

## MentorNet

### Module – COVID-19 and Global Pandemics

#### Overview

The COVID-19 virus, declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, has had significant impacts on health systems worldwide. This module will use a wide-scoped approach to discuss the way it has affected various sectors, from healthcare to populations. You will begin by exploring the definition of a pandemic, and how a disease can go from a local issue to a global one. You will then investigate the widespread repercussions that COVID-19 has had on health systems and populations around the world. Finally, you will look at Canada's response to the pandemic with a critical lens, exploring the strengths, weaknesses and difficulties involved in its response.

#### Objectives

- Understand the concept of a global pandemic and the factors involved in its development as well as its identification.
- Discuss the worldwide response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and how this experience may shape the future of healthcare
- Explore the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on various populations and health systems around the world

#### Prior to meeting

- Watch these TED-Ed videos about the [spread of pandemics](#) and [when a pandemic is over](#)
- Review the [WHO Interactive COVID-19 Timeline](#)
- Read this article by the United Nations on the [social impacts of COVID-19](#)
- Read the Executive Summary of the [WHO's report on the impact of COVID-19 on essential health systems](#)
- Review [Canada's response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

#### Discussion questions

##### *WHO Interactive Timeline*

- The WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. Based on the timeline, does this surprise you? Do you think this reaction was justified at the time?
- What do you think of the statistics of COVID-19 cases in different countries? How does this change over time? Does this seem to reflect real-world events during early 2020?

##### *Social impacts of COVID-19 and Impact on essential health systems*

- COVID-19 has had widespread effects on populations worldwide.
  - Which group do you think has been most affected by the pandemic? Why is that?
  - What actions by countries such as Canada have benefitted these high-risk groups? What actions have potentially harmed them?
  - Do different groups need unique precautions to protect against pandemics? Discuss a few examples.
- Do you think normal societal reactions to emergencies and disasters (such as hurricanes) might have been harmful in the response to COVID-19?
- What do you think were some indirect effects of COVID-19 on delivering healthcare worldwide? Did it cause any unforeseen improvements?

*Canada's response to COVID-19*

- Every country has responded to COVID-19 differently. Using Canada as a case study, do you think that the proper precautions were taken in your country of residence? What could have been improved? Is this said with the benefit of hindsight?