

So, what's next?

A guide to careers for
Health Policy & Management Majors



Faculty of Health

KEEPING MORE PEOPLE HEALTHIER, LONGER.

A message from the Dean of Health and the Chair of Health Policy & Management

At York's Faculty of Health, our vision is to educate future global leaders who will help redefine and advance health and human science. Each day, our graduates do exactly that.

York's interdisciplinary approach integrates a wide variety of perspectives and valuable learning opportunities that give our students a breadth and depth of understanding of health and health care issues. That educational background, which combines theory and real life experience, allows them to step into a wide variety of careers upon graduation. Today, our School of Health Policy & Management graduates can be found working as planners and administrators; researchers; educators; consultants; advisors; and in many more roles.

What career awaits you upon graduation?

That will depend on your interests, knowledge and abilities. You will almost certainly have a wide range of options given that the demand for caring, qualified health and health care professionals is continually increasing.

We encourage you to read about the exciting careers that our alumni of the School of Health Policy & Management are pursuing as they make a difference in health and human science.



Harvey Skinner, PhD, CPsych, FCAHS
Dean
Faculty of Health



Mary E. Wiktorowicz, PhD
Chair & Associate Professor
School of Health Policy & Management



As a student, you make a lot of choices. Where to study. What to study. Who to study with.

Now that you're ready to graduate, it's time to make another important choice: Deciding what's next for you. Will you go on to post-graduate education? Or, are you ready to begin your career and, if so, in what job?

Whatever decision you make, your studies at York's Faculty of Health have provided you with a great start towards a financially secure and interesting future. We take a broad view of health. That wide perspective creates an extensive range of career opportunities requiring a variety of skills and backgrounds.

You are in an exciting field at an exciting time. The demand for professionals with backgrounds in health policy, health management and health informatics is increasing. Canadian Business magazine (April 30, 2012) listed Health Policy Specialist as one of the top 50 jobs (#6) in Canada in terms of demand and salary growth.

This increase is due to a variety of factors including an aging and growing population and workforce, new technologies, restructured health care systems, stressful working environments, and new views on disability and lifestyle.

Health Policy & Management graduates work in many areas—in government, social services, health care, professional associations, regulatory organizations, and more. Their jobs include acting as health care planners, analysts, researchers, managers, information specialists, systems designers and administrators. Many have global perspectives and responsibilities, working for international agencies such as the World Health Organization, World Bank, and others.



When deciding on your next steps, particularly when choosing a career, it's best to begin with a clear understanding of what you're looking for. Defining the characteristics of your "ideal" job in advance helps focus your job search and provides a basis for assessing potential job descriptions. To define your "ideal" future, here are a few things to focus on:

- Your big interests—what you really enjoy doing and what truly inspires you
- Your talents and skills—the abilities you have that enable you to excel
- Situations and environments that appeal to you—the way you like to work and where
- Job tasks you enjoy, and ones you don't—the everyday routines, responsibilities and duties that would "make or break" your ideal job
- What will matter to you next year, in five years, or fifteen—it often takes time to gain the skills, experience and knowledge required to achieve your long-term objectives. Having a longer-term career plan helps you ensure that your next moves are stepping stones towards achieving your ultimate objectives

Regardless of where you choose to go next, York's Faculty of Health wants you to succeed. On the following pages, we offer you a variety of sources of information to help you as you transition from student life.

How can I gain work experience while at the Faculty of Health?

Graduates unanimously agree—working in your field as a volunteer, with not-for-profit organizations, with campus organizations, or others is invaluable. It's the best way to gain the relevant job experience that will catch the attention of future employers.

Students in all years of the Bachelor of Health Studies have access to experiential education in their courses through diverse means:

- Shadowing an Emergency Department doctor as s/he is actively working in the Emergency Department or shadowing other front-line health sector professionals
- Guest speakers in class that demonstrate the theoretical concepts addressed through direct application from a lived experience
- A field experience course in the 4th year which involves 10 week, 11 hour per week placements

The School of Health Policy and Management offers a Health Internship Program (HIP) which is an optional experiential education program that provides students with the opportunity to engage in four, eight, twelve or sixteen month paid internships. While on internship, students apply their classroom learning in a work environment, explore potential career options, and build relationships with colleagues and employers in their field of study.

