too

Can be managed – if well-prepared and support is in place

