



TOUCHSTONE
INSTITUTE
COMPETENCY EVALUATION EXPERTS

2017/18

ANNUAL REPORT

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About Touchstone Institute

Touchstone Institute is a non-profit corporation that offers expertise in evaluation and curriculum development to promote public confidence in professional competence in the Canadian workforce. We excel in providing competency-based services in support of successful transitions to training and practice that meet professional and societal needs.

Supported by expertise in simulation, innovation in exam technology, and robust research-based quality assurance, we are expertly prepared to meet the diverse needs of our clients, stakeholders, and partners. We specialize in creating valid and authentic competency-based experiences for internationally educated health professionals.



Touchstone Institute receives financial support from the Government of Ontario.





Our Partners and Clients

Partners

We foster strong relationships with key stakeholders to share knowledge, promote dialogue and implement programs with cross-sectoral impacts.

Our services respond to the needs identified by:

- Regulatory bodies
- Professional associations
- Settlement agencies
- Employers

and in consultation with:

- Educational institutions
- Bridging programs
- Health professionals
- Researchers
- Language experts
- Simulation experts

Clients

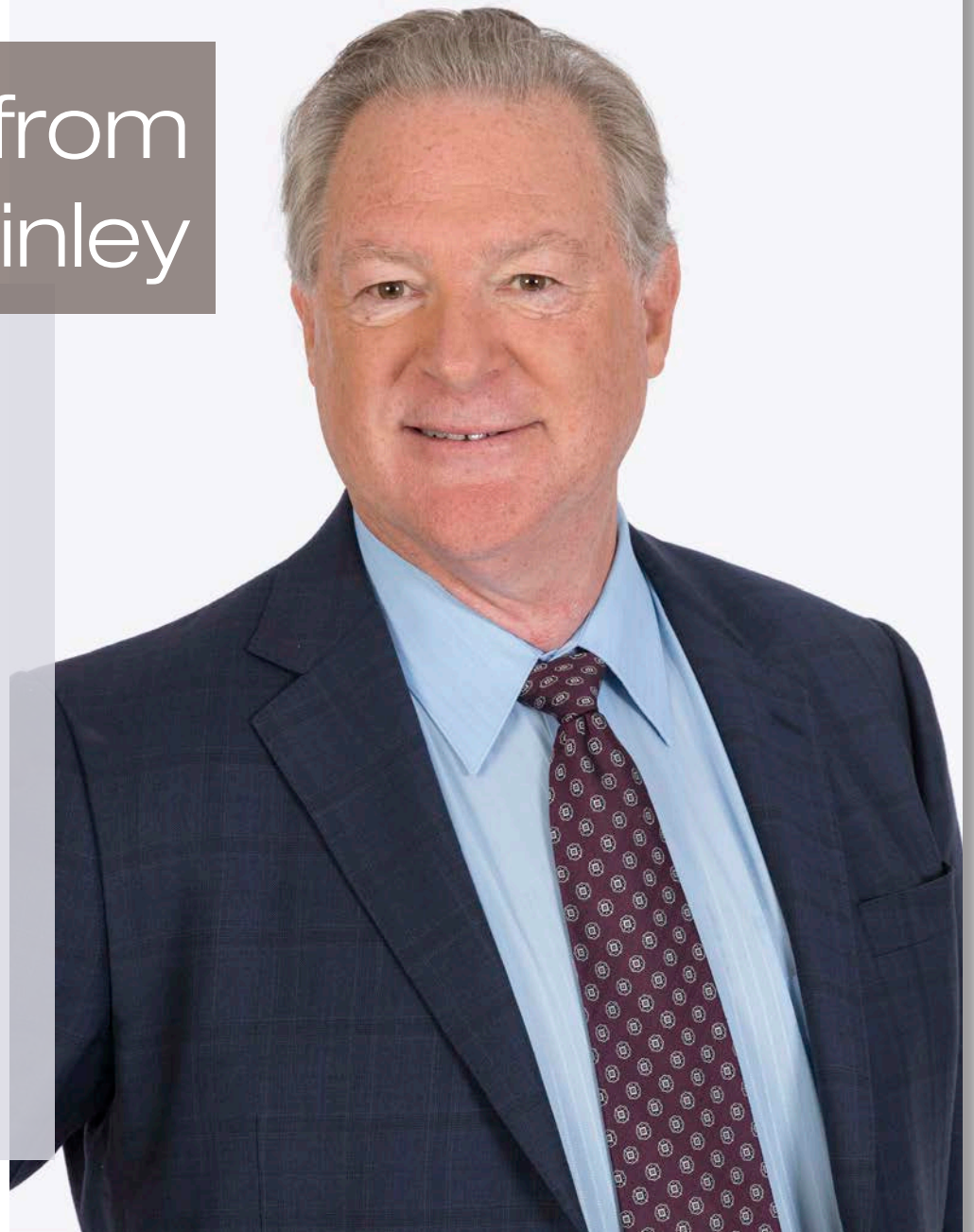
Our assessments and programs are developed in support of licensure and transitions to professional practice for internationally educated health professionals. Our candidates and learners include:

