

# Post Secondary Students Concerned About Work Placements Impacted By Coronavirus

By Jennifer Walker - January 25, 2021



KAWARTHA LAKES – The university experience changed drastically for Cassie Page after the pandemic began and her plans to become a registered nurse came to a halt.

Page started her four-year program at Ontario Tech University in 2017 in hopes of graduating this past December but the coronavirus thought otherwise.

"Before Covid my experience as a student with OnTechU was a generally positive one, similar to what I expect most university experiences to be," said Page. "Once Covid hit my university experience changed drastically. The school implemented new guidelines following government instruction and my classes were moved to an online format. Unfortunately, this greatly impacted our clinical hours, which is the general focus in fourth year."

In many programs, including nursing, clinical hours or "work placement" is imperative for graduation and in order to gain the hands on experience required to hone their skills. According to a survey done by Stats Canada, of the students who responded, about 35 per cent have had a work placement postponed or cancelled because of the novel coronavirus.

Page had chosen to fast track her program and finish her four-year program in a three-year time frame but due to the circumstances she is just starting her placement this week at the Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay.

"In a normal world my first semester of final year would consist of 300 preconsolidation hours and my final semester would consist of 420 consolidation hours," she said. "I feel as though my school handled the pandemic well and took direction quickly and effectively. To the same point I am disheartened at the lack of clinical hours as that is what ultimately prepares me for the real