



STANDARDIZED PATIENT USER GUIDE

Module 1



TEMERTY FACULTY OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Standardized
Patient Program

Table of Contents

Honouring the Indigenous history of Toronto	2
Acknowledgment of Traditional Land	2
Standardized Patient Program (SPP), University of Toronto	3
SPP Office Information	3
SPP Office locations	3
SPP Services	4
Knowledge Dissemination	4
Diversity Statement	4
The SPP and Equity, Diversity, Indigeneity, Inclusion, Accessibility (EDIIA)	5
What is a Standardized Patient?	6
Skills Required of a Standardized Patient	6
SP Reporting Structure	7
SP Expectations	7

Honouring the Indigenous history of Toronto

The University of Toronto is dedicated in its efforts towards Truth and Reconciliation and will continue to strive to be a place deserving of Indigenous community members.

Acknowledgment of Traditional Land

The land on which the University of Toronto operates has, for thousands of years, been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Module 1 - ABOUT THE STANDARDIZED PATIENT PROGRAM

Standardized Patient Program (SPP), University of Toronto

Welcome to the Standardized Patient Program at the University of Toronto!

The SPP began operations in 1984 and has a roster of approximately 500 Standardized Patients (SPs). The SPP continues its long history of teaching, simulation, and assessment services to the MD Program in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine (TFOM).

Currently, the SPP provides in-person and online simulation services to the University of Toronto St. George (Downtown Toronto), University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) Mississauga Academy of Medicine (MAM) and starting September 2026, University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC), Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH).

While the SPP's primary goal is to support the teaching of medical students within Temerty Faculty of Medicine, it also collaborates with a diverse group of clients, including other U of T Faculties and Departments (e.g., Faculty of Pharmacy, Faculty of Dentistry, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Social Work), as well as hospitals and community-based programs.

The SPP provides expertise on experiential learning, simulation, and facilitation. Our objective is to bring our knowledge and skills to clients by highlighting the role of SPs as educators and our SP methodologies which create dynamic teaching and learning opportunities.

Welcome to our team!

SPP Office Information

Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday – 8.45 am to 5.00 pm (Labour Day weekend in September to June 30)

Monday to Friday – 8.45 am to 4.30 pm (summer hours from July 1 to September Labour Day weekend)

Saturday, Sunday, and Statutory holidays – Closed.

[For additional information on University of Toronto's Holiday schedule](#)

SPP Office locations

University of Toronto St. George (Downtown Toronto) SPP Main Office 263 McCaul Street Suite 314, 3 rd Floor Toronto, ON M5T 1W7 Canada Phone: 416-978-4665	University of Toronto Mississauga, Mississauga Academy of Medicine (MAM) Terrence Donnelly Health Sciences Complex 3359 Mississauga Rd, Mississauga, ON L5L 1C6 Canada	University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC), Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health (SAMIH) 840 Military Trail Scarborough, ON M1C 0C7 Canada
For more information on the SPP Website - www.spp.utoronto.ca Email - spp.admin@utoronto.ca		

SPP Services

The SPP is involved in a variety of projects in healthcare education. The activities of the SPP include, but are not limited to:

Teaching:

SP-based learning that incorporates immediate face-to-face experiential learning and learner-focused feedback for:

- Undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Faculty development
- Continuing education and remediation

Assessment:

- Undergraduate and postgraduate formative and summative assessments

Consulting services:

- Expertise in SP methodology
- Case development
- Facilitation
- Feedback methodologies
- Expertise in the development of new simulation projects with our clients

Knowledge Dissemination

Leading workshops and consulting on:

- Community-based education and building simulation projects from the ground up. Examples:
 - People With Aids (PWA)
 - Hospital Collaborations - William Osler Health System - Secondary Disclosure workshops for Chiefs and Directors of Clinical Departments
 - Transgender health in medical education.
- Conflict Resolution
- Inter-professional Education (IPE)
- End of Life Care
- Online simulation practices

Diversity Statement

The University of Toronto is strongly committed to diversity and intentional inclusion within its community and encourages applications from racialized persons/persons of colour, women, Indigenous/Aboriginal People of North America, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ persons.

University of Toronto - Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Excellence

EDI at the University of Toronto – Our Values as an Institution

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Temerty Faculty of Medicine

The SPP and Equity, Diversity, Indigeneity, Inclusion, Accessibility (EDIIA)



Picture credit: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Surgery, University of Toronto

- The SPP is committed to EDIIA and is working diligently on the diversity of Standardized Patients/Simulated Clients through our intentional practices which benefits learners by accurately reflecting patient populations.
- Our commitment to EDIIA is reflected in:
 - Creating a culturally diverse SP pool through **outreach** and **collaboration** with TFOM Equity Groups, their network, and committees.
 - **Review** and **selection** from the applicant pool for interviews
 - SP **recruitment**, **hiring** and a thorough **onboarding** practice.
 - **Project assignment** to the best of our ability -- in being equitable in providing work opportunities to SPs.
 - **Workshops** – providing education and knowledge sharing on equity issues in collaboration with TFOM Equity Offices and subject matter experts.
 - **Communication** through the SPP quarterly newsletter (SPecial Edition) and the SPP Twitter feed.
 - **Collaboration** with Clinical Skills program directors

The SPP has its challenges in reflecting diversity in the Standardized Patients participating in projects due to many factors, namely the casual nature of employment, sporadic nature of work and projects, availability of SPs, retention, client budget limitations issues etc. The SPP is aware of these challenges and continues to collaborate and engage clients on multiple fronts to address these issues.