- Dietitians
- Embryologists & Andrologists
- Nurses
- Optometrists
- Physicians

A Message from John McKinley

This year I became Chair, stepping into the role occupied by Dr. Ken Harris for the past 10 years. Under Ken's leadership, Touchstone Institute blossomed from a small organization focused on Ontario's physician supply challenges to the organization you see today – one that works with internationally trained professionals from many disciplines, operating in provinces from coast to coast. I am taking this opportunity to thank Ken for his dedication to Touchstone Institute and for his leadership style that has supported the growth and development of the Board and the Institute. The Board has embraced this broader vision that builds on the skills and knowledge of Touchstone Institute staff to address unmet needs for high stakes assessment and orientation to the Canadian healthcare context. I am excited about the possibilities this organization presents, and look forward to continuing the journey that Ken initiated during his tenure.

John McKinley, Chair, Board of Directors, Touchstone Institute





A Message from Sten Ardal

I was fortunate to have Suzanne Bambrick step in as Interim Chief Executive Officer for the latter half of the past year. Our steady progress throughout this period was proof that Touchstone Institute's leadership and staff are committed to the success of our programs and the satisfaction of our clients, learners, and candidates. Readers will note their many contributions and accomplishments in the ensuing pages. I take great pride in sharing this work and am very glad to be back and restored to health. The hardest part of my lengthy absence was being away from the people I share my work world with. Together we are looking forward to another year of growth, as we continue to build on our core strengths to offer innovations in assessment, curriculum, and simulation services.

Sten Ardal, CEO, Touchstone Institute, pictured with Suzanne Bambrick, Interim CEO/Director, Human Resources & Operations, Touchstone Institute

Governance

Touchstone Institute is fortunate to have a Board of Directors that brings considerable experience and breadth of knowledge. Recently we have been experiencing renewal as our founding members exhaust their terms. This has presented opportunities to bring new voices to our table as we pursue our strategic goals of growth and commitment to fostering public confidence in professional competence.

