

# Pharmacy Phile

University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy  
Issue 86 | March and April 2020





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# President and VP's Address

A unique time has come upon us since we last could address you all, making the past few months challenging and providing uncertainty looking forward. To begin, we hope that you are all staying safe and healthy during this time, and that you are taking care of yourselves mentally and emotionally. Since mid-March, all on-campus events, classes and meetings have been postponed indefinitely, deeply impacting all of our lifestyles. Despite this challenge, we have all risen to the occasion, to adapt and try to cling on to whatever sense of normality we once had.

From that, we would like to specifically thank all of the incredible faculty at the School of Pharmacy for working tirelessly to transition academics from in-person to online on such short notice, and for continuing to do whatever they can to support the learning and academic success of our students. We would also like to thank the students of the School of Pharmacy for being so open-minded, accommodating, and resilient during these unforeseen circumstances.

Due to the acceleration of the pandemic, we were unable to host the annual OPSIS conference with UofT. OPSIS is a long-standing tradition at our school, and it is quite unfortunate as we were excited to share the experience with our pharmacy colleagues from Toronto. Since the conference is organized by each year's president and vice-president, we were also unable to defer or delay the conference. That being said, however, don't be discouraged if you were planning to attend OPSIS 2020. There will be a conference in 2021 and we hope to see you all there!

In times of distress comes ingenuity and opportunity, so to lighten the tone of our address, we would love to discuss a fantastic initiative that has been brought forth by our very own. To begin the now-completely online term of Spring 2020, several students from the Rx2023 and Rx2022 cohort have come together to launch the first ever Spring 2020 Welcome Back Week - Online. Hosting events online has allowed students to come together despite being far apart, reinforcing the fellowship and camaraderie of the UW Pharmacy cohorts. With board games and social media challenges the entire week, we really appreciate all the planning that went into it and on behalf of all students, thank you!

Lastly, it is with heavy hearts that we write this, as it will be our final Pharmacy Phile address. It has been one year since we have assumed the role of President and Vice-president, and it has been one of the most inspiring years yet. These roles have been challenging and stressful, while being humbling and fulfilling. Thank you for this opportunity to serve you, the student body, and we hope that we have made you proud. It is without a doubt in our minds that the new President and Vice-president will do a stellar job, so with that being said, best of luck to you Taher and Matthew. We cannot wait to see what the next chapter of SOPhS has in store for the University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy.

Kean Sarani & Meena Shweitar  
SOPhS President & Vice-President

# RxPRN Update

RxPRN is still here for you despite school being online. RxPRN and UW MATES Peer Mentors are available via Skype if you want to talk one-on-one (contact via fb pages). RxPRN OPeN (online anonymous questions) continue.

Follow our page for our special Wellness Wednesday posts with de-stress tips and our Motivational Meme Mondays.

## RxPRN Contact Info:



[uwrxprn@gmail.com](mailto:uwrxprn@gmail.com)



RxPRN OPeN



<http://uwrxprn.wix.com/open>



<http://tinyurl.com/ask-rxprnopen>

## Self-care Ideas While Isolating:

1. Take a break from screens – for your eyes and your mind.
2. Get outside – even if you just stand in the sun for a few minutes.
3. Reach out to friends and family – call, text, video chat, write an old fashioned letter.
4. Try a new hobby – dance, sing, crochet, paint, whatever suits your fancy.
5. Read for pleasure – the public library even has free online content.

## Tips for Working at Home:

1. Get dressed as if you were going out to school or work.
2. Set up a workspace that is only used for work.
3. Make a schedule to help you stay on track.
4. Take breaks when you need them.
5. Stay fed and hydrated so you can focus.

## Mental Health Resources

Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454

Here 24/7: 1-844-437-3247

UW Counselling: 519-888-4567 ext. 32655

Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566/  
text 45645

KW Sexual Assault Support: 519-741-8633

Connex Ontario: 1-866-531-2600

If you are worried about your safety or the safety of another person, call 9-1-1.