Eligible students interested in research careers or post-graduate study may apply to work at York's Research@York program (RAY) and be paid to participate in research projects with faculty members and/or fellow students, while receiving compensation at a competitive rate.

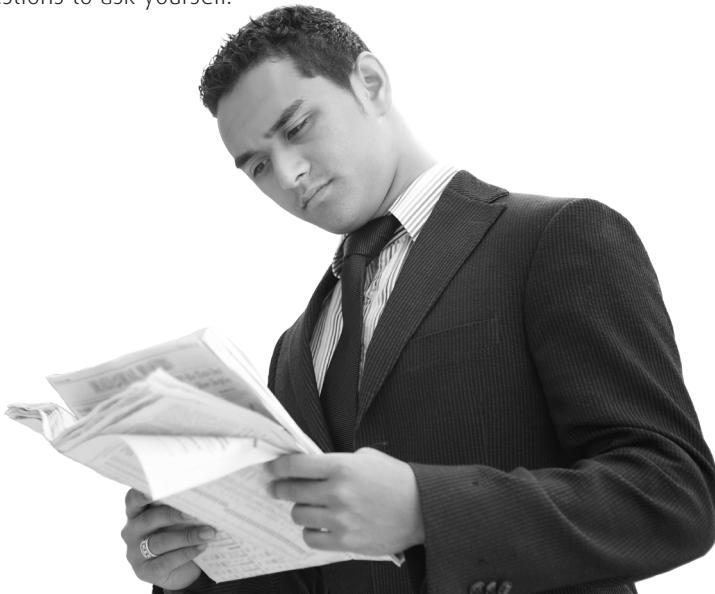
Where would I work?

People with Bachelor of Health Studies degrees can be found working almost anywhere. Their employers include federal, provincial and municipal governments, community health centres, public health, education, health program development, insurance industry, academic, medical, industrial, science, pharmaceutical and research institutions, professional associations, clinics, hospitals, international agencies, information technology firms and consulting companies.

What have others done with a Bachelor of Health Studies degree?

Graduates of York's Faculty of Health work in the public sector, in a variety of industries and business types, or operating their own businesses.

We've invited a few graduates to tell us about their career choices and offer you further questions to ask yourself.



Have the drive to make vital decisions alongside high-ranking agencies?



Mariam Paul
2012 Bachelor of Health Studies (BHS)
(Health Management)
Policy Analyst
Recipient of Faculty of Health Silver Medal, Bryce M. Taylor Scholarship, and Health Aid Leadership Innovation Award

For Mariam Paul, the appeal of the Health Studies program came from its ability to provide her with insight into the logistics of healthcare. While completing a double major in both Health Studies and Kinesiology, she landed a position on campus with Health Education and Promotion. This gave Mariam the space to combine and apply her theoretical knowledge from both programs. "I thought it was important to understand what health means physiologically and also how our health care system functions."

Immediately after graduating, she served as project coordinator on the YU START pilot project. "The work experience I gained through that position really made me ready for the work place outside of a post secondary setting." Mariam also maintained her involvement in the Faculty of Health Student Caucus (FHSC) during her undergraduate years for which she was the Chair in her final year.

These experiences taught Mariam the very skills that she now utilizes in her current position with the Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) as a Policy Analyst. "CHCA is the national voice for home care. I am responsible for keeping abreast of issues, trends, innovation and news related to home care in Canada. I also engage with key stakeholders in home care such as government representatives, and NGOs. Most of my daily work is related to research, writing and maintaining relationships on behalf of the CHCA."

The diversity of her courses proved to be an asset as they grounded Mariam in how to function in a healthcare setting while simultaneously exposing her to current situations and trends. "I now know how to chair meetings, network, be professional, set an agenda, and ensure a meeting starts and ends on time, and be comfortable doing that. I was also responsible for planning many events for FHSC. That experience has taught me the amount of detailed pre-planning that should go into planning the simplest meeting to an event large as a health career fair".