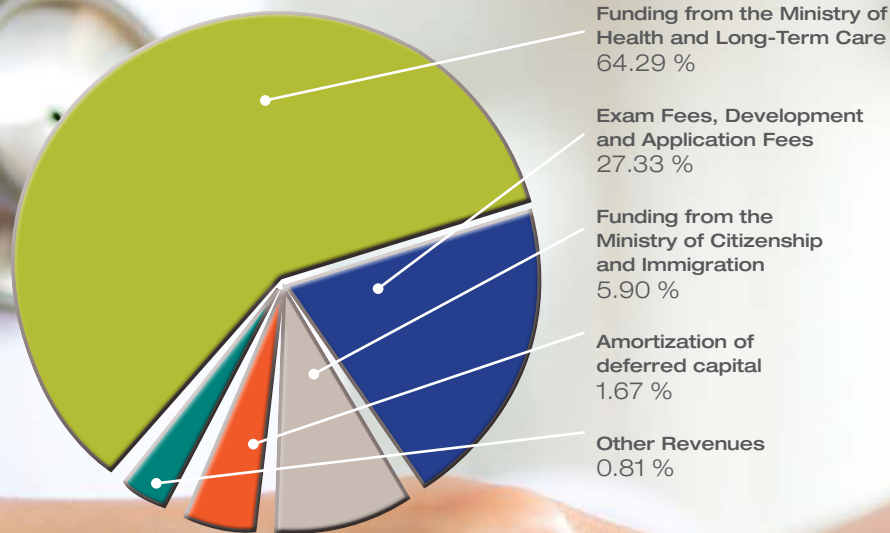


Back (Left to Right): John McKinley - Board Chair, Touchstone Institute and Principal, JMcKinley Consulting; Parveen Wasi - Associate Dean of Postgraduate Medical Education, McMaster University; Brian Hodges - Executive Vice President of Education, University Health Network and Professor, University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine; Dan Faulkner - Deputy Registrar, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

Front (Left to Right): Ella Ferris - Retired health care executive; Sten Ardal - CEO, Touchstone Institute

Absent: Lianne Krakauer - Career Coach and Leadership Consultant; Steve Watts - Partner in Audit Services, KPMG

