

The effect of the initial months of the COVID-19 lockdown on MMed training activities at the UFS

Dear MMed student,

COVID-19 has brought about significant changes in your MMed training activities. We applaud you for your continued work on the frontline of this epidemic.

You have been asked to participate in a research study entitled: "The effect of the initial months of the COVID-19 lockdown on MMed training activities at the University of the Free State".

The survey should not take longer than 10 minutes to complete. Please take time to read the information below before participating in the survey.

Thank you!

The purpose of this survey is for the researchers to better understand the effect of the early phase of COVID-19 lockdown on MMed training activities.

We aim to describe demographic and health profile of registrars relevant to a pandemic such as COVID-19, to describe the effect of the COVID-19 lockdown on MMed research progress, post-graduate academic activities and the clinical training environment and to see how these factors relate to one another.

There are no direct advantages for you as a participant, however it will assist the Postgraduate Office to understand the situation of MMed registrars better. There are no risks to either the registrar or the department involved with taking the questionnaire and all potentially identifiable responses will be handled confidentially.

The investigators in this project are Dr Carin Meyer, Dr Claire Barrett, Prof Nathaniel Mofolo, Prof Gina Joubert.

If you have any study related queries or concerns, you may contact the principal investigator, Dr Carin Meyer at 051 4012949 or meyererc@ufs.ac.za. If you have ethical concerns about this study, please contact the HSREC office at 051 4017387 or ethicsFHS@ufs.ac.za.

Please note that by completing this questionnaire you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this research study. You will remain anonymous and your data will be treated confidentially at all times. You may withdraw from this study at any given moment during the completion of the questionnaire. The results of the study may be published.

Permission to perform this research has been obtained from the UFS Health Science Research Committee as well as the UFS Office of the Vice-Rector.

Are you currently registered as an MMed student at the UFS?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you voluntarily agree to participate in this survey?

☐ Yes
☐ No

In this section, we would like some information about the degree that you are registered for.

1: In which year did you first register for your MMed degree?

- ☐ 2010
- ☐ 2011
- ☐ 2012
- ☐ 2013
- ☐ 2014
- ☐ 2015
- ☐ 2016
- ☐ 2017
- ☐ 2018
- ☐ 2019
- ☐ 2020
- (year)

2: In which month did you first register for your MMed degree?

- ☐ January
- ☐ February
- ☐ March
- ☐ April
- ☐ May
- ☐ June
- ☐ July
- ☐ August
- ☐ September
- ☐ October
- ☐ November
- ☐ December
- (month)

3: Which MMed discipline are you registered for?

- ☐ Anaesthesiology
- ☐ Anatomical Pathology
- ☐ Cardiothoracic Surgery
- ☐ Chemical Pathology
- ☐ Clinical Pathology
- ☐ Clinical Pharmacology
- ☐ Clinical Imaging Sciences
- ☐ Community Health
- ☐ Dermatology
- ☐ Emergency Medicine
- ☐ Family Medicine
- ☐ Forensic Medicine
- ☐ Haematology and Cell Biology
- ☐ Internal Medicine
- ☐ Medical Genetics
- ☐ Medical Microbiology
- ☐ Medical Virology
- ☐ Neurology
- ☐ Neurosurgery
- ☐ Nuclear Medicine
- ☐ Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- ☐ Oncology
- ☐ Ophthalmology
- ☐ Orthopedic Surgery
- ☐ Otorhinolaryngology
- ☐ Paediatrics
- ☐ Plastic Surgery
- ☐ Psychiatry
- ☐ Surgery
- ☐ Urology
- (dept)

In this section, we would like to learn a bit about your personal details.

4: What age is your age?

- ☐ 25-29
☐ 30-34
☐ 35-39
☐ 40-44
☐ older than 45
(age)

5: What is your sex?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male
☐ Prefer not to say
(sex)

6: What is your marital status?

