POLICY

Subject: COVID-19 Travel, Education and Visitor Policy

Approving Authority: Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences

Responsible Office: Dean's Office

Effective Date: March 12, 2020

Updated: March 15, 2020

Purpose
Due to the changing nature and spread of COVID-19, and in an effort to minimize the potential risk to patients in our care, the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) has adopted a new travel policy relating to all FHS clinical faculty, staff, and learners (students) who work and learn in a clinical care environment.

The Faculty respects and monitors our clinical partner’s policies and procedures and requires all faculty, staff and learners to understand and follow any policies or procedures required by that clinical partner.

For the purposes of this policy, in addition to Hospitals, the ‘clinical care environment’ includes any environment in which direct clinical care is administered (for example: Long-Term Care Facilities, Outpatient Clinical Care Setting, Home Care Settings, Schools, Ambulatory Care settings and Simulation Suites).

This Policy Applies to:

- Faculty of Health Sciences clinical faculty members, staff members, and learners who work or learn in a hospital environment or a clinical care environment including research labs.

- Faculty of Health Sciences faculty members, staff members, and learners (undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral) who work or learn in a research lab located in a hospital or clinical care environment.

- Learners, Visitors and Invited guest speakers coming from International locations. This policy oversees travel for international visitors who are scheduled to come to Western University for training and or guest lectures.

This Policy Does NOT Apply to:

- Faculty of Health Sciences faculty, staff and learners (undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral) who are NOT engaged in clinical care, or who don’t work or learn in a hospital or clinical environment, or a research lab in a hospital or clinical care environment will follow all Western University’s policies regarding COVID-19. Please visit Western’s COVID-19 website for the most up-to-date information.

Policy

Travel

• All travel outside of Canada related to university business, including travel related to presentations at international meetings, electives, practicums, international learning or for humanitarian reasons is cancelled for all those individuals to whom this policy applies effective March 12, 2020 until further notice.

• It is recommended that all non-business travel outside of Canada to whom this policy applies be cancelled effective March 12, 2020, until further notice. In alignment with the Government of Canada travel advisory, March 13, 2020, (https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html) any individual who has travelled internationally (including the United States) must self-isolate for 14 days upon return (updated March 15, 2020). In the event that you are in self-isolation and remain symptom free through the 14-day period, you must contact Occupational Health and Safety to return to work or placements. This must be done prior to resuming placements or work. If symptoms develop during the self-isolation period, the duration of exclusion from work will be determined by the public health unit in conjunction with Occupational Health and Safety.

• FHS and our Schools will work directly with Program Leaders to support learners who are not able to participate in their required learning in clinical care environments. Every effort will be made to help learners make up any clinical placement times missed later in the academic year or before the start of the next academic year. Please note however, FHS cannot guarantee learning in clinical care environments will be able to be made up during the normal academic cycles for programs. Should this be the case, FHS will work closely with the Schools to help reduce impact to students and find available placements as soon as reasonably possible.

• All interviews for international visitors or student applicants must be conducted virtually effective March 12, 2020, until further notice.

• Any international graduate students and postdoctoral trainees currently in labs located in the hospitals and clinical environments will continue. However, individuals coming from outside Canada will be required to self-isolate once they arrive in Canada for at least 14 days before they can commence their work in the labs located in the hospital or clinical environments. Proof showing date of arrival in Canada may be required before any individual assumes clinical duties.
Invited visitors/Guest speakers

- All international visitors/guest speakers who are scheduled to speak in a clinical environment including research labs situated in the hospitals must be cancelled effective March 12, 2020 until further notice, unless the event is moved to a non-clinical environment.

Refund process for cancelled travel

- The COVID-19 outbreak has prompted many travel service providers to adjust their refund policies. Please contact the relevant airline and your accommodation provider to explain about your cancelled travel and enquire about refund or credit options. If you purchased travel insurance or have a travel insurance benefit with your credit card, please make use of these services.

- Should you incur any financial penalties due to the cancellation of your travel, please keep your receipts. Information will be provided under separate cover regarding the review process.