



Experiential Learning at the Salvation Army Toronto Grace Health Center (TGHC)

The Organization

TGHC is a 119-bed healthcare facility located in downtown Toronto that specializes in complex continuing care (CCC), post-acute care rehabilitation (PACR), and palliative care. Their mission is to provide innovative, holistic care reflecting Christian values with the purpose of meeting the complex health needs of their patient population. Their vision is to provide outstanding, compassionate care for everyone.

My Role at TGHC

At TGHC, I was placed with the pharmacy department with TGHC's pharmacy manager, as my supervisor. TGHC was in the midst of switching from an old hospital-wide EMR system, GoldCare, to a new one called BCARE when I began my practicum. The pharmacy department specifically was moving from WORx to BCARE. I supported the pharmacy department in meeting deadlines so that BCARE could successfully go-live with the system transition as planned.

My Work at TGHC

Working alongside TGHC's pharmacy department, I was exposed to:

- BCARE and pharmacy information system manuals;
- Weekly meetings with BCARE's vendor, VitalHub;
- Weekly meetings with the pharmacy team discussing progress with BCARE implementation;
- Working directly with the BCARE drug formulary by applying tall man lettering, entering drug price adjustments, and specifying the stock measure of drugs;
- Conducting a brief SWOT analysis of TGHC's incident reporting system, AEMS.

A brief look into my practicum experience - Anna Begin,
Honours of Health Informatics



AEMS home page



Connection to Coursework

I had the opportunity to learn about and work with information management systems, specifically pharmacy information systems, that I had learned about in theory from my **ITEC 1010** and **HLST 3341** courses. I was exposed to a real EMR system for the first time and witnessed all the moving parts necessary for EMR implementation that I had learned in **HLST 3310** and **HLST 4310**. I revisited PHIPA at the start of my practicum to ensure I would protect patient privacy and confidentiality when accessing personal health information, like I learned in **HLST 4000**.

The Value of my Role at TGHC

Assisting the pharmacy department with BCARE allowed for their heavy workload to be lessened. Staff members had accreditation to worry about in addition to BCARE going live, so my being there helped lessen the burden. Also, all the data I had entered into BCARE was double checked by a pharmacist, ensuring there were no errors that would cause issues in the future for the pharmacists as well as the patients of TGHC, emphasizing exceptional care.

The Impact TGHC Had on Me

This practicum exposed me to the inner workings of a healthcare organization, and a pharmacy more specifically. I heard health informatics and general health studies concepts I had learned in all my courses used repeatedly in a real-world context reinforcing their significance. I also learned a great deal about myself during this practicum, regarding how uncertain I am about the future. This experience has served as a stepping stone in helping me realize the possibilities of my next steps.

Advice to Future Students

This practicum is a great opportunity for those who, like me, have not had previous experiences working in a healthcare organization. This is your chance to test the waters and decide if a particular career path is for you as the field of healthcare is very broad. Going into the practicum, I would have told myself to have a concrete idea of the goals I had hoped to achieve. I also would have told myself to take more initiative at the beginning to ensure I was doing what I wanted to do throughout the semester. Remember that this experience is what you make of it!