- ☐ Single
☐ Married/life partner/living together
☐ Divorced/separated/widowed
☐ Prefer not to say
(marital)

In this section, we would like to obtain more information about your MMed research

7: Have you completed NAMA7900 (research methodology module)	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No (nama)
8: What is the current status of your MMed research project?	<input type="radio"/> Not started yet <input type="radio"/> Preparing a protocol <input type="radio"/> Protocol submitted to HSREC <input type="radio"/> HSREC final approval obtained <input type="radio"/> Collecting data <input type="radio"/> Analysing data <input type="radio"/> Writing up the final manuscript <input type="radio"/> Manuscript submitted for assessment <input type="radio"/> Corrections completed and research passed <input type="radio"/> Preparing manuscript for publication <input type="radio"/> Published the results of the MMed research (project)
9: What type of study are you performing/planning?	<input type="radio"/> Descriptive study <input type="radio"/> Cross-sectional study <input type="radio"/> Cohort study <input type="radio"/> Case-control study <input type="radio"/> Randomised Controlled trials <input type="radio"/> Systematic review or meta-analysis <input type="radio"/> Case report <input type="radio"/> Case series <input type="radio"/> Not yet decided (study_design)
10: What type of data collection are you performing/planning?	<input type="radio"/> Prospective <input type="radio"/> Retrospective <input type="radio"/> Not yet decided (data_collection)
11: How has the COVID-19 lockdown affected your ability to work on your MMed research?	<input type="radio"/> I have more time to work on my MMed research <input type="radio"/> The time that I have to work on my MMed research is unchanged <input type="radio"/> I have less time to work on my MMed research <input type="radio"/> I have no time to work on my MMed research (mmed_research)
12: How has the COVID-19 lockdown affected your ability to obtain feedback from your supervisor?	<input type="radio"/> It is easier for me to obtain feedback from my supervisor <input type="radio"/> The feedback from my supervisor is unchanged <input type="radio"/> It is harder for me to obtain feedback from my supervisor <input type="radio"/> I have nothing to discuss with my supervisor during this time <input type="radio"/> I do not have a supervisor yet (supervisor)
13: In your opinion, has the COVID-19 lockdown affected your ability to adhere to the milestones for MMed research? This refers to MMed research only and not clinical training and the CMSA exams.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Too soon to say (milestone)

14: What specific challenges have you experienced due to the COVID-19 lockdown?

Please select all that are relevant.

- ☐ Difficulty in accessing the library/librarian (including online access)
- ☐ Difficulty in contacting my supervisor
- ☐ Difficulty in presenting my research proposal at a departmental research meeting
- ☐ Difficulty in contacting/obtaining feedback from the biostatistician
- ☐ Difficulty in contacting/obtaining feedback from the Ethics Committee (HSREC)
- ☐ Difficulty in contacting/obtaining feedback from the Free State Department of Health
- ☐ Difficulty in contacting/obtaining feedback from the NHLS (if relevant)
- ☐ Difficulty in contacting/obtaining feedback from the UFS gatekeepers (if relevant)
- ☐ Difficulty in accessing patients or data
- ☐ COVID-19 related clinical workload
- ☐ Psychological effects of working in the COVID-19 pandemic
- ☐ Caring for and teaching my children
- ☐ Increased domestic duties (washing, ironing, cleaning, cooking, etc.) due to lock-down
- ☐ Other
(extension_reason)

15: Please describe any other challenges that you have experienced with your MMed research as result of the COVID-19 lockdown.

(elaborate)

In this section, we would like to obtain more information about the post-graduate program

16: How are post-graduate academic meetings conducted in your department during the COVID-19 lockdown?

- ☐ All academic meetings cancelled
- ☐ Academic meetings conducted via electronic platforms (Zoom, Microsoft teams, Blackboard, Skype, etc)
- ☐ Face to face academic meetings continued
- ☐ Mix of electronic and face to face meetings (meeting)

17: How has the frequency of departmental post-graduate academic meetings been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown?

- ☐ Academic meetings cancelled
- ☐ Less frequent academic meetings
- ☐ Academic meetings frequency unchanged
- ☐ More frequent academic meetings (pg_prog)

18: How has the COVID-19 lockdown affected your self-directed learning time?