Enjoy technology and want work that helps people?



Sadiq Raji
2006 BHS (Health Informatics)
Health Human Resources Analyst

Every sector needs technological applications, and health is no different. In fact, the need to move to electronic patient records in Canada and globally, virtually assures students of a job. Employers include hospitals, information technology and consulting firms, pharmaceutical companies and government organizations such as the Canadian Institute for Health Information, or the provincial government's SmartSystems for Health.

Perspectives on health policy and health management—which York's Health Informatics program includes with its core focus on informatics—have proved to be particularly valuable to Sadiq Raji in his job as a Health Human Resources Analyst with the Canadian Institute for Health Information.

"I currently manage the National Nursing Database, which contains information on supply, demographics, education, employment and mobility trends related to nurses," Sadiq explains. "We conduct analyses and provide data to governments, regulatory bodies, educational facilities, hospitals and other institutions, as well as researchers. A knowledge and understanding of health policy and management

"My knowledge and understanding of health policy and management provides me with a critical, additional context for the work we do with the data itself."

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For Sadiq, the opportunity to combine interests in health and health care, a desire to learn—and an ongoing fascination with information systems, technologies and management continue to make health informatics a rewarding career.

Good with numbers and with people?



Thuy Hoang
2008 BHS (Health Management)
Decision Support Analyst

With demand for health care services increasing steadily and the cost of delivering those services already rising faster than the rate of inflation, the sustainability of the health care system depends upon maximizing its efficiency and using funds in the most cost-effective way possible.

"To manage costs effectively, you need to understand them – where funds are being spent, what drives their increases, how much they achieve and so on," explains Thuy Hoang, a Decision Support Analyst in the finance unit at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. Her job involves collecting and maintaining the integrity of clinical and financial data that the hospital and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care use in making a range of management and operational decisions.

"Part of my job involves analyzing patient utilization and staff productivity data in order to develop projections of revenues and expenses for the hospital, an individual care unit or a specific medical procedure," Thuy says. "That type of information is useful, for example, in co-ordinating, facilitating and supporting accessibility for specific patient services." Though she's always had an affinity for numbers and an interest in health care, Thuy's job was not a foregone career destination. She decided to take a variety of summer jobs during university to see what she liked doing best. One summer she worked as a bookkeeper, learning about accounting and finances, another year she worked as an administrator, and after her third year her summer job was as a researcher and team assistant at Community Care Access Centre. "As it turned out, I liked all my summer jobs," she says, "and they all provided me with skills I use in my current position."

Thuy recommends that current students should also try different jobs – summer, part-time or volunteer – as a way of determining a career path that's best for them. "The challenges to efficiently manage health care operations are only going to increase, and so will the demand for people with the skills to help meet those challenges."

Interested in combining technology and health to improve the lives of millions?

John Craig D. McEachnie
2012 BHS (Health Management)
Program Analyst

Computers have been around for decades; however, their integration into the healthcare system has been a fairly recent yet worthwhile advancement. Now, Information Technology (IT) professionals are creating and refining technological avenues for recording and transmitting information, which has meant improvements in the delivery and efficiency of health care for patients worldwide.

At the forefront of such innovations are programs like Health Management, which for John Craig led to an internship in his final year at Infoway, where he now works as a Program Analyst "My York degree has literally given me the tools, language and understanding to communicate with professionals that have been within the health industry for years. It's also taught me the history and current state of health management within Canada and possibilities for the future".

This extensive and in-depth outlook prepared John Craig for other opportunities. "At the moment, I'm a part of the ImagineNation Outcomes Challenge which seeks to optimize the quality of healthcare through information and communication technologies (ICT). I am also working on an online forum that will be used to securely communicate online and share ideas". Prior to this, John Craig conducted research for the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development which provides a space for governments to discuss current issues while spearheading initiatives to improve the quality of life for the current population.

