Comprehensive Research Experience for Medical Students (CREMS) 2022 Supervisor and Project Information Form

Please complete and return via email ONLY to crems.programs@utoronto.ca by February 18, 2022.

**Supervisor Information**

*NOTE: CREMS will not support pre-determined pairings of students and supervisors. Supervisors must agree to open their projects to all students and interview all that are interested.*

**Name:** Andrew Pinto  
**Email:** Andrew.pinto@utoronto.ca  
**Department:** Department of Family and Community Medicine  
**Hospital/Research Institution:** Upstream lab, MAP C-UHS, St. Michael’s Hospital  
**SGS Department(s) (if applicable):**  
Dalla Lana School of Public Health  
**ORCID ID** (see https://orcid.org/ - if you do not have an ORCID ID we encourage you to sign up for one):  
0000-0003-1841-9347  
**Location of Work:** Remote

**Field of Research (up to 4 keywords):**
Systematic review, social determinants of health, chronic disease, health disparity

**Student contact time** (number of hours per week YOU are available to the student for any concerns or to review progress):
Summer student will be supervised by PI, and supported by a research team consisting of core staff, graduate students and post docs. Summer staff will meet with PI and other staff on a weekly basis as part of team meetings, and PI will be additionally be available to meet as needed to address concerns and progress.
**Project Information**

*NOTE: If this project is selected, this information will be posted on CREMS website for interested student applicants to view research opportunities.*

**PROJECT TITLE:**

Synthesizing the Evidence on Reducing Inequities in Risk Factors for Chronic Disease

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Including background, aim(s), methods and significance of the project. **Maximum 300 words.**

In 2018, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), in collaboration with Pan-Canadian Public Health Network (PHN), Statistics Canada, and the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), released a report entitled “Key Health Inequalities in Canada”.(1) This report summarizes evidence of inequities across demographic and socioeconomic status for 22 indicators of health outcomes, such as diabetes, obesity, and lung cancer, as well as risk factors that include smoking, alcohol use, and food insecurity, among others.

As part of the effort to address health disparity in Canada and to realize the public health goal of optimal health for all Canadians, PHAC has engaged the Upstream Lab at the MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions to identify and examine the best available evidence on interventions that help reduce health inequities in relation to common risk factors for chronic diseases.(2) To achieve this aim, the Upstream Lab will conduct four systematic reviews on **interventions that address the social determinants of health of four behavioural risk factors for chronic diseases: unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco smoking, and problematic alcohol use.** These risk factors were selected since they represent the most pronounced health inequalities in Canada and due to their strong association with the highly prevalent non-communicable chronic diseases in Canada, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer, and disability.(1,3,4)

The specific goals of the systematic reviews are two-fold:

1) To synthesize evidence on effective interventions implemented in the community or at the policy level that target the social determinants of unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco smoking, and problematic alcohol use.

2) To develop a publicly available repository of promising social interventions that help reduce inequity in chronic conditions.

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**Is this project remote-capable (in case of new restrictions) or have an alternative remote option?**

- ☒ Yes, remote capable
- ☐ No

☐ Yes, alternate remote option. Please specify (100 words max): Click or tap here to enter text.

**If human subjects are involved, have the appropriate Research Ethics Board approvals been obtained?**
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☒ Not Applicable

If yes, please list the application submission date:

Do you expect this work will be published?

☒ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Uncertain / Other
Research Environment and Student Roles and Responsibilities

Please be specific as possible. Please describe the research environment, including availability of required facilities/equipment/expertise, supervisor’s experience and mentorship plans. Please clearly outline the student role(s) and responsibilities related to the project, potential educational value, and indicate who will serve as the student’s direct report for daily oversight (PI, PHD student, technician, etc.). Maximum 300 words.

This study will be based at the Upstream Lab, a research team that is housed within MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, St. Michael’s Hospital. We are fully affiliated with the University of Toronto.

Since 2016, we have focused on health equity research, the social determinants of health and research that goes “upstream” of the health concerns and issues addressed in the health care system. Our three streams of work include: 1. Integrating health and social care, 2. Population Health Management, and 3. Using data to enable proactive care.

The summer student will mainly support literature screening, data abstraction, and reporting of the first two systematic reviews, which focuses on unhealthy diet and physical inactivity. There may also be an opportunity to support protocol development for the other two systematic reviews on tobacco smoking and problematic alcohol use.

The summer student will be an active member of our dynamic team of research staff, clinicians, and graduate students including MSc and PhD candidates, and post-doc fellows. The student will be supervised by Andrew Pinto, who has had the great privilege to supervise numerous medical students, medical residents, undergraduate summer students, and practicum student from U of Waterloo and York University. The summer student will also work closely with research staff leading this work. They will have the opportunity to take part in our weekly team meetings chaired by the PI, and meet with staff/PI one-on-one as needed. They will also have the opportunity to engage in collective learning on decolonizing research, anti-racist and abolitionist research, and building links with community.