- ☐ I have more time for self-directed learning
- ☐ No change in self-directed learning time
- ☐ I have less time for self-directed learning (learning)

19: Has the COVID-19 lockdown affected your ability to comply with the requirements of the CMSA logbook, clinical rotations and clinical exposure?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (logbook)

20: Are you satisfied with the level of communication that you have received from the UFS Faculty of Health Sciences post-graduate administration office, concerning your studies and research?
(This excludes generic UFS communication)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (comm_ufs)

In this section, we would like to obtain more information about your clinical training environment

21: Do you feel adequately prepared and trained to work on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(frontline)

22: How has the COVID-19 lockdown affected your day to day clinical workload and activities?

- ☐ Workload less than before
☐ Workload unchanged
☐ Workload is more than before
(clinical)

23: How has the COVID-19 lockdown affected the workload on your after-hour work (calls)?

- ☐ Workload less than before
☐ Workload unchanged
☐ Workload is more than before
(workload_affect)

24: Have you been seconded or nominated to any COVID-19 task teams or been requested to work with COVID-19 positive patients?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(task_team)

25: Please note which task team you were seconded to. You may chose more than one answer, if appropriate.

- ☐ National Department of Health task team
☐ Provincial Department of Health task team
☐ Hospital specific task team
☐ Departmental task team
☐ Clinical work for COVID-19 patients
☐ Other
(task_team_type)

26: Did you experience anxiety when you were requested to work with COVID-19 positive patients or nominated/seconded to a COVID-19 task team?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(task_anxiety_1)

27: Have you treated or had direct contact with any patients with SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) in the clinical training environment?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(treat_covid)

28: Have you been concerned about infecting your family with SARS-CoV-2 due to the nature of the clinical training environment?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(infect_home)

29: Are you satisfied with the level of communication that you have received from the Free State Department of Health and your department with regard to your clinical workload and well-being?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(comm_hosp)

In this section we would like to know a little about your health

30: Have you been diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) infection?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Tested, awaiting results (sars)

31: Do you have any of the following poor prognostic factors for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)?
You may select as many as relevant.

- ☐ Chronic kidney disease
☐ Diabetes
☐ Hypertension
☐ Cardiovascular disease
☐ Chronic pulmonary disease
☐ Use of "biologics"
☐ History of transplant
☐ Immunosuppression
☐ Current cancer
☐ Body mass index > 30
☐ Other risk factors
☐ None
(prognostic_factors)

32: Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the psychiatric conditions included in the list below?

- ☐ Stress
☐ Anxiety disorder
☐ Major depression
☐ Post-traumatic stress disorder
☐ Bipolar mood disorder
☐ Burn-out
☐ None
☐ Other
☐ Prefer not to say
(psych_list)

33: Have you experienced any of the following psychological consequences (or worsening of symptoms of known conditions) in response to COVID-19?

- ☐ Stress
☐ Anxiety disorder
☐ Major depression
☐ Post-traumatic stress disorder
☐ Bipolar mood disorder
☐ Burn-out
☐ None
☐ Other
☐ Prefer not to say
(pscyh)

In this section, we would like to learn about your home environment

34: Are there other circumstances at home that have changed due to COVID-19 that affect your MMed research progress?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(home_circum)

35: Please elaborate on how your home circumstances have changed that have affected your MMed research progress

(home_circum_elab)

36: Has anyone in your household been diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) infection?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Tested, awaiting results
(household_sars)

37: Number of people living in your household during the COVID-19 lockdown?
If you live alone, the number will be 1.

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5
☐ 6
☐ 7
☐ 8
☐ 9
☐ 10
(household)

38: Number of children between 0 and 3 years who live with you?

(toddler)

39: Number of pre-primary school children who live with you?

(preschool)

40: Number of primary and secondary school children who live with you?

(primary)

41: Number of tertiary level education people who live with you?

(tertiary)

42: Number of currently employed people who live with you?

(adult_employed)

43: Number of currently unemployed people who live with you?

(adult_unemployed)

44: Have any of the adult members of your household had a reduction in salary or lost their jobs due to COVID-19 lockdown?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
(employment_change)