What is a Standardized Patient?

A Standardized Patient (SP) is an individual trained to simulate the symptoms or characteristics of a real patient (or client) in a reliable and valid manner, providing the student or candidate with an opportunity to learn and/or be evaluated on learned skills in a simulated clinical environment.

Based on the learning objectives of a session and client preferences, SPs can also be referred to as Simulated Patients, Standardized Clients or Simulated Clients (SCs). For this document, they are referred to as Standardized Patients (SPs).

SPs as Educators

“In healthcare simulation, actors may be hired to perform in an educational activity; however, as SPs, they are doing something different from actors. They are part of an educational team, focused on fulfilling the learning objectives of a simulation activity in service to learners.”

- The Association of Standardized Patient Educators (ASPE), Standards of Best Practice (SOBP)

SPs participate in communication and clinical skills assessments, education, and quality assurance for the following groups:

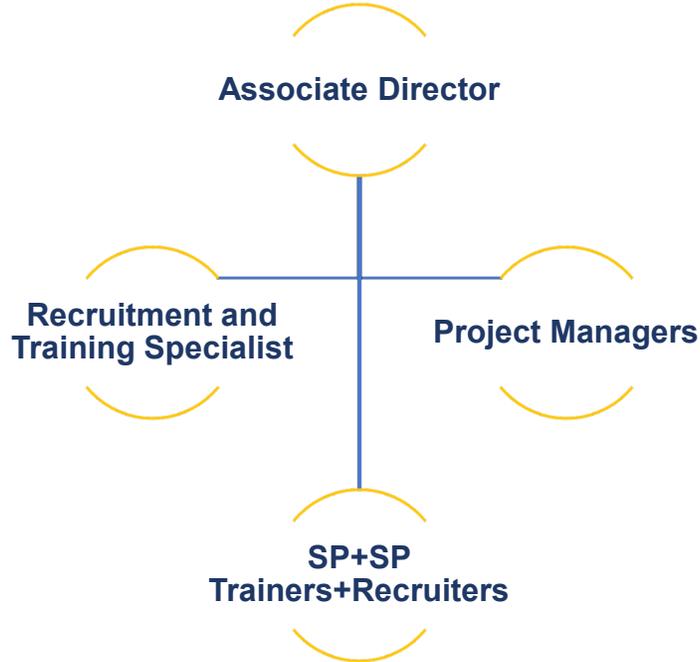
- Medical students
- Pharmacy students
- Medical Residents
- Physicians
- Physician Assistant students
- Occupational Health Students
- Other healthcare students and professionals

Skills Required of a Standardized Patient

An SP will be:

- Able to retain information
- Reliable and punctual
- An active listener
- Able to work with others in a professional and respectful manner
- Able to receive constructive feedback
- Able to follow detailed instructions and reproduce simulation consistently
- Able to provide feedback to learners

SP Reporting Structure



- SPs are supervised by the SPP's Recruitment and Training Specialist
- For individual projects, any questions, concerns, or recommendations can be brought to the SP Trainers
- The SP Trainer will refer questions or concerns to the Project Manager who will either solve the problem or refer the matter to the Recruitment and Training Specialist
- The Recruitment and Training Specialist will refer concerns to the SPP Associate Director if needed

SP Expectations

- Work in accordance with U of T statements, [policies](#) and guidelines. Examples include:
 - Confidentiality – includes but is not limited to SPP, SP, Client, and role information.
 - [Conflict of Interest](#) – real, perceived or otherwise.
- Exhibit professional and ethical behavior at all times.
- Maintain professional boundaries with clients at all times and limit interactions to the workplace setting.
- Respect the authority and knowledge of other professionals.
- Exhibit sensitivity and respect for other beliefs, opinions, gender, race, culture, religion, sexual and gender preferences, and status.
- Abstain from speaking with candidates/learners “out of role” before or during the session; SPs should not be seen by any of the candidates/learners unless in role except for teaching sessions.

- To not receive any advice or recommendations from a physician tutor during the course of any sessions as constituting individual medical care or advice, and SPs should not actively seek medical advice from learners or faculty while performing their duties as an SP.
- Keep all scenarios, cases, procedures, communications, and other related information confidential.
- To not discuss learner performance, behaviors, or interactions outside of simulation
- To not consume food or drink in any SP simulation, unless required by the scenario (SPs may bring a water bottle into the clinic room, but this must be kept out of sight during simulation)
- Keep personal belongings out of sight within the clinic room during simulation.
- Unless you do an online session (e.g., Zoom), turn off all mobile phones and electronic devices during training and simulation.
- Always maintain proper hygiene, grooming, and cleanliness.
- Be scent-free. The University of Toronto is asking for voluntary cooperation towards a [scent-reduced environment](#). Many other locations where we work are also scent-free.
- Understand and agree that drinking alcohol or consuming drugs prior to or during a simulation session is expressly prohibited.
- Understand and agree that vaping or smoking during a simulation session is expressly prohibited.
- Abstain from posting any information on social media that can inform learners on case information, and role portrayal. This includes project information, listing learner, faculty, client or patient names, any information on case facts or the exam checklist. Before sharing a post related to the SPP on social media, ask yourself “is this information publicly available?”. If not, please do not post.