

HSPnet Overview & Benefits

Updated: August 31, 2005

Background

The Health Sciences Placement Network of BC, or HSPnet, was launched in April 2003 by the BC Academic Health Council (BCAHC) to provide a province-wide system for coordinating the placement of health sciences students in clinical practice or fieldwork opportunities. HSPnet provides a web-enabled database and tools that support the following practice education objectives:

- Increased availability and quality of practice education opportunities
- Streamlined processes and improved coordination
- Enhanced access to untapped opportunities and a greater range of placement settings
- Evaluation and improvement of learner and agency outcomes
- Enhanced profile and priority of practice education

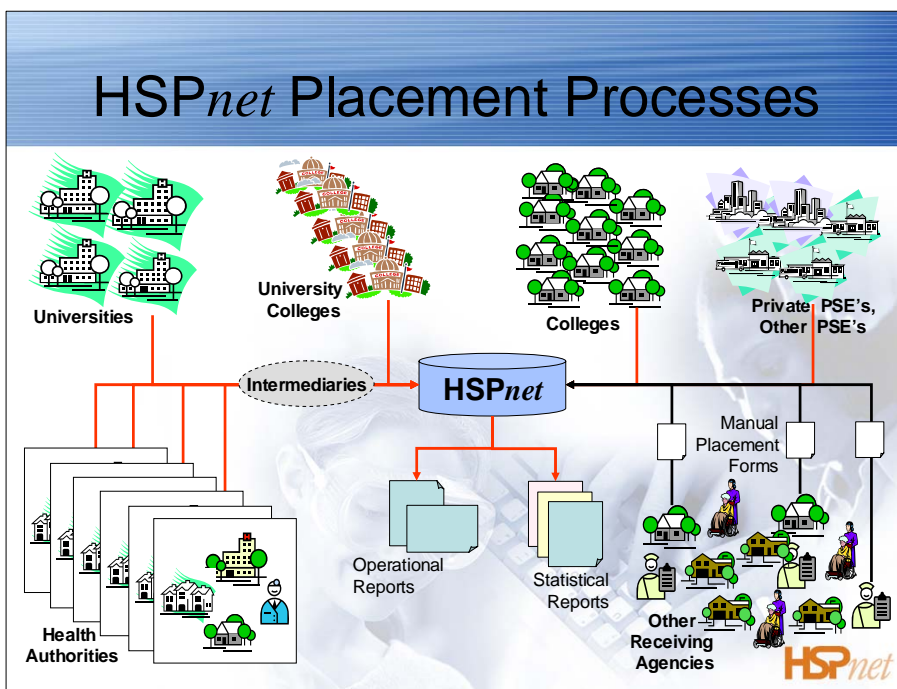
Funded through a one-time award from the Ministry of Health, the ongoing sustainability of HSPnet is achieved through a portion of membership fees from BCAHC agencies, subscription fees from non-member agencies, and cost sharing of system infrastructure and enhancement costs with partner provinces. HSPnet implementation is progressing across the Western provinces, and partnership discussions are also underway with other Canadian provinces and a jurisdiction in the UK. These partnerships ensure that HSPnet is accessible and affordable for even small agencies, and the initial taxpayer investment is being leveraged to ensure ongoing cost-effectiveness and continuous improvement at a declining cost over time.

HSPnet User Groups in each province review local issues and processes, and contribute each year to identifying and prioritizing enhancement requirements. A national Steering Committee of all Partners oversees policy and ongoing expansion of the system, and sets the annual operating and enhancements budget.

Agencies Using HSPnet

In BC alone, more than 300 users are now using HSPnet, representing:

- 95 educational programs representing fifteen disciplines; and
- Over 100 sites in five health authorities and private agencies



More than 18,000 student placements have already been entered into HSPnet since the 2003 launch.

100% of nursing placements in the Lower Mainland are now processed via HSPnet, providing a comprehensive dataset that will support the study of placement issues including acceptance rates, reasons for declining placements, opportunities for building placement capacity, and placement activity levels by facility, service type, and discipline.

Users report a high level of satisfaction with HSPnet functionality, and note that the system has greatly reduced paper handling and streamlined communications.

HSP_{net} Overview (continued)

Benefits of HSP_{net}

The benefits of HSP_{net} adoption include:

- Improved communication and information exchange among schools and agencies that accept students, throughout the placement process;
- Reduced handling of paper through access to electronic placement requests, online course profiles and student resumes, and up-to-date information about destinations that accept students;
- Improved turnaround on placement requests through instant communications, alerts and reminders, and automated reports on requests awaiting action;
- Productivity tools to produce automated confirmation and thank you letters, student and instructor lists, and unit schedules;
- An enhanced ability to plan and build capacity through access to comprehensive data on placement activities and trends, reasons for declining/canceling placements, etc.

Future Enhancements

Future plans for HSP_{net} development include:

- A Capacity Manager module (target release December 31, 2005) will allow receiving sites to set target levels of student capacity by shift and student/placement type, and site managers to review capacity utilization for a service, site, or health authority.
- A Practice Education Toolkit (target release 2006/07) will allow schools and health authorities to publish policies, guidelines and other content at the level of a program, discipline, health authority, site, or unit.
- A feasibility study is currently underway for using HSP_{net} to support e-Orientation of students and preceptors. This will dovetail plans for a Student Access module, which would provide students with access to information about upcoming placements, placement history, and an online resume.
- An expanded Student Prerequisites module will be released October, 2005 and will streamline efforts by schools to track status of criminal records checks, immunizations, and other placement requirements.

System Requirements and Privacy/Security

The only technical requirements for using HSP_{net} are an internet-connected PC with Microsoft® Internet Explorer (version 5.5 or higher), an active email account, and Adobe® Acrobat Reader (a free download). There is no software to install or maintain, and authorized users can access HSP_{net} from work or home.

HSP_{net} transactions are encrypted over the internet and logged for audit purposes, and multi-level security ensures that only authorized users can view placement information as appropriate for their role within an agency.

Students sign a consent form prior to their identifiable information being entered into HSP_{net}, and student identification is not released until a placement is accepted and confirmed.

More Information

For more information about HSP_{net}, visit the website at www.hspbc.net or contact:

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