

IPHER
**Interprofessional Health
 Education and Research**

Women's Community House

AGENCY CONTACT NAME: Susan Dill TITLE: Director, Residential Programs and Services

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AGENCY ADDRESS: 101 Wellington Road CITY: London, Ontario

Terms Available for Student Placement :

Fall (Sept.-Dec.) Winter (Jan.- Apr.) Spring/ Summer (May- Aug.)

Times Open for Student Placements:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Day/Afternoon	Day/Afternoon	Day/Afternoon	Day/Afternoon	Day/Afternoon

Student scheduling preferences (daytime, evening, weekend):

Daytime _____

THIS AGENCY IS ABLE TO ACCOMODATE STUDENTS IN THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

PROGRAM	Yes	No
Clinical Psychology	X	
Education		X
Food and Nutrition	X	
Medicine	X	
Nursing	X	
Occupational Therapy	X	
Physiotherapy		
Pre-professional Students (Health Sciences, Medical Sciences)		X
Social Work	X	
Speech Language Pathology		X
Other: Social Services Worker, Child and Youth Worker, Dental Hygiene	X	

Total number of students accepted per term: 3

OTHER REQUIREMENTS NEEDED FOR PLACEMENT (i.e. Immunizations, police checks and vehicle):

Requirement:	Mandatory (Y/N)	Specifications:
Vehicle	N	
Immunizations (Specify what immunizations are	N	

required)		
TB test (Specify within what time frame Eg. within 1 year of placement)	Y	within one year
Police Check	Y	
Orientation	Y	One-day orientation required
Other:	Y	CPR certification and references required

AGENCY DESCRIPTION:

Women’s Community House (WCH) is a registered, charitable non-profit organization providing safety for abused women and their children. Our Vision - **“Ending woman abuse and its impact on families and communities”** drives Women's Community House.

Founded in 1978, WCH a registered, charitable organization (#123582348RR0001) and is not a United Way member agency. Women's Community House provides emergency, short term shelter and basic needs, advocacy, referrals and on-site service to address the financial, housing and legal issues facing approximately 1,000 women and children per year. Counselling and support is provided to families (non-residents) in the general public, through our 24-hour Abused Women’s Helpline, and Women's Community House Transitional Outreach Program.

Our 25-unit apartment complex Second Stage Housing in the White Oaks subdivision which provides affordable, safety-focused accommodations, to women and children after leaving shelter in a rent geared to income apartment complex, for 45-49 families per year. Second stage Housing is a community unto itself with tenants residency of one year.

Women who access Women’s Community House, are presenting with increasingly more complex needs than they did in the past. Recent needs assessments (including staff’s assessment of the women’s needs, focus groups conducted with the women themselves and exit surveys) suggest that:

- Over half of the women are dealing with mental health issues.
- One quarter of the women are using substances as a means to cope with their spectrum of difficulties.
- Over half the women coming to shelter have experienced repeated abuse that originated with childhood sexual and physical abuse.
- The majority has little financial means and lives below the poverty level.
- Half come to shelter with children.
- Women may come with self harming behaviours, eating disorders, anxiety symptoms and often a list of medications.

The skills set required of staff to work with these women has changed and requires more in the areas of mental health, harm reduction, partner/general abuse, drug and alcohol use, and self harming behaviours. An Interprofessional Team would be able to meet these needs.

WCH is a non-profit, government funded agency whose resources are limited. We have a staff of over 40 counsellors and they include Social Workers, Social Service Workers, Child & Youth Worker and through a partnership with CMHA - two Mental Health Crisis Workers. We do not have a nurse on staff but rather a visiting Nurse Practitioner (once week) and no medical or Psychology supports.

SERVICES PROVIDED AT AGENCY:

- Emergency, short term shelter and basic needs
- Advocacy
- Referrals and on-site service to address the financial, housing and legal issues facing approximately 1,000 women and children per year.
- Counselling and support is provided to families (non-residents) in the general public, through our 24-hour Abused Women's Helpline, and Women's Community House Transitional Outreach Program.

PROFESSIONALS PRESENT IN AGENCY:

- Mental Health Crisis Workers
- Nurse
- Nurse Practitioner (Outreach 1day/ week)
- Residential Counselor
- Social Workers
- Social Services Workers
- Child and Youth Workers

PLACEMENT PARAMETERS:

1. Students will work day and afternoon shifts that correspond to their on-site mentor, and may work at any one of three WCH sites.
2. Students will attend weekly peer consultation meetings.
3. Students may carry a caseload independently before the end of their placement, depending on the discipline.
4. Students accepted into placement will develop short term goals for the placement and may include project work and/or provision of primary care, counselling , group program facilitation , crisis support with individuals in person and/or on the telephone.
5. Women's Community Houses provides a practice site for interprofessional students to gain experience in working within a collaborative allied professional team.
6. Students will develop and practice of interprofessional communications among and across team members.
7. Students will gain experience in observing and working in a feminist organization.
8. Students will gain experience and knowledge from work in a Violence Against Women – Social Services sector.
9. Students will increase awareness of community resources.
10. WCH will expand the knowledge of the student's chosen discipline with agency staff.