

Students, trainees, faculty and staff,

I'm completely astounded by the number of you who've stepped up to help with COVID-19 response efforts. Many of our students have been [helping collect information about community transmissions and supporting health-care practitioners on the front lines](#). And earlier today, CBC News shared that our [medical students have quadrupled Alberta's COVID-19 contact-tracing capacity](#).

In addition to these efforts, I put a call out to faculty members on Mar. 20 asking for volunteers to assist Alberta Health Services (AHS) with contact tracing. Over 400 of you have signed up to volunteer for this and any other efforts where help is needed. Dr. Sid Viner, MD, AHS' Calgary zone medical director, says that the "outpouring of support has been absolutely incredible and truly heart warming."

Since so many of you have expressed interest in volunteering in areas outside of contact tracing, we've updated our volunteer form to reflect this. I encourage anyone who's interested in helping the health-care system during this challenging time to visit cumming.ucalgary.ca/volunteer and complete a form. We've been sharing this list with AHS and someone will contact you if your assistance is needed. AHS is very grateful to have this database of compassionate individuals who are eager to help.

The University of Calgary has also developed a new [COVID-19 volunteer support website](#). If you have capacity and are interested in opportunities outside of the health-care system, I encourage you to register.

I couldn't be prouder of our CSM community. Keep up the amazing work!

Learning and working

- If there's anything you still need to retrieve from your locker or workspace, please do so. In the event of a university closure, I want everyone to be prepared.

Facility access

- The CSM has been asked to provide information on faculty and staff members who will still need access to UCalgary buildings should the university close.
- For more information, faculty and staff are asked to refer to the [building access email dated Mar. 25](#).

Education

- In response to the difficulties many students are facing due to the COVID-19 situation, the university is providing all undergraduate and graduate students the option to either accept their final course grade or opt for a credit received/fail. For more information, visit the [grades web page](#).
- Students who are still on campus are encouraged to use a “buddy system.” Your “buddy” should know your whereabouts, while still practicing social distancing. There are a limited number of people on campus and I want everyone to be safe.
- Bachelor of Health Sciences and Bachelor of Community Rehabilitation:
 - Course registration for Fall 2020 began earlier this week. Students requiring support are asked to contact their program’s student advisor.
 - Summer studentship programs are currently under review. We’re hoping that many programs will be offered in a modified format. Additional information will be shared when it becomes available.

Research operations

- Principal investigators – Please have your staff follow the [working at home guidelines](#). Your human resources partner is available to help with working from home processes. More information will be available soon.

Clinical operations

- University of Calgary Medical Clinics remain open to provide urgent patient care. This serves as a key opportunity to triage patients and decrease visits to emergency departments.
- The majority of clinical interaction is being done via phone, and recommendations from AHS will be followed for in-person visits.

Mental health during COVID-19

- Please take a look at this comprehensive [guide to mental health resources for COVID-19](#) from the Massachusetts General Hospital’s Department of Psychiatry.

COVID-19 resources

- Our Continuing Medical Education team has created a variety of education materials and resources for health-care professionals, which are available at cumming.ucalgary.ca/cme/COVID-19-Resources.
- To read previous CSM updates, visit cumming.ucalgary.ca/covid. For additional COVID-19 information and recommendations, visit ucalgary.ca/covid-19 or ahs.ca/covid.

As the number of COVID-19 cases in Alberta rises, it’s increasingly important to follow the public health recommendations. Maintain social distance, wash your hands frequently, avoid touching your face, stay home if you’re sick, and cover your coughs and sneezes.

As always, thank you for everything you do.

Sincerely,

Jon Meddings, MD
Dean, Cumming School of Medicine
University of Calgary