A key source of motivation and insight for John Craig were his professors and their unique experiences. "There were several of them that inspired me, were personable and encouraged me to achieve more with my career. I remember one of my first lectures sitting in a class listening to an associate professor talk about class material as it related to her current senior leadership role at an academic hospital and just wanting to hear and learn more. It was at that moment, when I knew I was in the right spot and I never looked back".

John Craig also sits on the Board of Directors for Caritas - an Addiction & Mental Health organization that serves the population of Toronto and Vaughan.

Interested in continuing your studies?



Rahul Mediratta
2007 BHS (Health Policy)
Oxford University Student

Many students want to build on the education they've obtained at York. Alumnus Rahul Mediratta, who planned to go on to graduate studies, won the prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship to attend Oxford University in his last year at York.

Although he had considered a career as a doctor, Rahul's direction became clear in his first health policy class at York. When professor Dennis Raphael, posed the question: "What is the biggest, most direct determinant of personal health? Smoking? No. Exercise? No. Good diet? No." When the professor waved a \$20 bill at the class, that single moment completely changed Rahul's understanding of what health means.

"One reason it affected me so profoundly is I didn't grow up in comfort," Rahul says. "I realized a lot of things would have been easier if our family had been better off."

Rahul has become interested in the political as well as the social determinants of health. Government policies on health care, day care, education and affordable housing have a direct impact on population health.

"What started as an interest in health care has become an interest in the political science of population health," Rahul says.

Rahul's journey is still underway. Currently at Oxford, he plans to return to Canada to contribute to the social well being of our country. He hopes to volunteer with Oxfam Canada, work for a research policy institute, earn a PhD and maybe even run for political office.

Want to go on to a professional school?

Kayla Goldrich

2011 BHS (Health Management)

Second year Juris Doctor (JD) student at Osgoode Hall

The Bachelor of Health Studies (BHS) degree at York University is a multifaceted degree that incorporates areas of business, management, policy, law, science, social science and information technology. Upon graduating, I truly felt like I had a substantive understanding of all of these areas, and more importantly, how they intersect. I felt that numerous options were available to me upon graduation and, as such, I applied to both medical school and law school, ultimately choosing to enter law school at Osgoode Hall.

I do not believe that there was any single moment in my undergraduate school career that helped me attain success, but rather, I think it was the culmination of various elements: first, professors were always willing to meet outside of the classroom and answer questions academically, professionally and personally; second, the curriculum incorporated throughout the four years is both multidimensional and contemporary in nature; and finally, the opportunities to get involved extra-circularly—whether it be as a peer ambassador, on the Student Association of Health Management, Policy and Informatics (SHMPI) board, or as part of the petitions committee—were endless.

I graduated with the highest GPA in the Faculty of Health (including the School of Psychology, the School of Kinesiology and Health Science, the School of Health Policy and Management and the School of Nursing). Additionally, I received the President's Award upon graduating for attaining a 9.0 GPA. I was also recognized as being a member of the Dean's Honour Role and graduating Summa Cum Laude. I also received a yearly scholarship based on my academic achievement and won a Canadian Scholars' Press (CSP) Book Award for having attained the highest overall grade in my Health Policy course.

Ultimately, I believe that it was the feeling of constantly being challenged, but always knowing there were numerous resources available to help me succeed that contributed to my achievements while completing my degree.

The Faculty of Health at York is a great place to prepare for professional school.

What makes the School of Health Policy and Management such a great choice for pre-professional school education? Lots of things including:

- Flexibility to choose your major and structure courses to suit your interests and goals
- Personal contact with professors
- Interactive laboratories
- Tutorials and seminars that develop critical skills
- Prerequisite course required by professional schools available to all students
- Pre-professional academic advising
- Pre-professional student clubs
- Extensive student services including information sessions, time management workshops, study habit training, mock interviews
- Volunteer and paid positions in research labs

What kind of salary can I expect?

Your salary will depend on your job, your years of experience, where you work, and your employer. With so many variables, this is a challenging question to answer precisely, yet an important one to ask. The best way to learn about salaries is to check with an industry association or on the internet during the course of your occupational research.

Who can help me make my career decisions?

