

## **University of Toronto and University of Guelph Study**

### **January 2021 - December 2021**

- Focus groups and analysis began for this study entitled 'Examining the mental health and well-being of medical laboratory technologists and medical laboratory technicians/assistants in Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic'.
- If you are a medical laboratory professional working through COVID-19 (both in COVID-19 labs and labs doing other testing), please participate in this study into burnout, low morale, or other mental health and well-being concerns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To learn more about the study and participate, please [click here](#).
- Principal Investigator Dr. Behdin Nowrouzi-Kia is an occupational therapist and assistant professor in the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto. This is a joint research project with the University of Guelph.

## **Clinical Placements and the Shortage of MLTs**

### **July 2021 - Prepared by Judy Tran, MLT MBA - Independent Research Consultant**

- To further quantify the research begun in 2019 around the MLT Human Resource Shortage, we initiated a further research project to investigate the issue of clinical placements as an impacting factor in the shortage of MLTs. Following interviews with 22 stakeholders, a literature review, and a 2-hour think-tank with 18 participants, this report proposes short- and long-term advocacy recommendations. These include funding for clinical placements, increasing student throughput, investing in simulation education, and supporting recruitment and retention in rural and remote laboratories. [Click here to read the report](#).

## **Call to Action**

### **August 2021 - December 2021**

- Following on our Clinical Placement research, we developed a Call to Action to address Health Human Resources shortages in Ontario laboratories. We developed a Return on Investment estimating that Without intervention, ongoing MLT shortages could cost taxpayers over \$1.6 billion dollars annually in increased wait-times and lengthened hospital stays, negatively impacting patient health.
- Building on the proposals within the clinical placements report, we put together a 3-phase approach of \$6.2M over 4 years:

**Phase 1 – 2022-2025: Laboratory Externship Program – \$3.6M (total over 3 years)**

- Clinical placements (externship) are a major roadblock for both laboratories and training programs, making this a target area to alleviate MLT shortages. Labs are not able to take on students due to their staffing shortage. Schools are not able to take on more students due to lack of externships. This funding is needed immediately.

**Phase 2 – 2023-2026: Northern Health Program - Laboratory - \$2.6M (total over 3 years)**

- Rural and remote areas are most impacted by this shortage, necessitating a targeted recruitment and retention strategy to support healthcare in these communities.

**Phase 3 – 2024: Develop Ontario Simulation Laboratory**

- Further research currently being conducted to determine capital investment required.
- Once the report was developed, we built stakeholder support for the proposal by getting 50 co-signatories endorsing the report from hospitals, healthcare centres, laboratory networks, vendors, and professional associations. Following this proposal, our CEO Michelle Hoad also met and built relationships with hospital CEOs, speaking with them about the shortage concerns and highlighting the importance of laboratory services. [Click here to visit our Call to Action Page.](#)