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Validation of the CanMEDS Competence Framework for Workplace Learning in Undergraduate Healthcare Education: An Online Delphi Study

Background and aim(s) - Nowadays, workplace learning in healthcare education is often guided by competency-based educational methods. Various competence frameworks have been constructed but haven't been interdisciplinary validated in undergraduate healthcare education. This study aims to validate the CanMEDS competence framework in 8 undergraduate healthcare educational programs, and to provide recommendations.

Methods - A three round online Delphi method with experts i.e. teachers, mentors, internship coordinators and educational experts from audiology, dental hygiene, midwifery, nursing (bachelor and associate degree), occupational therapy, podiatry and speech therapy, was used. Experts scored the

relevance, clarity and measurability of each key competency (n=27). Consensus was defined as 70% or more of the experts scored positive on a 6-point Likert scale (quantitative analysis). In round 1, experts also provided qualitative comments to clarify their score, adjust key competencies without consensus and formulate recommendations. Differences between expert groups (e.g. healthcare profession, experience level etc.) were explored after each round.

Results - Round 1 and 2 included 38 and 37 experts. Round 3 is ongoing. After round 1, there was no consensus about the relevance of 2 competencies, the clarity of 3 competencies and the measurability of 19 competencies. Qualitative remarks were used to clarify (21) or adjust (3) competencies. After round 2, 3 competencies weren't validated. No significant differences between expert groups were found.

The analysis further revealed that 1) key competencies needed enabling competencies to maximize measurability, and 2) not all key competencies could be assessed at any moment during the program which emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development.

Conclusions and recommendations – This validated CanMEDS competence framework might be used to support interprofessional education across different undergraduate healthcare professions. Future research is necessary to validate newly formulated enabling competencies to optimize measurability.

Key words - CanMEDS, undergraduate healthcare education, online Delphi