Ultimately, it's up to you! Parents, friends and teachers may provide advice. The media can be a source of information. Your job experiences will also shape your decisions. In the end, though, it comes down to you: it's your life, your work and your purpose.

It's your future, and it's a big choice. But you don't have to go it alone. York University students and recent alumni have access to the York University Career Centre, a team of career professionals who support you in the development of career self-management skills. The Career Centre delivers job search and career development programs to help you build success on your terms.

Check out www.yorku.ca/careers

TYPICAL EMPLOYERS IN HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Careers in health management include jobs as a Health Administrator, Health Systems Planner and/or Analyst, Performance Management Analyst, Health Resource Centre Manager, Project Manager. Some typical employers are described below.

Governments

Many federal and provincial/territorial government departments are responsible for setting priorities related to the way health services are provided and organized. Governments also play a growing role in holding health care providers and organizations accountable for the services and programs they deliver. Accordingly, these departments require individuals with knowledge of the health care system and a specific understanding of stakeholder issues, planning, program evaluation, performance measurement and accountability.

Community Health Centres and Community Care Access Centres

Community Health Centres (CHCs) deliver primary care, often to groups who have difficulty accessing services. Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) are responsible for organizing home care services as well as coordinating placements in long term care facilities. These organizations require people with expertise in the organization and delivery of health and social services to manage the financial, human resources, and quality improvement activities of the organization.

Hospitals

Hospitals require individuals with knowledge of the health care system and the expertise to manage departments and services such as human resources, x-ray, labs, food, supplies, etc. Hospitals also devote increasing resources to the measurement and improvement of quality and performance and seek out individuals with expertise in these areas.

Public Health Departments

These health institutions require support in central planning and in managing day to day work of staff.

Public and Private Health Care and Social Service Delivery Agencies

Many public and private organizations/agencies deliver community-based care and services. These include companies that contract with CCACs to deliver clinical services (such as nursing and therapy) and non-clinical services (such as meal delivery) to people receiving care in their homes. These organizations, and social service organizations such as Family Services and the United Way, require people with knowledge of health care management issues who can manage financial, planning, staffing, and quality activities of the organization.

Pharmaceutical and Related Health Industries

These organizations require support in planning activities around the launch of new drugs, analyzing sales patterns of drugs and planning promotional activities, production and distribution of products.

Chain Drugstores and other Health-Related Companies

These companies require planning support for new sites and developing health care programs to run in pharmacies.

Professional and Regulatory Organizations

Professional associations such as the Ontario Medical Association and Ontario Nurses' Association, and regulatory bodies such as the College of Physicians and Surgeons, College of Physiotherapists, etc., address financial, human resources, quality and planning issues for physicians, nurses and allied health professionals (e.g. occupational therapists, physiotherapists). They require individuals with a background in and knowledge of these health management areas.

International Agencies

Many international agencies involved in analyzing, planning, or delivering health services require people with knowledge of both management and organization, and health system issues.

Students trained in health care organization and management who also have training as a nurse or allied health professional will find many employment opportunities available to people with their combination of management and clinical training (e.g. CCAC case manager or supervisor, nurse manager or allied health department head, clinical quality specialist).

TYPICAL EMPLOYERS IN HEALTH POLICY

Careers in health policy include jobs as a Health Policy Analyst, Planner, Researcher, Health Care Advocate. Some typical employers are described below.

Governments

Governments have a mandate to develop policies related to maintaining and enhancing the health of populations and providing health care. These policies can be directly related to the provision of health care services and to maintaining health, such as income benefits, housing and shelter, transportation, etc. For example, governments determine priorities in areas such as drug approval processes, delivery of services to First Nations and the military, policies to help seniors to live independently, planning requirements for health care workers, research into variation in health status among different population groups, and analyzing use of health care services. Health Canada is a major potential employer, as are provincial and city governments.

Government-Funded Organizations

Various government funded organizations such as public health departments, District Health Councils, and associations such as the Ontario Hospital Association, Association of Ontario Health Centres and others determine the allocation of resources and specific policy directions.

