

Effectiveness of a Core-Competency-Based Program on Resident's Learning and Experience – Preliminary Results in a Care of the Elderly Program

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Context: The Care of the Elderly (COE) Diploma Program is a six-to-twelve-month enhanced skills program taken after 2 years of core residency training in Family Medicine. In 2010, we developed and implemented a core-competency-based COE Diploma program to improve residents' learning and training experience at the University of Alberta.

Objective: To assess the effectiveness of the core-competency-based program on residents' (1) learning and (2) rating of their training experience.

Design: Pre-test-post-test design, comparing outcome measures among residents who graduated from the program in two periods: (1) before and (2) during the implementation of the core-competency-based program.

Participants: All residents in the COE Diploma Program from 2007- 2013.

Intervention: The implementation of a core-competency-based COE Diploma program.

Outcome Measures: (1) Residents' learning, as measured using the preceptors' evaluation of the residents' skills/abilities throughout the training program; and (2) Graduates' training experience, as measured using the graduates' ratings of the program on a Graduate's Questionnaire

Results: There were nine and eight residents before and during the implementation of the COE competency-based residency program, respectively. Learning was rated highly in both periods. Residents in the competency-based program earned higher learning ratings on 73% of objectives and for all CanMEDS roles. However, the increase did not reach significance due to a ceiling effect. This represented 118 evaluations from the 17 residents. Training experience also was rated highly in both periods. Graduates in the competency-based program rated the following program components significantly higher than the pre-competency-based-program residents: Admission process, Orientation to the program, and Evaluation process ($p=0.014$, 0.038 , 0.038 , respectively).

Conclusion: The development and implementation of core competencies may strengthen residency training. Residents in a core-competency-based program have a more positive learning experience compared to those in standard programs.