



T5. UNDERSTANDING THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHERS^a

To work effectively with physicians and other colleagues in the health professions, you need to understand and appreciate the professional roles and responsibilities of the people you work with. Many of the concerns underlying the “how to” of collaboration emerge from a lack of understanding of the professional roles and responsibilities of others. This exercise is designed to help you identify any gaps that you may have in your understanding.

Instructions for Learners:

- Mark an X beside the roles that you feel you understand well enough to explain to others.
- Add a description for each role, including the skills and expertise that individuals in this role contribute to patient care.
- Add clarifying notes if or how ‘it depends’ on the work place context.
- Reflect on the roles that have no X next to them. Is it important to your practice and to the care of your patient that you understand these roles? If so, make the time to find out.

ROLE	X	DESCRIPTION
PHYSICIANS		
Medical clerk		
Physician’s assistant		
Resident		
Fellow		
Staff physician		
Family physician		
Specialist		
OTHER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS		
Nurse practitioner		
Advanced practice nurse		
Registered nurse		
Registered nurse assistant		
Venipuncturist		
Charge nurse		
Nurse manager		
Triage officer		
Audiologist		
Chiropodist and podiatrist		
Chaplain		
Chiropractor		
Dental hygienist		
Dentist		
Denturist		

^a Adapted from Richardson D, Martin D, Glover Takahashi S. Chapter 3. In *The CanMEDS Toolkit for Teaching and Assessing the Collaborator Role*. Ottawa: Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada; 2012. Reproduced with permission.



T5. UNDERSTANDING THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHERS (continued)

ROLE	X	DESCRIPTION
OTHER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS		
Dietician		
Kinesiologist		
Massage therapist		
Medical laboratory technologist		
Medical radiation technologist		
Midwife		
Occupational therapist		
Optician		
Optometrist		
Paramedic		
Pharmacist		
Physiotherapist		
Prosthetist		
Psychologist		
Respiratory therapist		
Social worker		
Speech pathologist		
Other		
Other		
COMMUNITY RESOURCES		
In-home patient care		
Community-based nursing care		
Other		
Other		
PRACTICE SUPPORT SERVICES		
Dietary service		
Housekeeping		
Security		
Volunteer		
Unit clerk		
Bed coordinator		
Health records		
Dictation/Transcription		
Central supply room (CSR) service		
Other		
Other		