Check out the new RxPRN logo, created by  
Mayur Tailor (Rx2023)

By: Emma Peters (Rx2021) for RxPRN

# OPA Update

## UW OPA Partners with Pharm Against COVID-19



In April, the UW OPA student chapter officially partnered with Pharm Against COVID-19, a student-led initiative from UW and U of T.

Led by Mayur Tailor of Rx2023, Pharm Against COVID-19 (pharmcovid19, for short) has been responsible for securing and distributing approximately 20,000 donations ranging from PPE to sanitizers for pharmacists in the KW, Toronto, and Ottawa regions. Since pharmacists in Ontario have not been included in the list of healthcare professionals entitled to government supplies of PPE, Mayur took it upon himself to fix that problem. The group, which has now grown to around 45, is focused on two main objectives:

1. To ensure frontline pharmacy professional are protected with PPE

2. To advocate for the advanced services that pharmacists are able to provide, especially in a time where other healthcare professional are less accessible

With this, the UW OPA chapter partnered with pharmcovid19. Working together, the two groups had several meetings with OPA staff to discuss collaborations. As a first initiative, this led to a social media campaign aimed with showcasing the pharmacists on the frontline. The campaign consisted of a video from Justin Bates, CEO of OPA, calling on all Ontario pharmacists to post pictures on themselves on the frontline with the hashtag #PharmacistsOnTheFrontline.

Some photos of UW Students on the frontline!



Mayur Tailor (Rx2023)  
Founder and leader of Pharm  
Against COVID-19

Pharmacy professionals across the world have been posting their photos on social media. The video currently sits at 14.5K views on Twitter and has gotten support from many important figures such as the mayors of Toronto, Kitchener, and Ottawa in the form of shout-outs on Twitter.

If you haven't already, check out their Twitter/Instagram/Facebook:  
[@pharmacovid19](#).

Once again, a group of pharmacy students have proven that leadership is not a position or a title. Rather, it consists of action and example.

George Daskalakis  
UW OPA Student Chapter Chair

Joshua Pusong  
UW OPA Student Chapter Vice Chair



Twitter/Instagram:  
[@PharmCovid19](#)

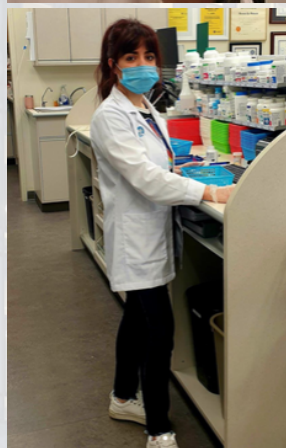
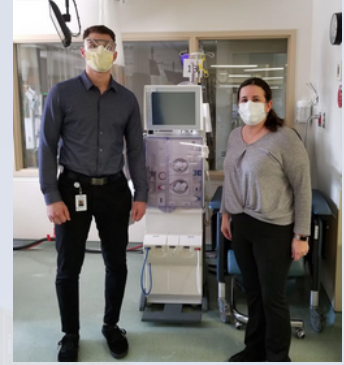


Photo Credits: OPA, Pharm Against COVID-19

# Co-Op Chronicle: Interview with Sasha Goldstein (Rx2022) Clinical Oncology Pharmacy Student at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre - Odette Cancer Centre

Interviewer: Cherry Chan (Rx2022)

**Pharmacy Phile: Tell us about a typical day at work.**

Sasha Goldstein: Every day, when I arrived at the office, the other pharmacy students and I would look at the patient schedule for the day and assign patients between the five of us. To give some background, I worked with two Waterloo pharmacy students and two UofT APPE students. We would generally see patients that were starting chemotherapy for their first time, receiving a different chemotherapy regimen, or those with supportive care medication changes. Prior to seeing a patient, I would complete a full work-up to gather information on their past medical history and current cancer diagnosis. For new patients or those receiving a different chemotherapy regimen, I would see them in the chemotherapy unit to collect a BPMH and to complete a baseline assessment on their symptoms prior to starting treatment, such as nausea/vomiting, constipation, etc. Once completed, I would identify any potential drug therapy problems and would then work with other members in the patients' circle of care to resolve them. I was also responsible for creating medication calendars for each patient that I was seeing in a day. Using these calendars, I counselled the patients on the most appropriate use of their supportive care medications. At the end of this process, I would document each patient interaction in

their electronic patient record. Throughout the day, I also completed follow-up phone calls for the patients that were seen two days prior. The days at the Odette Cancer Centre were busy but very rewarding.

