

Assessing the teachable moment

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Since the introduction of the CanMEDS Roles, residency programs have been challenged to assess trainees over 7 core competencies. The objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs) used as in-training formative evaluations by residency programs traditionally appraise residents in the role of Medical Expert. However, there has been success adapting the OSCE to the assessment of other competencies.

The CanMEDS 2005 Framework outlines the role of the physician as Scholar, which includes the ability to facilitate the learning of medical students. Although residents provide much teaching, there are few opportunities to formally assess the resident as a teacher. The objective of this project was to design an OSCE station to explicitly evaluate a resident's competence in teaching medical students. Seventeen residents in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Ottawa participated in an OSCE. At one station, a standardized student presented a case to the residents. Residents were instructed to listen to the presentation and provide constructive feedback while "teaching around the case."

The performance of the residents was evaluated by both an examiner and the standardized student (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = excellent). The median score given by both examiners was 3, and the correlation between examiners was 0.75. The correlation was best for the weakest and strongest performances.

Using a standardized student, the OSCE format can be successfully utilized in the assessment of teaching skills, thereby enhancing the ability to evaluate the resident in the role of Scholar. Further work is required to develop a validated tool to evaluate this competency.