

# Pediatrics on Lake Erie

Type of Rotation: Academic Consulting Pediatrics in rural community setting

Duration offered: 2 weeks, 3 weeks, or 4 weeks

Location (base): Lighthouse Pediatrics, 414 Main St, Port Dover ON (Norfolk County)

Placement contact:

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Learners:

- Undergraduate clerks; Residents (Postgrad); BHSc(PA) clerks
- Both McMaster University and other universities (e.g., visiting electives)

Pre-requisites: Does not require prior completion of a core rotation in pediatrics

Blackout Periods: Last two weeks in August; Last week in December

Funding: See the Mac-CARE website at <https://finmcare.mcmaster.ca/>

Accommodation: Information on local accommodation is available through the office of the Preceptor and at: <https://finmcare.mcmaster.ca/options#tab-two>.

## Description:

This is a McMaster University, multi-award-winning rotation that offers an elective or core pediatric experience in a newly built, academic consultative clinic on the shores of Lake Erie in southwestern Ontario. About an hour's drive from Hamilton, Port Dover is a popular tourist area and in a rural community.

In a collaborative ambulatory setting, medical students, residents, PA students, and other health professional students can lead in the care of children and youth with general pediatric

problems, complex longitudinal needs, and semi-urgent issues. Lighthouse Pediatrics attracts diverse referrals for acute, chronic, and complex problems across the Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant region and surrounding areas. Some of the families are vulnerable and have limited access to primary or pediatric care. Several at-risk or isolated groups are also distinct and offer unique opportunities for trainees, such as children of Mennonite communities and Indigenous peoples. A collegial and supportive learning environment is complemented by a rich and well-supervised learning experience, with emphasis on continuity of care and meeting family-centered and community-based child and adolescent health needs. Working as a team, we strive to serve each patient's needs in context of that individual, their family and community.

Pediatric conditions cross the continuum from common childhood problems to complex or multi-system disorders, and from acute to chronic presentations of pediatric illness. Some of the clinical themes include prematurity and neonatal issues, epilepsy, diabetes, genetic disorders, pediatric syndromes, congenital conditions, feeding and growth problems, failure to thrive, adolescent issues, infant and child development, obesity, social health determinants, educational problems, mental health, gastrointestinal disorders, congestive heart failure (e.g., congenital heart defects, rheumatic heart disease), urgent semi-acute referrals from family physicians, and care following hospitalization.

The experience is particularly salient for students and residents planning careers in general or community pediatrics, as well as those planning a future in primary care. Learners gain proficiency in evaluating children and youth with a variety of common and complex general and subspecialized conditions. Valuable opportunities abound to enhance interviewing skills with children and families; develop skilled, targeted pediatric histories and an approach to the physical examination of infants and children; identify normal patterns of growth and development; understand and manage adolescent issues; and identify and treat acute pediatric problems in a rural setting. If desired, residents can become involved in teaching and in educational dialogue with medical students and students from other professional programs.

Learners can formulate and pursue their own goals in the rotation. A few examples of past learner objectives include: increase effectiveness of presenting assessments and plans for patients; interact with other learners around patient care and key case findings; enhance clinical reasoning skills by combining clinical experiences with review of relevant evidence-based publications, electronic resources, and discussions with attending physician; apply principles of primary and secondary prevention; take part in supervised patient education and familial counselling around care; communicate effectively on sensitive issues with families, patients and other members of the healthcare team; and prioritize in care the different social determinants and cultural practices of the family interacting with the pediatric team.

#### Brantford General Hospital:

The Lake Erie Pediatrics rotation can be customized by the clerk or resident according to individual interests and goals. If desired, in-hospital pediatric shifts with the preceptor can be included at Brantford General Hospital, a regional acute care centre and affiliate teaching site of McMaster University. The Department of Pediatrics at Brantford General Hospital functions as a community CTU, serving a wide range of general pediatric needs. Pediatric coverage in

Brantford includes the level 2B Special Care Nursery (SCN), attendance at newborn deliveries (> 32 weeks), well babies in the post-partum ward, the inpatient pediatric unit (up to 10 patients), consultations from the emergency department, well-baby discharge examinations, a neonatal bilirubin clinic, and the Pediatric Acute Referral Service (PARS). PARS is an in-hospital, afternoon clinic that serves the community and the ER as a space for acute consults, which are typically seen within 48 hours of referral. The bilirubin clinic and PARS clinic are supervised by the on-service (weekday CTU) or on-call (weekend) pediatrician. During call on weeknights, the pediatric team typically completes consults and organizes admissions from the Emergency Department, as well as attends deliveries and manages ward patients with the preceptor. Learners can therefore experience the entire breadth of community-based hospital pediatrics and outpatient general pediatric clinic practice during this rotation.

#### Other:

After approval of the elective by their program, learners interested in this rotation apply through the elective rotation portal. Learners will also complete the Mac-CARE application form. Arrangements for hospital privileges and credentials are made through Shelley Friesen (Mac-CARE, [shelley.friesen@bchsys.org](mailto:shelley.friesen@bchsys.org)). Please also see: <https://maccare.mcmaster.ca/learners/>.