

To: Students

We understand that some students would like to help COVID-19 efforts and are seeking volunteering opportunities. We know that some of these opportunities would put you in direct contact with the health care environment (e.g., door-screening at health clinics), with health care professionals (e.g., providing child care and elder care for researchers and clinicians in our affiliated hospitals), or with potentially affected community members (e.g., assisting isolated and vulnerable seniors). We are also aware of some lower-risk remote or virtual activities (e.g., fact-checking online articles, taking calls from Kids Help Phone, crafting mock N-95 masks for training purposes).

We would like to first commend you on your commitment to public service and to supporting the broader efforts to combat the COVID-19 virus. We know there is a lot of conflicting information being circulated in the media and through social media about the virus and risks of infection. During these times of uncertainty, we must all make our own decisions about what level of risk we are willing to accept. The purpose of this email is to give you some general information about the implications for you, should you decide to engage in these activities. Our aim is to ensure that you are making *informed* decisions and keeping yourselves as safe as possible.

**These volunteer opportunities are independent of academic studies and the University, even if the activities take place on sites that are affiliated with the University (e.g. at major hospitals or with academic appointees requesting volunteers). As a volunteer, the University's insurance coverage, WSIB coverage through the University (including the coverage applicable during student placements), financial support, or logistical support would not be available to you.**

Unless the organization or site at which you are volunteering makes it available to you, as a volunteer, you may only be covered in case of injury or illness in the course of volunteering through OHIP/UHIP and your extended health coverage plan, if you have one.

Please make sure you are protecting yourself, following public health advice, and informing yourself of the potential risks of any volunteer opportunity. We ask that you continue to consult the University's [central webpage](#) for links to public health authorities, travel advisories, and student supports including mental health resources.

Please stay safe and take care of yourself during these difficult and troubling times.

Dr. Lynn Wilson MD, CCFP, FCFP  
Acting Vice-Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions  
Faculty of Medicine  
University of Toronto