

2022–2023
Annual Learner
Experience Report
Executive Summary

Background

The Learner Experience Unit (LEU) is a resource for medical students, residents, and clinical fellows who witness or experience mistreatment. Effective Fall 2023, the LEU expanded to support clinical learners in the following Temerty Medicine health professions programs:

- Medical Radiation Sciences Program
- Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Program
- Physician Assistant Program
- Physiotherapy Program
- Speech Language Pathology Program

As in other health professions learning environments, learner mistreatment at the Temerty Faculty of Medicine remains a prevalent, systemic issue. The most recent “Voices” surveys, disseminated in 2021, found that 25 – 40% of medical learners indicated that they had experienced harassment over the prior academic year and 35 – 45% of learners had experienced discrimination. Faculty were the most frequently cited source of mistreatment, followed by patients and families. A further 20% of learners had experienced mistreatment by their peers.

In partnership with learners, the LEU has:

- Developed and revised guidelines for managing disclosures of learner mistreatment
- Established webpages that break down the guidelines into a user-friendly format, including an online disclosure form, in keeping with recommendations from the [Canadian Federation of Medical Students](#)
- Developed an education and communications strategy to reach learners and ensure university and hospital leaders are aware of the pathways to [*discuss, disclose, and report*](#).

We emphasize trauma-informed and equity, diversity, inclusion, indigeneity, and accessibility (EDIIA)-informed approaches that explicitly frame mistreatment as result of power asymmetries. We thank the LEU team which includes Meeta Patel (Assistant Director, Learner Experience), recruited in August 2022; Marina Mammon and Saunia Palmer-Nelson (Learner Life Specialists in the Office of Learner Affairs), who spend part of their time supporting learners in navigating mistreatment processes; and Lorraine Sheffield (Administrative Coordinator for LEU), who supports learners in getting connected with our unit. Starting in December 2023, the LEU team is thrilled to welcome Lindsey Fechtig (Business Manager, [Office of Indigenous Health](#)) to our team, to improve access to the LEU for Indigenous learners. [Our frontline staff](#) strive to support learners in ways that centre their goals and needs.

Learner Experience Unit Activities

Over the prior academic year (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), the LEU managed 49 cases that were carried over from the prior academic year, facilitated intake of 169 new learner concerns, and closed 112 files, across the MD Program and PGME. Files that were carried over from the prior academic year resulted from learners weighing their options or reports being under review / investigation. Of the 169 new submissions, we received 40 new reports, 57 new online anonymous reports, and 70 new discussions / disclosures (2 files were uncategorized). Aggregated and de-identified mistreatment data for the newly onboarded health professions programs (MRS, OSOT, PA, PT, SLP) will be shared in next year's annual learner experience report.

Over the reporting period, the LEU also documented 29 consultations to support education leaders in Departments and Clinical Placement Sites in interpreting the mistreatment guidelines when they reviewed and addressed concerns within their clinical department or placement site.

The LEU tracks discussions, disclosures, and reports about mistreatment from a variety of sources and by the type of mistreatment. A variety of resolution mechanisms were triggered over the prior academic year, from expectation-setting conversations, education interventions, to disciplinary interventions. Details can be found in our Full Report.

Systems Level Activities

The LEU continues to work to increase its transparency, accountability, quality, and visibility. Examples include:

- 1. Extending support to additional Temerty Learners:** We created a consolidated Universal Learner Mistreatment Guideline to onboard new clinical programs reflective of the various training contexts in which Temerty Medicine learners contribute and engage.
- 2. Updates to Electronic Case Management System and Data Collection:** We continued to improve our data collection and storage processes and to update our electronic case management system. We also began to explore collecting more granular details about mistreatment subtypes in response to recommendations from the [Addressing Anti-Black Racism at Temerty Medicine Steering Committee's work](#) and community consultations.
- 3. Program Evaluation:** The LEU previously launched an [anonymous survey for learners to provide feedback](#) to our unit about our services which continues to inform our activities.
- 4. Supporting Toronto Academic Health Sciences, Education Portfolio (TAHSNe) efforts:** LEU continues to work closely with TAHSNe to ensure an aligned and collaborative approach to addressing learner mistreatment between Temerty Medicine, Clinical Departments and Clinical Placement Sites. The LEU supported working groups which released the [TAHSN Responding to Learner Mistreatment from Patients, Family Members and Visitors Guide](#) and the [TAHSN Learner Mistreatment by Faculty, Staff, Other Learners: Toolkit](#).
- 5. Faculty Development:** The LEAC Faculty Development Working Group designed and implemented a [Primer for learner-facing teachers](#).

6. **Learner to Learner Mistreatment:** A time-limited working group was created and worked to identify interventions and solutions for this unique issue. Its learnings will inform the next iteration of work on this subject, inclusive of all the learners we support.
7. **Role of a Support Person:** The LEU created a toolkit to clarify the vital Role a Support Person may play in any administrative proceedings.

Education and Communication Activities

In 2022 – 2023, the LEU delivered approximately 55 presentations to audiences including learners, clinical departments, and hospitals. We also hosted a Trauma-Informed Approaches Workshop, sponsored by decanal leaders in the Medical Education portfolio, to support leaders in further developing skills to respond to learners in EDIIA-informed ways and using a trauma-based lens. The LEU also wishes to acknowledge the educational and communications activities of our partners in the Professional Values Office, the Office of Inclusion and Diversity, and the Centre for Faculty Development.

Next Steps for the Learner Experience Unit

Our unit has seen tremendous growth over the past 3.5 years and we are humbled by the learners that choose to share their stories with our team and, at times, with the institution, in the spirit of fostering culture change. We look ahead to fully implementing our expansion to cover Temerty learners across the Health Professions and to build on our pilot project with the Office of Indigenous Health to improve accessibility to the LEU for Indigenous learners. Despite the progress made, we recognize that there remain barriers for people to come forward. We will continue to work in partnership with all of you: learners, faculty, staff, departments, and placement sites, to advance this work and continually improve on these processes.