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## Understanding CanMEDS and CanMEDS-FM Roles

### Introduction: What is CanMEDS? CanMEDS-FM?

Since 2005, the RCPSC (CanMEDS)<sup>i</sup> and the CFPC (CanMEDS-FM) have developed a framework that describes the competencies needed to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of physicians across the full spectrum of practice contexts. Family practitioners will use every one of the CanMEDS-FM roles, which incorporate the Four Principles of Family Medicine<sup>ii</sup>. The scope of different specialists' practices will dictate the combination of CanMEDS roles they exercise in their work.

### *Naming and describing the CanMEDS / CanMEDS-FM roles and enabling competencies will:*

- *allow you to choose those competencies you want to develop further in your own practice, and*
- *equip you with language to teach and offer concrete feedback to learners on the technical and the non-technical aspects of physicianship*

## The Roles and Enabling Competencies

### Medical Expert / Family Medicine Expert

This central role defines a physician's scope of practice, integrating all the competencies. Physicians use evolving knowledge, clinical skills and professional values to collect information, make clinical decisions, and perform diagnostic and therapeutic interventions and procedures, within the limits of their own expertise. Practice is patient-centred, ethical, resource-efficient, and established in a culturally safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

### Communicator

Physicians use communication skills to establish effective therapeutic relationships, gather and share essential information, and include patients and their families in health care decisions. Physicians maintain timely, accurate and clear patient records (written, electronic).

### Collaborator

Collaboration requires trust, respect, and shared decision-making in the common pursuit of optimal patient outcomes. Physicians collaborate respectfully and constructively with patients and families, colleagues and team members, and community providers. They understand the roles of others, make appropriate consultations and referrals, and ensure safe and efficient transfers of care.

### Leader

Physicians demonstrate collaborative leadership and management to foster a culture of continuous quality improvement at the personal, team, organization, and system level. Leader roles and responsibilities include personal career planning, resource stewardship, time management, and use of health care data to improve

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practice processes. Physician leaders engage in shared decision-making that drives continuous evolution in patient care, through a variety of clinical, administrative, teaching, and research activities.

### **Health Advocate**

Physicians use their expertise and influence to work with communities and patient populations to improve health. They work to mitigate disease, promote disease prevention, and educate about positive health measures at the level of the individual, the community, and the population. Physicians determine needs, speak up for others, and help patients navigate the health care system; they use their influence to engage with other professionals, community agencies, administrators and policy makers, directing resources for the promotion of healthier communities.

### **Scholar**

Physicians commit to lifelong excellence in practice through continuous learning, evaluating and integrating best evidence into practice, teaching others, and contributing to the creation and dissemination of new knowledge. They reflect on their practice to identify opportunities for learning, generating and constantly revising personal learning plans for continuous improvement; they teach patients, trainees, the public and other health care professionals; and they engage in scholarly enquiry and contribute to the body of research.

### **Professional**

Physicians are committed and accountable to their patients, the profession, and society. They are dedicated to the health and care of others through the ethical practice of the art and science of medicine. Physicians have high personal standards and values, adhere to physician-led regulation, commit to ongoing professional development, and maintain their own personal health.

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<sup>i</sup> Frank JR, Snell L, Sherbino J, editors. CanMEDS 2015 Physician Competency Framework. Ottawa: Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada; 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> Shaw E, Oandasan I, Fowler N, eds. CanMEDS-FM 2017: A competency framework for family physicians across the continuum. Mississauga, ON: The College of Family Physicians of Canada; 2017.