**PP: What lessons were you able to use from the previous school terms and utilize while on co-op?**

SG: The curriculum at the University of Waterloo truly provided me with the resources and skills that were needed to conquer the steep learning curve in this placement. Having previous experience with patient interviewing and with navigating resources such as LexiComp, RxTx and Natural Medicines from Professional Practice 3 was quite helpful. A large portion of my role involved interviewing patients and I found myself often using a modified approach to SCHOLAR-HAMS to gather information. I also frequently accessed LexiComp and Natural Medicines to investigate for potential drug interactions. Additionally, I gained a huge appreciation for the Clinical Biochemistry Modules from IPFC 1 while interpreting blood work. Overall, the rigor and intensity of the PharmD program helped me quickly adapt to the fast-paced environment in my placement.

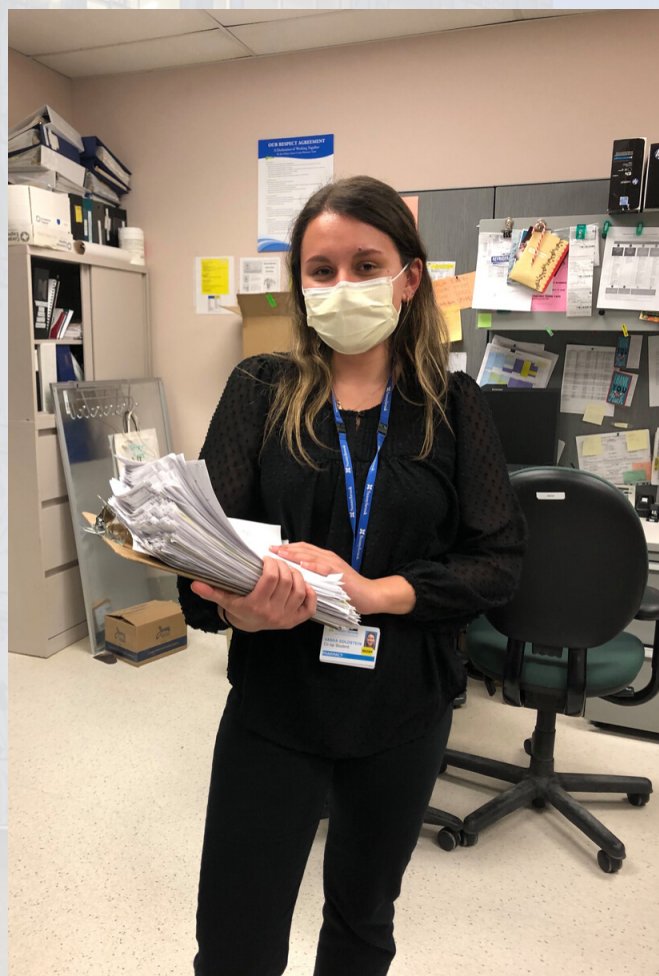
**PP: What was the most interesting experience you had on the job during your term?**

SG: The most interesting experience I had during this co-op term was the opportunity to work collaboratively with medical oncologists and oncology nurses. It was rewarding to have the ability to advocate for my patients' needs to the rest of the healthcare team. Upon initial baseline assessment or follow-up, I would work to address and resolve any identified drug therapy problems. I was also fortunate to have the opportunity to discuss and make therapy modifications in collaboration with the medical oncologists and pharmacy team. Through these experiences, I gained confidence in my knowledge and ability to provide individualized patient-centred care.

