



## Research Team Memorandum of Understanding

# Student-Community Advisor Terms of Reference

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These Memorandum of Understanding documents are intended to guide the work of the Trans PULSE Canada Study. While each team member agrees in principle with the Memorandum of Understanding, it is considered a set of 'living documents', which may be revisited and revised throughout the life of our project.

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## Roles and Responsibilities

### Student

The Trans PULSE Canada (TPC) project prioritizes working with trans and non-binary students. The main role of the student is to complete their proposed thesis project in a timely manner and to work alongside Trans PULSE Canada team members. The student has a responsibility to:

- Involve trans and non-binary people (including populations of focus for the proposed project) in their project.
- Ensure project goals are community-relevant and that results are framed appropriately, consistent with the goals and guiding principles of the trans PULSE Canada project.

### Community advisor(s)

One to two community advisor(s) consisting of a Trans PULSE Canada community team member(s) will work with the student. The community advisor(s) will be responsible for:

- Helping in the conceptualization, visioning, framing, and data interpretation of the student's project.
- Reviewing and providing input of final products in all stages of the research project (i.e. thesis proposal, concept sheet, thesis manuscript). The student's thesis manuscript cannot be vetoed by the community advisor(s) or Steering Committee.
- Providing input on the best ways to bring the results of this research back to community.
- Mentoring students to ensure that investigations are community-relevant and that results are framed appropriately, consistent with the goals and guiding principles of TPC.
- Checking in and reporting to the Steering Committee any issues or concerns regarding the integration of their feedback in the student project.

### Student's Supervisor

The main role of the student's supervisor is to:

- Provide advice and guidance on the successful completion of the student's thesis project.

## Decision-Making

Decisions regarding project development, including variable and topic selection, will be made by the student in collaboration with their supervisor (connected to the TPC project) and community advisor(s). The community advisor(s) will serve as a community mentor and research team member helping to guide project development and data interpretation to ensure that investigations are community-relevant and that results are framed appropriately.

Final products, excluding the student's thesis manuscript, will be provided to the Steering Committee for approval before either submission or distribution. Final decisions will fulfill academic requirements. The needs of the community, as identified by the community advisor(s) and the Steering Committee, must be considered. The student's supervisor and community advisor(s) will serve as liaisons to settle disagreements related to the project or its products between the student and the Steering Committee.

## KTE Strategy Commitments

The student commits to making thesis findings available in plain language formats relevant to community members. Short summary articles and stand-alone graphs will be available for use in organizational newsletters and websites, and for incorporation into presentations, fact sheets, and resource sheets. A thesis manuscript that represents the policy-driven and capacity-building aims of this project will be developed for submission to journals.

## Authorship and Acknowledgement

The student will take primary responsibility for analyzing the data and writing the manuscript required for their thesis; for which the student will be listed as the first author. The student's supervisor and community advisor(s) will have the opportunity to be listed as co-authors on all publications (i.e. peer-reviewed journals) pertaining to the thesis, except for the thesis manuscript. Co-authors must participate in all stages of the research project and approve the final version of the manuscript. Please refer to the [Authorship and Acknowledgement MOU](#) for further guidance. The entire TPC Team, its funding agencies, and the funders of the student's thesis will be credited in the acknowledgements.

## Project Abandonment

If the student is unable to finish drafting a manuscript, the student should communicate this to their supervisor and community advisor(s). In such a case, or in the case where a student is not responding to project-related inquiries, the student's supervisor must assume responsibility and will acquire lead authorship for the manuscript. If the topic was a community-identified priority, or it was on the list of team priorities, the supervisor must ensure that the manuscript is completed, whether by the supervisor or by an assigned team member. The supervisor will need to communicate with the team about the status of the student project. The supervisor must communicate to the Steering Committee if the completion of the project will go beyond the program completion time to ensure the team's priority research is conducted in a timely manner.

If the community advisor(s) must end involvement in the project for any reason, the student or supervisor can set up a debrief meeting with a new community advisor, where the exiting community advisor will be encouraged to attend, to ensure continuity and transition of the project.

## Communication Guidelines

Students and community advisor(s) are expected to communicate via email and in meetings throughout the length of the project, though specific guidelines will vary according to each project. The student and community advisor(s) are expected to meet at least once in each phase of the research project (i.e. conceptualization of the project, data analysis, interpretation of results, etc.). Additional meetings will be scheduled as required. Each meeting should have an agenda, prepared by the student in consultation with their supervisor and community advisor(s), distributed in advance of the meeting. In the case that conflict arises, please refer to the [Conflict Resolution MOU](#) for further guidance and direction.