Professional Associations

Associations such as the Ontario Medical Association, Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Canadian Public Health Association and all provincial public health associations carry out policy studies.

Social Service Agencies

Social service agencies such as the United Way, Social Planning Councils and Family Service Associations, are concerned with broad concepts of health and carry out policy studies and analyses.

Non-Government Advocacy Groups

Organizations such as the Canadian Abilities Foundation, various AIDS groups, family planning organizations, Canadian Mental Health Association, Cerebral Palsy Association, Canadian and provincial Associations for Community Living, Toronto Association for Community Living, and the Centre for Independent Living Toronto, among others, require policy development expertise.

Other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

NGOs need assistance deciding on priorities (e.g. campaign of Doctors Without Borders to increase access to drugs in developing countries). The Canadian Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke Foundation, and other health-related organizations all have policy issues.

Research Institutes

Organizations such as the Canadian Institute for Children's Health, the Caledon Institute, Canadian Policy Research Network, Institute for research on Public Policy are increasingly carrying out health related policy studies and analyses.

International Agencies

These agencies are involved in analyzing and planning health care such as the World Bank, World Health Organization, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the Pan American Health Organization, among others.

TYPICAL EMPLOYERS IN HEALTH INFORMATICS

Careers in health informatics include jobs as a Health Information Specialist, Systems Designer, Systems Integration Specialist. Some typical employers are described below.

Hospitals

Hospitals must maintain computerized medical records and must not only manage patient records, but also analyze patterns of service use.

Other Health Care Organizations

Both public and private organizations are required to collect information and report on service use, and outcomes of services.

Insurance Industry

A mainstay of insurance work is analyzing patterns of automobile accidents and illnesses and the factors contributing to them. Employees would work in health records and other departments of private insurance companies.

Canadian Institute of Health Information and Other Institutes

These organizations have been established to provide ongoing data collection of analyses of a wide range of health and health care information. These activities involve analyzing information from health surveys, census records, hospital discharges and provincial health care services.

Governments

All levels of government require support in collecting and analyzing health related information from a variety of sources. This may involve initiatives to integrate health records from hospitals, pharmacies, and doctors' offices.

Pharmaceutical and Other Health Care Related Industries

Assistance is required in analyzing patterns of use of drugs and other services in different population groups and prescribing patterns of doctors.

Public Health Departments

These departments are responsible for compiling data and creating population health reports.

International Agencies

These agencies are involved in analyzing and planning health care such as the World Bank, World Health Organization, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the Pan American Health Organization, among others, will require those with informatics expertise.

Useful Websites

Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa)

www.alphaweb.org

Canadian Centre on Disability Studies

www.disabilitystudies.ca

Canadian College of Health Service Executives

www.cchse.org

Canadian Institute for Health Information

www.cihi.ca/careers

Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI)

www.ciphi.ca

Canadian International Development Agency

(Employment Opportunities)

www.acdi-cida.gc.ca

Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA)

www.cpha.ca

Canadian Research.org (Academic Research Positions in Canada)

www.canadianresearch.org

Charity Village (Non-profit postions)

www.charityvillage.com

Coach: Canada's Health Informatics Association

www.coachorg.com

International Development Research Centre (Career Opportunities)

www.idrc.ca

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

www.edu.gov.on.ca

National Listing of Provincial Opportunities

www.jobfutures.ca/en/provincial.shtml

More useful websites continued on back cover

Useful Websites

Public Health Agency of Canada

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca

Ontario Health Promotion E-Bulletin

www.ohpe.ca

Ontario Internship Program

www.internship.gov.on.ca

Ontario Municipal Jobs

www.ontariomunicipaljobs.com

Ontario Public Health Association

www.opha.on.ca

Ontario Public Service Careers

www.gojobs.gov.on.ca

Public Service Commission (Government of Canada)

www.psc-cfp.gc.ca

Society for Disability Studies (SDS)

www.disstudies.org

York University Career Centre

www.yorku.ca/careers

York Student Clubs & Services

Student Association of Health Management, Policy and Informatics

www.yorku.ca/sahmpi

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