

# Studying Pediatrics under the COVID-19 pandemic

Dear students,

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented situation for all of us. We are fully aware of the difficulties you are facing as students, and we want to assist you in your learning efforts as much as possible. We hereby introduce two measures that we hope will enable you to gain a robust basic competence in Pediatrics: A “core curriculum” and a framework for clinical training.

## 1.” Core curriculum” in Pediatrics

The “core curriculum” in Pediatrics is essentially a list of items that is acknowledged as particularly important by the teachers. It consists of three parts: An overview of overarching topics, a list of important clinical presentations/symptoms/signs, and a list of important childhood diseases. We hope this list will be a helpful guide for your self-studies; in addition, it might serve as a possible starting point for small-group video discussions. We underline, though, that this “core curriculum” is not a formal definition of learning goals, and not a legally binding definition of what is necessary to know (and not know) within the field of Pediatrics.

## 2. Clinical training in Pediatrics

The pandemic situation constitutes a major obstacle to clinical training, be it small-group bed-side teaching, obtaining patients’ medical records or just taking part of the normal clinical routines at our departments. Still, we find clinical training in Pediatrics to be an essential part of studying medicine.

Fortunately, the great majority of students have had some clinical training in Pediatrics prior to the university lock-down. The module coordinator (Ellen Rosenberg) has made an overview, listing the number of “clinical activities” that each student has performed already. Participation in one small-group bed-side teaching session *or* being present at a department/out-patient clinic of similar duration *or* obtaining one medical record count as one “clinical activity”. Students belonging to the University of Oslo (UiO) who have returned to Norway after an initial exchange period abroad have been included in this list; thus, the following pertain for them as well.

During the remaining weeks of the present semester, we will do our best to allow for additional clinical training at our Pediatric departments. The extent of such training, however, will depend on many factors such as the teachers’ abilities to include students in ongoing clinical work, the protective regulations currently imposed, the general pandemic situation, etc. Thus, all clinical training has to be organized on an *ad hoc*-basis.

We remind all students of the obligation to prevent viral transmission. This is particularly important, of course, in a hospital setting. Thus, students will not be allowed to participate in any clinical activity if they:

- Have ***any symptoms of current infection*** (such as fever, cough, general malaise, muscle aching, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) during the last 2 weeks. Remember that the symptoms of COVID-19 might be very subtle and varied in young adults.
- Have been ***in contact with any person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19*** during the last 2 weeks.
- Have ***returned from travelling abroad*** within the last 2 weeks.

All clinical activities that have been successfully conducted should be continuously reported by each student to either **Line Sletner** ([line.sletner@medisin.uio.no](mailto:line.sletner@medisin.uio.no)) (activities at Ahus) or **Hrefna Gudmundsdóttir** ([h.k.gudmundsdottir@medisin.uio.no](mailto:h.k.gudmundsdottir@medisin.uio.no)) (activities at OUS). The email report should include:

- Date of clinical training
- Duration of clinical training
- Type of activity (outpatient clinic, medical record, department rounds, on-call participation, etc.)
- Name of responsible teacher/other clinical staff (please cc the person in the email report)

Drs. Sletner and Gudmundsdóttir, in turn, are responsible for continuous updating of the above-mentioned list.

All students will be allowed to participate in the Module 6 exam irrespective of their clinical training experiences. However, for the UiO students, a minimum number of 7 “clinical activities” in Pediatrics have to be obtained before graduating as Medical Doctors (i.e., after completing 6 years of studying). Other formal regulations may apply to the exchange students - please contact your home university to find out what the formal requirements are.

Therefore, at the end of the semester, the list of performed clinical activities will be used as follows:

- UiO students that have not yet achieved the mandatory number of 7 clinical activities, will be offered opportunities for clinical training during fall 2020 and eventually spring 2021. Such training will be organized at Ahus for students belonging to small-groups 1-10, and at OUS for students belonging to small-groups 11-24.
- Exchange students will be given a statement specifying the extent of clinical training in Pediatrics.

We hope that these measures, in addition to the ongoing video teaching and other learning tools presented at the web, will be helpful in obtaining professional competence in Pediatrics.

On behalf of the teachers, and with all my best wishes for the remaining part of the semester,

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