

CanMEDS Collaborator  
Teaching tool T5  
Guided Reflection and Discussion

**Understanding the roles and responsibilities of others[[1]](#endnote-1)**

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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 |  |  |
| 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 |  |  |

1. 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. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)