

Reflection as a Method to Teach and Evaluate the Professional Role

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Problem Statement

The Royal College and essentially every other medical education accrediting body worldwide has deemed professionalism a core competency. However, educators continue to struggle to find methods to teach and evaluate in this domain.

Approach

Reflection is a powerful tool utilized in medical education to assist learners to gain insight into the nature of complex issues and problems. The method of reflection was used in the General Surgery training program at U of T to better prepare PGY1 residents to assume their identity as Professional.

All PGY1 residents are required to submit a 3-5 page reflection paper entitled *Professionalism in Practice*. The paper is assigned on the July 01 and due January 15 of the PGY1 year. Successful completion of this assignment is a requirement for the completion of the PGY1 year. The paper becomes a permanent part of the resident's file and is used in residents' portfolios.

The reflection paper describes an incident related to professionalism that the resident was involved with or witnessed during the first 6 months of residency. This incident could be something that impressed the resident as an example of highly professional or unprofessional behaviour. This incident could have directly involved the resident or another member of the health care team, including non-physician members.

Approximately 50% of the paper is devoted to recounting the factual details and 50% is devoted to the resident's reflections about how this incident was a manifestation of professionalism or the absence of professionalism. These reflections must be grounded in an understanding of the literature. The paper should include the resident's suggestions about how this situation should be addressed. A brief, required reading list is provided to the resident, and could be modified based upon specialty.

The paper must be de-identified, so that persons and places are referred to only by fictitious initials or names. Each paper is evaluated as pass/fail/honours by 2 faculty members and one senior resident member, based upon the above noted criteria. Particular emphasis is placed upon how clearly the resident is able to connect the incident to an understanding of the literature. Extra marks are given for clarity of thought and writing style.

Results

15/15 PGY1 members of our class completed this assignment on time. Residents reported that this exercise helped them to immerse themselves in the professional role and expand their view of themselves beyond the medical expert domain. The quality of the papers was outstanding, with 7 papers achieving honours status; the remaining 8 were graded as a clear pass. The 2 best papers (tied for 1st place) were recognized at our annual graduation ceremonies for final year residents.

Implications

We describe a relatively simple method to assist PGY1 trainees to begin to expand their professional identity beyond medical expert. Further refinements to this method include the use of these papers to debrief residents about their understanding and views about what is acceptable and unacceptable practice as it relates to professionalism in practice.



CanMEDS Best Practice Submission Form

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CATEGORY

- Curriculum** — a design for education around the CanMEDS competencies.
- Teaching Tool** — a submission that will assist the teaching the specific CanMEDS competencies.
- Assessment Tool** — a submission that will assist in the assessment/evaluation of the CanMEDS competencies.
- Faculty Development Tool** — a submission that will assist in teaching faculty to teach/evaluate of the CanMEDS competencies.

TYPE OF TEACHING TOOL

- Journal Club
- Pathology Lab
- PBL
- Seminar
- Simulation
- Workshop
- Clinical
- Course
- Lecture
- Teaching Round
- Mentoring
- Role Modeling
- Web-based
- Committee Work
- Conference
- Self-Directed
- Research Project
- Resident as Teacher
- Administrative Duties
- Other Reflection paper

TYPE OF ASSESSMENT TOOL

- ITER
- Chart Stimulation Recall
- OSCE
- Evaluation od Research
- MSF
- Simulation
- FITER
- CEX/Mini-CEX
- Encounter Card
- Portfolios & Logbooks
- Oral Exam
- Written
- Other _____

CanMEDS ROLES

- Medical Expert
- Communicator
- Collaborator
- Manager
- Health Advocate
- Scholar
- Professional
- Applicable to all roles

TITLE Limit to 50 words or less

The use of Reflection to teach and evaluate in the Professional Role

KEYWORDS

1) professionalism, reflection, reflection paper	4)
2)	5)
3)	

AUTHOR(S)

1) Ahmed N	4)	7)
2)	5)	8)
3)	6)	9)

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2)		
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