

Re-envisioning the Future of Assessment, Certification, and Examination (ReFACE): At a Glance

Background

The Re-envisioning the Future of Assessment, Certification, and Examination (ReFACE) project is a series of continuous quality improvement processes designed to strengthen and enhance family medicine certification decisions using a variety of approaches. An ongoing, quality improvement mindset of our approach to awarding certification in family medicine (CCFP) is not only reasonable but should be expected of an organization of the high calibre of the College of Family Physicians of Canada™ (CFPC).

Many factors have arisen to make this the right project at this time. In 2016 we received recommendations related to our examinations as part of an external review of our certification assessment program. More recently, the CFPC Residency Training Profile (RTP) has clearly defined comprehensiveness in training. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic forced major changes for administering the examination in family medicine in the simulated office oral (SOO) component of the examination, from being delivered in person to a virtual format.

The CFPC must therefore align both: (1) its articulated goal of family medicine certification, and (2) its assessment content and processes with this 'new bar' so that the CFPC is seen to be, and is truly, assessing what is valued by the profession. This includes both in-training assessment and point-in-time (i.e., examination) assessment environments.

Key deliverables

Expand assessment strategies by:

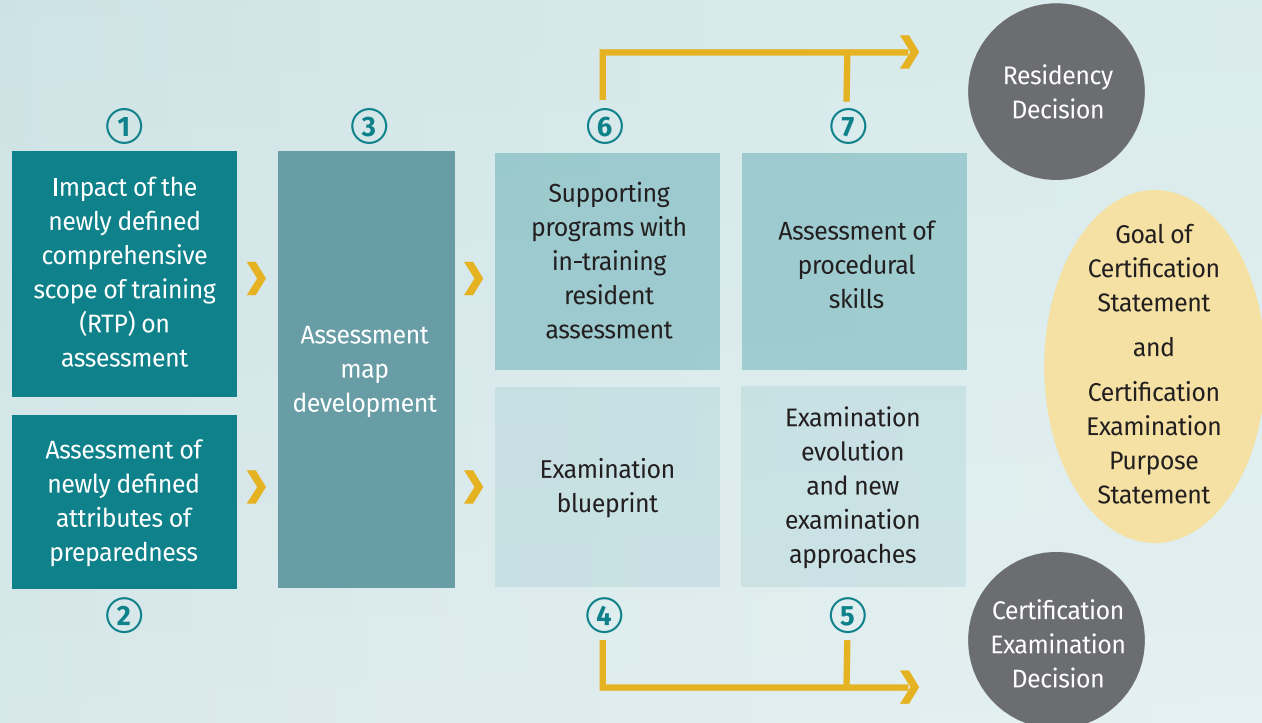
- Ensuring that assessment approaches align with the comprehensive scope of training as defined by the RTP
- Identifying and developing assessment approaches for newly defined attributes of preparedness and competence
- Providing guidance and support to residency programs and examination content development for assessing the scope of training expectations defined in the RTP
- Designing an approach to assessing procedural skills by family medicine residency programs

Consider possible changes to the CFPC's certification strategy by:

- Articulating an examination blueprint that is the basis for creating the test forms used to examine candidates
- Developing examination formats based on best practices that use the most current technology
- Determining an overall certification strategy that may include a wider scope of practice and range of assessment contexts

Strengthen the clarity of purpose of the family medicine residency certification by:

- Articulating a Goal of Certification statement that aligns with the RTP and the OTP projects' recommendations
- Creating a Certification Examination in Family Medicine Purpose Statement, further clarifying its role in the certification decision in a competency-based educational world



Project work streams and outputs

1. Impact of the newly defined comprehensive scope of training (RTP) on assessment

Determine the impact that the comprehensive scope of training outlined in the RTP could and should have at the levels of in-training residency assessment, the certification examination, the certification decision, and on the CFPC's assessment frameworks.

2. Assessment of newly defined attributes of preparedness

Integrate the preparedness attribute, defined by the OTP Education Reform Taskforce, into the CFPC's overall assessment strategy.

3. Assessment map development

Clarify which aspects of preparedness and components of competence should be assessed through in-training residency assessment, by the written part of the Certification Examination in Family Medicine (short answer management problems (SAMPs)), and/or by the performance part (SOOs) of the examination. This may require incorporating new approaches to our current examination structure and design.

4. Examination blueprint

Develop a comprehensive examination blueprint that will guide the CFPC in designing examination test forms that are

comparable over time, ensure the assessment objectives are appropriately and consistently met from year to year, and inform candidates about what will be tested. An examination blueprint also provides important evidence to support the validity of examination results.

5. Examination evolution and new examination approaches

Explore and possibly adopt new approaches to examination testing, modernize both the written and performance components of the certification examination, and ensure an examination process that is pandemic-resistant.

6. Supporting program in-training resident assessment

Collaborate with programs to identify challenges encountered in in-training resident assessment, particularly those that are newly articulated by the OTP and identified through a social accountability lens, and commission work to help family medicine residency programs develop their assessment strategies.

7. Assessment of procedural skills

Develop an approach to the assessment of procedure skills in family medicine residency programs in collaboration with program and assessment directors.