

# RECOMMENDATIONS

To create a great elective experience in public health for medical students:

## INFORM STUDENTS ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH AND ELECTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 Advertise opportunities broadly**, starting early in medical school and including Public Health Interest Groups, journal clubs, career evenings and targeted information sessions.
- 2 Ensure the details of elective experiences are available online** via the electives catalogue, [AFMC Student Portal](#) or faculty website targeted to medical students.
- 3 When advertising an elective, clarify the scope of the experience.** For example, state whether the elective is working with a medical officer of health, is specific to a particular project or is a general experience in the field of public health.
- 4 Further engage public health physicians**, as well as other physicians with an interest in public health, in teaching components of public health early in medical school.
- 5 Provide mentorship opportunities between students and public health physicians**, allowing students to ask questions as they progress through medical school.

## DEVELOP STUDENT-SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 6 Discuss the student's interests and learning objectives prior to or at the start of the elective.** Medical students come with a variety of knowledge and experience regarding public health, from very little prior exposure to an MPH degree.
- 7 Create well-defined and achievable objectives for the elective.** In the objectives, identify topics to be covered and possible skills to be gained through the experience. Create customizable opportunities depending on the student's career aspirations and interests.

## FOCUS ELECTIVE CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES ON THE STUDENT

- 8 Provide a broad overview to public health services, but more importantly give sufficient exposure to the work of a medical officer of health.** This is important for medical students to understand what a career in public health and preventive medicine would look like.
- 9 Include defined project work** that is realistic in scope, exciting, and engaging for the medical student.
- 10 Involve students in projects and meetings** where they may witness decision-making first hand. Also provide a briefing, background reading and material for discussion including past minutes and agendas beforehand to ensure the student is well-informed and engaged about the topic.
- 11 Provide opportunities for students to meet with non-physicians** (e.g. public health inspectors, public health nurses, epidemiologists) as well to better identify the many roles and collaborative efforts involved in public health.
- 12 Provide opportunities for students to meet with residents in the program** through academic half days or organized meetings.
- 13 Provide and ask for feedback throughout the rotation** to maintain direct contact between the student and preceptor and to help achieve the defined objectives.

From the report, *Public Health Electives for Medical Students*