

What *does* competent performance look like? A problem-based redefinition of competence

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This paper explores the features of residents in difficulty and the limits of the current approaches to defining and describing competent practice. Additionally, a new model of competent practice is described that aims to provide a common understanding of competence at all stages of the professional's lifespan.

This model reflects the 4 C's of practitioner competence:

1. **Continuum of development** (i.e., student, clerk, resident, fellow, specialist, expert);
2. **Competencies** (i.e., outcome statement that reflects the knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve a role, task or responsibility that can be measured against well-accepted standards);
3. **Capability** (i.e., physical, mental and emotional potential and the facility of an individual that enables him or her to fulfill a professional role; synonyms for capability include talent, aptitude and potential); and
4. **Context of practice** (i.e., the "who" [types of clients, groups, populations], "what" [areas of practice, types of service], "where" [practice settings] and "how" [professional roles, funding models] in which individuals may practice).

Cases are used to illustrate the limits of the current models and to exemplify how the 4 C's of practitioner competence can be used to understand, support and remediate underperforming trainees. Cases will also be used to explore the factors influencing "successful" development and maintenance of competent practitioner practice.