

Defining a “Permissive Launch” in the context of COVID-19

Adjusting to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on programs’ readiness to launch Competence by Design will require us all to lean in and make accommodations. The following document aims to identify key principles for a ‘permissive’ launch in July 2020.

A reminder: Our Current Policies

One national standard

In order for a discipline to launch in CBD, all of its programs need to convert together. This approach has helped to ensure that we maintain one national standard for all trainees.

From an Accreditation point of view, standards take effect a year later

Current accreditation practices already offer a 12 month preparation period. The standards of accreditation for disciplines launching CBD programs in July 2020 will apply to accreditation reviews as of July 2021 (i.e., 12 months later). Therefore, programs in disciplines that launch CBD in July 2020 will have until July 2021 before the new CBD standards are used to evaluate programs during an accreditation review.

Even once the standards take effect for Accreditation, perfection is not the expectation

Accreditation is a quality improvement process. There is no expectation of perfection from the outset of a transition to CBD. Once the standards are in place, programs will not be penalized for lack of full compliance with standards during the transition to CBD, provided they are aware of and have identified the areas for improvement. In any transition, programs are expected to demonstrate an increasing progress towards implementation of CBD standards.

New Principles in light of COVID-19

Guide trainees with a coherent approach to training

At a minimum, we suggest you link EPAs and key competencies with the training experiences. This will help trainees and faculty understand the focus of training, even if it is disrupted in light of COVID-19. In some cases, the existing time-based objectives may suffice.

Start with the early stages, phase in CBD requirements

Normally, in order to have ‘fully implemented’ Competence by Design, programs must be able to demonstrate how they would deliver both clinical and academic elements across all stages of training. In light of COVID-19, the launch of CBD in 2020 will be even more ‘permissive’. You can focus on the early stages of a resident’s training (i.e., Transition to Discipline, Foundations) and phase in CBD over time.

Start with observations and coaching as you are able, some is better than none

As you are able, please begin to ensure coaching and workplace-based observations are taking place. During this transition, it is likely and acceptable that there will be fewer EPA observations being recorded.

Reviews of resident progress aren't needed on Day 1

Competence committees do not need to be in place on Day 1 of implementation. If possible, we recommend that programs 'soft launch' their committee (potentially in a virtual context) by the time residents need to progress to the second stage of training, Foundations of Discipline. Once implemented, competence committees are encouraged to review resident progression, considering any EPA observations as well as other data points in the context of the overall picture of resident performance. While they may not have all the data points that would be available during a non-COVID time, the committee will still benefit from timely, formative observations, in replacement of historical evaluations.

Set yourself up for success through the use of an electronic portfolio

Early experiences with Competence by Design underlined the importance of having an electronic portfolio to capture observations. To the best of your ability, we would strongly recommend use of an electronic portfolio as soon as possible, to avoid challenges integrating one later on. Please contact the Royal College if you are anticipating challenges getting an electronic portfolio ready for your trainees; we would be happy to assist.

Our commitment to you :

- 1) ***Faculty Development*** – With the advice and guidance of Faculties of Medicine, the Royal College is pleased to offer extra faculty development to enrich and bridge any gaps. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you require targeted support.
- 2) ***Parameters for Accreditation*** - Accreditation surveyors will be coached to take the context of COVID-19 into account as they assess programs.
- 3) ***Continued updates as details unfold*** – We commit to providing you updates as details unfold and the impacts of the pandemic evolve. This document was developed at the request of the Specialty Committee Chairs of 2020 launch disciplines and Competency-based Medical Education Leads. We will be happy to continue developing additional guidance in collaboration with you and are always here to answer any questions and help