



Training residents in emergency medicine

New educational resource manuals offer national guidelines for family medicine residents

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Emergency medicine (EM) is a College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)-mandated, integral component of family medicine (FM) training. Family medicine trainees across Canada receive EM education during their core FM first- and second-year training. Residents in third-year FM-EM programs for additional skills have a more in-depth exposure to acute care. The CFPC's educational guidelines recommend that EM education be integrated into the 3-year training program.¹

Currently, there are no EM educational tools useful for all Program Directors, educators, and FM residents in both the core FM and FM-EM programs. Most programs use objectives that are specific for teaching in their settings and are generally geared for urban or regional centres. These objectives do not suit a variety of other settings in which acute care teaching can occur. There is little continuity or consistency between FM and FM-EM training across Canada.

The FM-EM Program Directors' National Committee took on the challenge of developing educational resources that integrate EM education in FM and FM-EM programs. The intent was to provide all participants in the programs with tools that are educationally sound, based on a graded approach to EM education, clear and easy to use, and aligned with the four principles of FM.

Developing the text took 4 years. The editors, many EM teachers and educators from other disciplines, FM Program Directors, CFPC staff, and FM educators across Canada worked hard to attain the consensus needed for shaping the final product. Two separate, two-part documents have been developed: the Educational Reference Manual; Core Emergency Medicine Training in Family Medicine Residency Programs² and the Educational Reference Manual; Family Medicine–Emergency Medicine Residency Programs.³ They can be located at either of the following two sites: <http://www.caep.ca/006.residents/006-07.objectives.htm> or <http://hippocrates.family.med.ualberta.ca/educational-resource-top-page.htm>.

These manuals should prove to be useful to many. "Part 1: Terminal Objectives" in each document describes

educational goals and provides simple, comprehensive tools for Program Directors in EM education. The larger "Part 2: Study Guides for Programs" in each document compiles clinical case presentations and a series of "enabling objectives." The study guides provide educators and FM residents with practical tools for delivery of high-quality EM education.

Programs in Canada can adapt the content to local needs. Residents should look at the task of attaining these objectives as 2- or 3-year works-in-progress. Training takes place in urban and regional emergency departments, rural practices, during off-service rotations in other traditional hospital-based disciplines, and sometimes in family physicians' offices. Portions of these reference materials can be reviewed throughout all rotations. The strength of the current manuals is that they take a global, integrated approach to EM training. By the end of 2 or 3 years of comprehensive training, residents should have covered most if not all the material in these reference manuals. ♦

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