The College of Family Physicians of Canada™ (CFPC) conducts the Certification Examination in Family Medicine virtually in the spring and fall in English and French.

1,540 total number of candidates

1,510 candidates sat the SAMP and the new virtual SOO exam

22 candidates sat the new virtual SOO exam only (repeaters)

8 candidates sat the SAMP only (repeaters)

The new virtual SOO explained

SOO flow: In the exam, the candidate assumes the role of the family doctor caring for a patient in their office setting. The examiner, a certified family physician, plays the role of the patient and marks the candidate’s performance during the exam. The candidate encounters five different “patients” in a row (five SOO cases).

The written component of the examination, the computer-based short-answer management problems (SAMPs), took place from April 19 to April 21, 2022. It was four hours in length with an optional 15-minute break.

The new virtual simulated office oral (SOO) component of the Certification Examination in Family Medicine was administered to all eligible candidates. This was the biggest interactive virtual examination in Canada so far.

Examiner Login
Candidate Login

Exam development

Content development:
- 10 SOO English and French cases
- 10 SOO writers (authors and reviewers)
- 8 SOO committee meetings

Exam delivery platform development:
- 20 hours of user acceptance testing
- 2 virtual and 2 in-person staff platform training sessions
- 2 dry-runs

Oral exam administration details

Four Virtual Examination Days (Two weekends)
April 23 and 24, 2022
April 30 and May 1, 2022

Candidate readiness
- Instructional videos, audio recordings, and written materials
- Frequently asked questions document
- Candidate technical user guide
- Live webcast
- Sample videos of a virtual SOO encounter

Examiner readiness
- Platform orientation including hands-on experiences in the demo environment
- Marking standardization session
- Virtual calibration session using mock candidates
- SOO leader and assistant SOO leader training
- Incident management guide
- Examiner training on performance assessment of patient-centered approach, identifying a range of judgment biases, and managing the impact of bias in assessment
- Business process transformation
- Bilingual exam interface

ID Validation
Reading Time: 1 minute
Administration Time: 15 minutes
Marking Time for Examiner/Candidate Break: 12 minutes
Examination starts of 50 candidates each day
50 candidates and 50 examiners log in and start together
As many as 150 candidates in the exam at the same time

Examiner/Candidate Break

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Exam day command centre

To ensure secure, effective, and seamless candidate and examiner support, a fully staffed, well-trained in-person command centre was formed:

Key functions:

- Exam day schedule
- A continuous cycle of pre-exam troubleshooting, publishing exams, exam monitoring, issue resolution, and data collection

Outcomes:

- 100% capture of examiner marking and more qualitative written comments about candidate performance than ever before
- 99% success rate of initial encounters
- 26% French, 74% English
- Our largest ever francophone cohort at just over one quarter of all our candidates
- 0.6% of all encounters had to be rerun since the fifth SOO station finished due to technical issues in the initial running
- 2 emergency examination sessions were initiated at the end of exam day on both Saturdays for a rerun of one or two stations for eight candidates

Written exam administration details

Mode of delivery

- 36% remotely proctored exam
- 64% test site exam
- One-third of candidates opted for remote proctoring of their exam. Public health restrictions on indoor gatherings limited the number of people that could be accommodated at test centres.

Technical difficulties

- 1% Fourteen candidates experienced technical difficulties and alternative options were found for them. With effective communication channels in place, the CFPC was able to solve problems in a quick, professional, and consistent manner.

Language of choice

- 25% French, 75% English
- One quarter of candidates took the exams in French

Eligibility route

- 6% practice eligible
- 94% residency eligible
- Majority of the candidates qualified through the residency-eligible route.