

Noelle Cater

I am a practicing medical laboratory technologist, Allied Health Sciences educator and current student at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT). I am taking my Allied Health Sciences degree, planning to graduate in the summer of 2019. I am an avid volunteer for my profession, whether it be professional advocacy or with my regulatory body. I enjoy being involved in all aspects of my profession and particularly enjoy sharing my knowledge with my students, colleagues and mature learners.

What is your involvement with the CSMLS Research and Special Initiatives Department?

I am a research practicum student from UOIT. I was honoured to be chosen by UOIT and CSMLS to partner in a research project exploring precarious careers for medical laboratory assistants (MLAs) in Canada. The 2018 data from the annual CSMLS post-certification employment survey, combined with peer-reviewed data linking precarious working conditions and negative health outcomes, indicate that Canadian MLAs are likely experiencing negative effects from precarious employment. In order to confirm this hypothesis, we are conducting a mixed research study, using qualitative focus groups and a quantitative online survey, to determine if any job precarity exists and if those in precarious positions are showing any negative effects from it.

Why do you value your partnership and project(s) with CSMLS?

Being able to learn about research methods with a CSMLS project specifically developed for the medical laboratory sciences helped me relate to my profession on a higher level. The partnership gave me a strong motivation to find meaningful research connections that can be used to help all medical laboratory professionals across Canada. It was also an important avenue for allowing me to develop my research confidence and illustrate my adaptability and dependability, while tapping into my professional creativity.

How will your project(s) help the medical laboratory profession?

This project has the potential to be an ongoing contribution to overall health and well-being for all medical laboratory professionals. By exploring the current precarious employment conditions for CSMLS members (and non-members where possible), important connections to the emotional, mental and overall health impacts can be used to identify opportunities to improve workplace environments that address employment precarity. The project data collected on workplace aspects that positively influence the workplace environment may help guide employers in decreasing the negative effects of job precarity overall.