

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the FTA framework?

FTA stands for Fundamental Teaching Activities. As medical education became competency based, clinicians began to ask how they needed to develop as teachers. The College of Family Physicians of Canada formed a Working Group on Faculty Development in the spring of 2012 to help answer this question. After an academic literature review and extensive consultations with medical teachers and learners, the WGFD developed the FTA framework. It describes the day-to-day elements of a teacher's work to give a holistic portrait of what a teacher actually does.

How can I use the FTA framework?

The FTA framework has multiple uses. These include:

- providing teachers with a description of their teaching tasks
- furnishing a road map for teachers to guide their self-reflection and self-development
- assisting programs, departments, and faculty in developing strategies or curricula for faculty development
- serving as an organizational framework for faculty development materials, tools, and strategies, both locally and nationally

This framework is not intended as an assessment tool or as a checklist of requirements. It should be viewed as a guide to your teaching development. The FTA framework may help you improve your teaching skills in conducting your current tasks. It could also help you identify training you might need to take on new responsibilities.

What are domains, tasks, and activities?

For the purpose of this framework, *domain* describes a broad sphere of teaching activity. These domains are clinical preceptor, teacher outside the clinical setting, and educational leader. Domains are divided into *tasks*: the clinical preceptor domain is divided into clinical coach and competency coach; the educational leader is divided into educational administrator and educational programmer; and the teacher outside the clinical setting has one task, which is the design and delivery of teaching sessions outside the clinical setting. For each task, fundamental *activities* have been identified. They depict what teachers do on a day-to-day basis. Each activity is described by key elements in the columns to the right of the activity, in a developmental trajectory from left to right.

What is a competency coach?

A competency coach is an educational advisor along the course of the learner's training, guiding development of competencies. This is the teacher who works longitudinally with the learner to periodically review their learning goals.

What is the difference between an educational programmer and an educational administrator?

An educational programmer identifies and addresses the curricula needed to meet the learning needs of groups of learners (medical students, residents, family physicians, and other teachers in family medicine). The content and delivery methods of the curricula would be the educational programmer's primary focus, generally at a specific teaching site.

The educational administrator focuses at a broader level on evaluating the impact of educational programs, on aligning programs with current university and CFPC goals, and on securing resources to deliver these programs. As family medicine becomes widely distributed outside traditional teaching settings, more teachers will become involved in the development and delivery of family medicine programs.

Are there resources I can access?

The Working Group on Faculty Development is developing a repository of faculty development resources. This will be available on the CFPC website and will be regularly updated. Additional resources may be available to you through your Department of Family Medicine, your local Faculty Development Committee, or through the Faculty of Medicine at your university. In addition, there are many tools available online, as several universities have made their faculty development tools available to family medicine teachers across Canada. A search of individual university sites can also uncover a wealth of resources.

Do I need to accomplish all tasks in all domains?

No! The domains describe all possible tasks that family medicine teachers might perform. Everyone's situation will be different. The FTA framework is a guide to help you identify the competencies that are relevant to your teaching needs. As you take on new roles and tasks, the FTA can help you identify areas of potential professional growth.

What does the arrow at the top of the domain mean?

The arrows pointing from left to right represent growth in each fundamental teaching activity. This is not, however, a mandatory or required progression for each teaching activity.