

Committee on Specialties

Role

The Committee on Specialties (COS) is a subcommittee that reports to the Committee on Specialty Education (CSE). It is responsible for providing advice and making recommendations on matters relating to the system of specialty medicine in Canada, and in particular, the disciplines recognized by the Royal College.

Responsibility and Authority

The major tasks of the COS are to:

- Provide insight and recommendation to the Committee on Specialty Education on the overall configuration of the system of specialty education, specifically on policy for discipline recognition, including the development of criteria for discipline recognition;
- Review requests and, in accordance with the relevant policy, make recommendations to CSE for recognition of new disciplines;
- Review requests and, in accordance to the relevant policy, make recommendations to CSE for changes to existing disciplines (i.e., status, length of training, name);
- Oversee the activities of individual disciplines and specialty committees as part of the periodic discipline review process, with the aim of ensuring the health and sustainability of disciplines; and
- Offer an appeal and dispute resolution mechanism for potential applicants and specialty committees.

The COS delegates authority to individual specialty committees (specialty, subspecialty, and Area of Focused Competence) for the following key functions, across the continuum of medical education:

- Development of specialty-specific milestones and objectives of training;
- Oversight for assessment of the discipline, including specifically the development of work-based assessments and the examination blueprints within the discipline, in keeping with the Assessment Committee's predetermined set of criteria and principles;
- Development of a national curriculum for the discipline;
- Oversight of Accreditation review for those programs within the relevant discipline, both domestic (national) and international in nature; and
- Oversight of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) within the discipline; and
- Oversight of certification for graduates of the discipline.

In addition to reporting to the Committee on Specialty Education (CSE), the Specialty Standards Review Committee (SSRC) has a reporting relationship with the COS.



Composition

The COS has 15 voting members, including the chair and a vice-chair. The chair is a member of the Committee on Specialty Education. The specific composition of the COS will be determined as appropriate and will include:

- One (1) specialty resident representative, as selected from two nominees from the Resident Doctors of Canada (RDOC);
- One (1) specialty resident representative, as selected from two nominees from the Fédération des médecins résidents du Québec (FMRQ); and
- Fellows of the Royal College from the medical, surgical, and laboratory disciplines, and others with an interest and/or expertise in the system of specialization in medical education and practice.

Fellows shall be selected on the basis of ensuring a diversity of perspectives from both tertiary care teaching hospitals and rural/community-based practice, across all regions of Canada.

The COS also includes ten (10) non-voting members who may attend meetings but shall not be counted for the purposes of establishing quorum:

- Two (2) non-voting residents, one each from RDoC and FMRQ;
- One (1) non-voting representative from the Postgraduate Deans;
- One (1) non-voting member from the Canadian Post-M.D. Education Registry (CAPER);
- One (1) non-voting member from the Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS);
- One (1) non-voting member from Le Collège des médecins du Québec (CMQ);
- One (1) non-voting member from the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC);
- One (1) non-voting member from the Committee on Health Workforce (CHW);
- One (1) non-voting member from HealthCareCAN, and
- One (1) non-voting member from the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC).

Key Competencies and Characteristics

Generally, committee members should possess the following key competencies and attributes:

- Ability to demonstrate a broad perspective on system of specialization in medical education and practice,
- Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of effective medical education policy with respect to the structure and function of the system of specialization in medical education and practice, and
- Ability to demonstrate an understanding of the interactions between various disciplines within the system of specialization in medical education and practice.
- Ability and willingness to meet the strategic directions of the Royal College and the willingness to participate effectively in committee meetings.



Term of Office

The usual term of office of the chair is two years, renewable once (maximum of four years). The term of the vice-chair is one year, renewable three times (maximum of four years). The usual term of office of the other committee members is two years, renewable twice (maximum of six years), with the exception of the voting specialty residents whose terms are one year, renewable twice (maximum of three years). The terms of office take effect as stipulated so long as the member's total years of service on the committee do not extend beyond 10 years.

All terms shall begin and end at the time of the Annual Meeting of the Members when vacancies need to be filled.

The chair and all voting members of the committee require appointment by the Executive Committee of Council (or the CEO if it is a midterm appointment). Non-voting members do not require approval of the ECC or the CEO.

Meetings

The COS usually meets two or three times per year.

Quorum consists of a majority of the voting members of the committee (i.e., 50% plus one). The chair is counted as a voting member in constituting quorum. However as the presiding official of the committee, the chair does not move motions. Furthermore, the chair shall only vote when the vote is conducted by secret ballot. Every question shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast. In the event of a tie vote, the question shall be defeated. When a committee is called to make a decision outside of a meeting by e-ballot, the same rules apply.

Appointment to a Royal College committee carries significant responsibilities, and all committee members are expected to adhere to the Volunteer Code of Conduct. In addition, committee members are required to maintain absolute discretion and not divulge, re-produce, or release any confidential information except when authorized by the Royal College. Committee members may download a copy of committee materials for the sole purpose of participating in committee work. All downloaded materials must be deleted once the related committee work is completed. The Royal College retains copies of committee materials should committee members wish to access them at a later time for related work.

Committee work product

In the course of performing their committee duties, committee members may produce or contribute to materials, content or other work products. These work products and the related intellectual property will be owned by the Royal College. The Royal College is open to discussing other ownership arrangements for specific projects. Alternative arrangements must be confirmed in writing by the project contributors and the Royal College.



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