

# Sophia Kara

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## EDUCATION

### University of Ottawa

Master of Public Health, Concentration in Public Health Practice

Ottawa, ON

Sept 2024-Present

### Western University

Honours Bachelor of Science, Specialization in Nutrition Science with Distinction

London, ON

Sept 2015-May 2020

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Aga Khan Foundation Canada

Health Systems Strengthening Consultant

March-Sept 2024

*Aga Khan Hospital, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*

- Spearheaded the development of Aga Khan Hospital's mental health program through capacity-building initiatives in collaboration with the civil society sector and Tanzania's national mental health hospital
- Led the establishment of a gender-based violence (GBV) case management system at Aga Khan Hospital, ensuring sensitive care for survivors and enhancing institutional capacity
- Identified climate change adaptation and mitigation opportunities at Aga Khan Hospital, implementing initiatives such as healthcare worker education, patient awareness, and energy conservation efforts
- Authored a research proposal on the experiences of GBV survivors seeking legal aid in Dar es Salaam
- Conducted a research study on healthcare worker knowledge and practices regarding climate change, presented findings at two national conferences and submitted a manuscript for publication
- Collaborated with mental health experts to establish a protocol for conducting a systematic review of the state of mental health in Tanzania

### Aga Khan Foundation Canada's International Youth Fellowship Program

Health Systems Strengthening Fellow

May 2023-March 2024

*Aga Khan Hospital, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*

- Led a public health project evaluating the impact of climate change, mental health, and gender issues on Tanzania's progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Developed and applied monitoring and evaluation tools (e.g., logic models, theories of change) to design project plans that met donor requirements and ensured timely submission of deliverables
- Led stakeholder engagement and advocacy initiatives, including forming a multisectoral Think Tank, to advance evidence-based solutions and raise awareness on key issues
- Authored and published an in-depth review on the state of the SDGs in Tanzania, available at: <https://www.aku.edu/ighd/research-programmes/Documents/CHOICE-Country-Report-Tanzania-2023.pdf>
- Fostered multi-sectorial partnerships and drafted policy briefs to strengthen project impact and reach

### Aga Khan University

Family Medicine Research Intern

May 2022-May 2023

*Karachi, Pakistan (Remote)*

- Created program evaluation documents, based on comprehensive searches of medical literature, to evaluate the impact of Pakistan's first-ever rural family medicine training program
- Collaborated with family physicians to prepare an ethics review application package, interview study participants, collect and analyze qualitative data, and author the study's manuscript

## **Newtopia**

Lifestyle Medicine Consultant  
Toronto, Ontario

**May 2021-Nov 2022**

- Applied evidence-based guidelines and findings from the literature to educate over 200 clients living with chronic disease on the role of diet, exercise, and mental health in disease progression and management
- Used shared decision-making to help clients create healthy habits for symptom management
- Analyzed confidential health data to provide tailored, high-quality care and improve client outcomes

## **Western University**

Kinesiology and Mental Health Research Assistant  
London, Ontario

**Dec 2020-May 2021**

- Planned and facilitated bi-weekly combined exercise and psychoeducation sessions for study participants over 16 weeks to assess their impact on university student mental health
- Collected and analyzed participant health data in collaboration with the research team to identify trends and insights related to the feasibility and effectiveness of the intervention
- Managed confidential research documents and maintained accurate participant records, ensuring compliance with privacy standards and research integrity

## **OTHER EMPLOYMENT**

- **Summer Camp Director**, Aga Khan Youth and Sports Board Canada **2022**
- **Summer Camp Counsellor**, Aga Khan Youth and Sports Board Canada **2016- 2021**
- **Diabetes Research Student**, Lawson Health Research Institute **2018-2020**
- **Exercise and Pregnancy Lab Research Assistant**, Western University **2017-2018**

## **SELECT VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

- **Vice President Wellness**, uOttawa Public Health Graduate Students Association **2024-Present**
- **Oncology Camp Counsellor**, Campfire Circle **2022-Present**
- **Psychoeducation Program Facilitator**, Aga Khan Health Board Canada **2021-2022**
- **Communications Executive**, Western University Health Promotions **2019-2020**
- **Community Engaged Learning Volunteer**, Western University **2019**
- **Global Health Volunteer in Panama City**, Western University **2018**

## **AWARDS**

- **Faculty of Medicine Special Merit Scholarship (\$8,000)**, University of Ottawa **2024-2026**
- **Global Health Research Scholarship (\$1,000)**, Aga Khan University **2022**
- **Faculty of Science's Deans Honors List Designation**, Western University **2016-2020**
- **Laurene Paterson Estate Scholarship (\$2,500)**, Western University **2018**
- **Experiential and International Learning Awards (\$2,500)**, Western University **2018**

## **CERTIFICATIONS:**

- **Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) Tool**-Public Health Ontario (Issued Dec 2024)
- **Mental Health First Aid**-The Lady Fatemah Charitable Trust (Issued June 2024)
- **Effective Project Management-PM4DEV** (Issued Oct 2023)
- **Health Policy Analysis in Public Health**-Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (Issued Sept 2023)
- **Unconscious Bias in Medicine**-Stanford University School of Medicine (Issued May 2022)
- **TCPS2 Research Accreditation**-Government of Canada (Issued Jan 2021)