**PP: How did COVID-19 affected your co-op experience?**

SG: When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, we had to quickly change the delivery of our clinical services to ensure that the health and safety of our patients was prioritized. The other co-op students and I began to conduct BPMHs and baseline assessments over the phone on the day before our patients' chemotherapy appointments to limit exposure. Additionally, as much as possible, we completed medication counselling over the phone once the patients arrived home from their appointment. As the pandemic evolved, hospitals began to prohibit all visitors and Sunnybrook quickly followed suit. This especially affected the patient population at the Odette Cancer Centre, as many patients are accompanied by family or friends to their chemotherapy appointments. Once visitors were prohibited, I tried to do

anything I could to make patients' visits a little easier and to support them through the experience. Taking the extra time to explain their supportive care medications in more detail or using the translator service if there was a language barrier were some of the ways that we tried to ease our patients' anxiety during these difficult times. As chemotherapy weakens the immune system, many of my patients were very anxious about coming out for their treatments. I tried to be especially mindful of taking all the necessary measures to protect my patients and show extra compassion towards them.



A picture of Sasha on the last day of work with all her patients' workups and medication histories



**PP: What were some barriers or challenges that you encountered?**

SG: One of the initial challenges that I faced was finding the balance between empathy and professionalism when interacting with cancer patients. A cancer diagnosis is extremely stressful, and patients go through many emotions throughout their care journey. Overtime, I learned to focus my emotional energy on providing the best possible care while remaining empathetic. As one would expect, there were definitely days that were overwhelming and where it was difficult to put my emotions aside. Additionally, another major barrier that I encountered was communicating with patients that had language barriers or couldn't speak as a result of their disease. The other students and I had to find alternative ways to communicate with these patients whether it be through caregivers or written communication.

**PP: What advice would you give to a student looking to arrange a co-op term at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre?**

SG: Take advantage of every learning opportunity and don't be afraid to ask questions! The pharmacists that you work with at the Odette Cancer Centre truly promote an environment that supports students' learning needs. The learning never stops in this placement and I never thought I would walk away from this co-op term with the knowledge that I have obtained. In this placement, you'll not only gain insight into the field of oncology pharmacy but also learn about a multitude of different clinical

presentations and refine your skills as a practitioner.

**PP: What is the best part about working in ambulatory care?**

SG: The best part about working in an ambulatory care setting is having the ability to form relationships with your patients and to follow their care on a long-term basis. I had the opportunity to really get to know some of my patients and to have meaningful conversations with them regarding their care. Every cancer patient's journey is different, and it was extremely rewarding to be able to witness the long-term results of their care. I found that these relationships often provided a sense of comfort and familiarity for my patients, especially when enduring the stress and uncertainty of cancer treatment.

# SOPhS Communications: Stay safe and healthy!



Have an opinion about our expanded scope of practice? Experience something on co-op that you'd like to share? SOPhS encourages you to submit an article for the PharmPhile newsletter! Submissions can be sent to [pharmsoc@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:pharmsoc@uwaterloo.ca) by the end of every month for inclusion in the next edition!

If you have any interest in becoming involved with the SOPhS Communications Committee please send an email our way!

# SOPhS Upcoming 6 Week Calendar

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1	May 10	11 Classes Begins Co-op Begins	12	13	14	15 Tuition and Fees Due	16
Week 2	17	18 Victoria Day	19	20	21	22	23
Week 3	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Week 4	31	June 1	2	3	4	5	6
Week 5	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Week 6	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

**SOPhS Calendar Notes:** Please note that event dates may be subject to change. Contact SOPhS if you are unsure of an event date. You may also find this information on the SOPhS Google Calendar (<http://tinyurl.com/jo3awk7>). If you would like to add an event to the SOPhS calendar please email the SOPhS secretary at [secretary@sophs.ca](mailto:secretary@sophs.ca).