

Frequently Asked Questions

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What is HSPnet?

The Health Sciences Placement Network (HSPnet) is an electronic system for improving the management of Practice Education activities for health sciences students across a province. Practice Education management activities include coordinating clinical placements (also known as preceptorships, clerkships, internships, or practica) and related activities such as policy management and agreement tracking, preceptor recognition, instructor assignment and scheduling, collaborative resolution of scheduling conflicts, and interprofessional placements.. HSPnet streamlines manual processes for managing practice education, improves communications and information sharing, and brings together multiple local data sets to provide better system-wide information.

Who uses HSPnet?

HSPnet has been used for multiple disciplines in BC since 2003 and has been introduced in several more provinces through the National HSPnet Alliance, established in 2004.

The primary users of HSPnet are those involved in placing students (typically course leaders and practicum coordinators in educational institutions) and those who receive students (placement coordinators, unit/program managers and educators in health service organizations). Other users of HSPnet include instructors, senior managers, and students.

How does HSPnet improve practice education management?

HSPnet is a set of integrated functions that enable participating agencies to:

- Maintain **online profiles** for:
 - students, instructors, and courses/programs in placing agencies
 - sites, destinations, and supervisors/preceptors in receiving agencies
- **Coordinate requests and placements** and send/redirect with document uploads and resource links
- **Monitor status** as requests are accepted or declined, with conditions and reasons
- Manage a “**Call for Offers**” process to canvass large volumes of sites for their availability
- **Coordinate student arrangements** such as consent forms, orientation packages, and prerequisites for immunization status and CPR certification
- **Manage documents** including confirmation notices, recognition letters, and placement schedules
- Manage **access to agency information systems** for students and instructors
- **Generate reports** on placement activities, placement capacity, utilization and outcomes
- Publish and access **online policies and guidelines**, and standardize policies through shareable templates based on researched best practices
- Develop and track **educational Contracts** or Affiliation Agreements
- Enable students and faculty to access **online orientation** content
- Track **student employment** including undergraduate and new graduate hiring programs

Can students access HSPnet?

Student access to HSPnet was introduced in 2006 and provides information about upcoming placements and schedules, placement history, and access to online documents and resources. Future functionality includes online evaluation and feedback mechanisms and opportunities for students to research and select placement opportunities online.

Frequently Asked Questions

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How does HSPnet support collaboration and capacity building?

HSPnet supports the critical role of intermediaries that coordinate placements on behalf of others. Scheduling tools support online, collaborative resolution of scheduling overlaps, and custom reports are available to support organizations or groups that review placement capacity issues or facilitate program planning and health human resource planning.

How is HSPnet funded?

BC's Ministry of Health provided one-time funding for HSPnet development in 2002. Ongoing costs in BC are covered through a portion of fees paid by member agencies of the BC Academic Health Council (BCAHC), the sponsor and host organization for HSPnet. Non-member agencies involved in health sciences student placements may also access HSPnet through an annual subscription fee.

The BCAHC established the National HSPnet Alliance in 2004, offering HSPnet licensing at no charge to other Canadian provinces that would share the ongoing costs of operating and enhancing the system. Six provinces are now participating in the Alliance and share a cost efficient, centrally managed infrastructure for training, user support, system management, and enhancements.

In addition to facilitating student placements, can HSPnet be used for tracking other related activities?

HSPnet is designed to accommodate agencies who wish to use the same system to track "internal" placements such as placements between hospitals, preceptor/mentor training, and new staff orientation. These placements will be counted differently than inter-agency placements, but will contribute to the overall data set on practice education involving students, new graduates, and employees.

How is privacy of personal information protected?

Information privacy and data stewardship are primary considerations of HSPnet design, development, and ongoing enhancement. In general, agencies have access only to information relating to their own organization, and users access student information on a need-to-know basis only as per their organizational role. For example, a Placing Coordinator would have access to information for students in his or her educational program only, and a Receiving Coordinator would have access only to information on students confirmed for placement at his or her site.

Does HSPnet support out-of-province placements?

Placement activities often cross provincial or even national boundaries, and requests can also be received from non-healthcare organizations. HSPnet allows tracking of these activities through generation of manual placement forms and letters than can be sent via fax or email to receiving agencies that are not using the system. Similarly, HSPnet Receiving Agencies can enter requests received from non-user schools, in order to track this "external" activity and to ensure that all such placements and their associated impacts and outcomes are included.

Where can I get more information?

Please visit the website at www.hspscanada.net or contact:

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