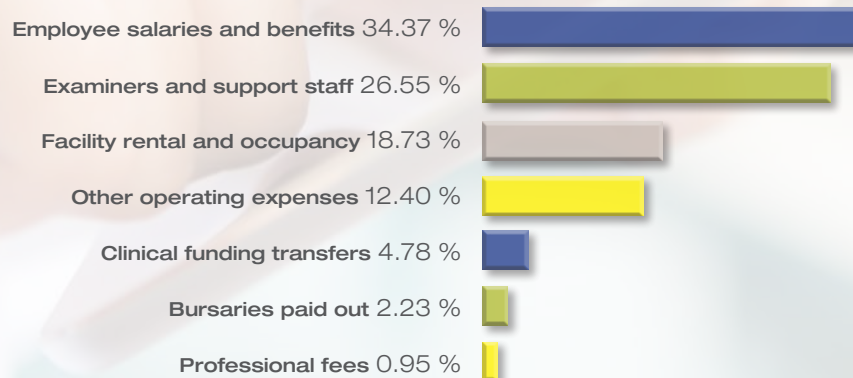
Financial Information



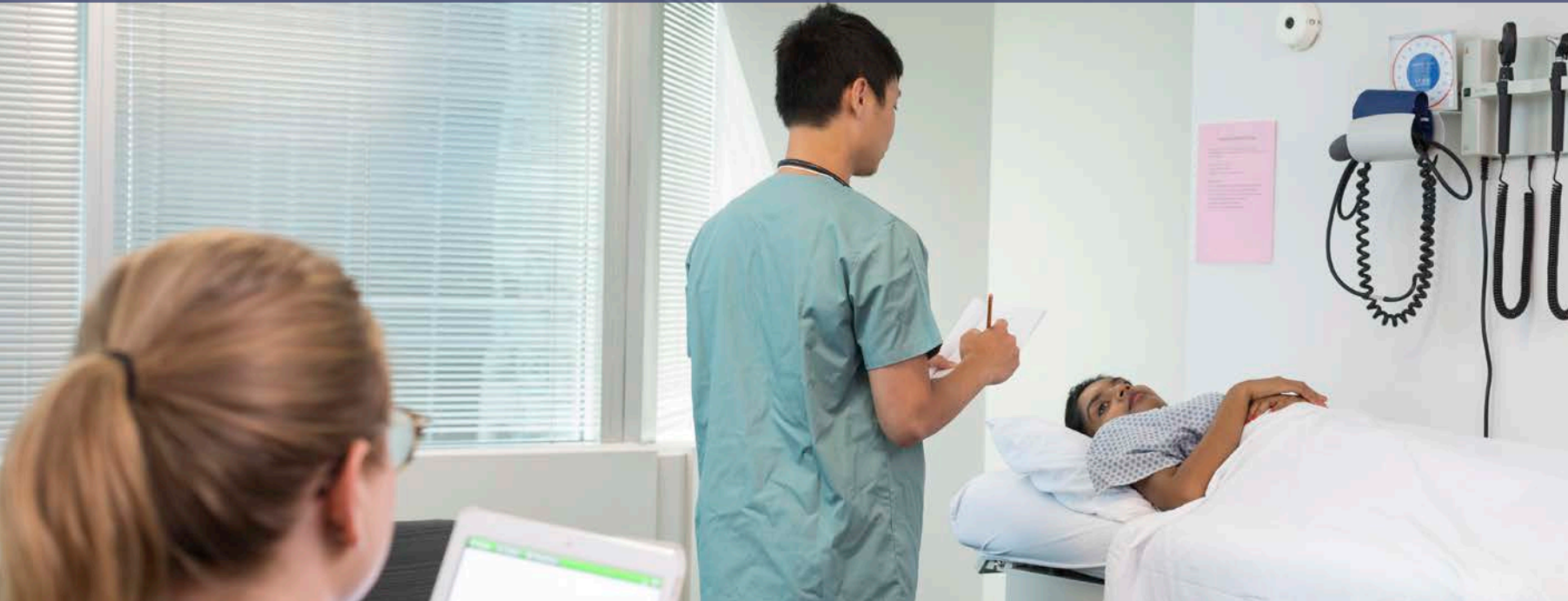
Condensed Statement of Operations

Year Ended March 31	2018	2017
Revenues		
Funding from Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	7,385,334	7,590,001
Funding from Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration	677,926	998,230
Exam fees, development and application fees	3,139,604	2,365,612
Other revenues	93,375	267,163
Amortization of deferred capital funding	192,099	512,386
	11,488,338	11,733,392
Expenses		
Examiners and support staff	2,773,860	2,606,485
Employee salaries and benefits	3,590,737	3,291,387
Facility rental and occupancy	1,957,018	1,761,297
Bursaries paid out	232,500	315,750
Clinical funding transfers	499,950	416,700
Professional fees	98,884	152,524
Other operating expenses	1,295,734	1,855,760
	10,448,683	10,399,903
Excess of revenues over expenses	1,039,655	1,333,489
Repayable to Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	(417,603)	(41,833)
Net excess of revenues over expenses	622,052	1,291,656

Expenses 2017-18



Programs & Services



A 360° View of Communicative Competence at Work

- Project focusing on the development of an open-access framework providing strategies and approaches for effective and successful intercultural communication in the workplace.

Alberta Registered Nurses Assessment Program (ARNAP)

- Assessment of the knowledge, skills, and judgement of internationally educated nurses seeking registration in Alberta.

Canadian English Language Assessment for Optometrists (CELAO)

- Occupation-specific language assessment for internationally educated optometrists to evaluate speaking, writing, reading, and listening language skills.

Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN)

- Assessment of speaking, writing, reading, and listening language skills – Developed by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, administered by The CELBAN Centre within Touchstone Institute.

Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society Assessment for Assistive Reproductive Technology (CFAS ART) Lab Professionals

- Certification assessment for assistive reproductive technology lab professionals operating in a non-supervisory position (embryologists and andrologists).

Programs & Services

Canadian Medicine Primer (CMP)

- Orientation program offered to visiting fellows and to residents studying in Canada under visa arrangements.

Communication through Simulation Project

- Project focusing on the development of an experiential communication competency program targeting professional communication skills for the healthcare workplace.

Internationally Educated Nurses Competency Assessment Program (IENCAP)

- Assessment of the knowledge, skills, and judgement of internationally educated nurses seeking registration in Ontario.

Internationally Graduated Optometrists Evaluating Exam (IGOEE)

- Assessment of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of internationally graduated optometrists.

Knowledge and Competency Assessment Tool (KCAT) for Internationally Educated Dietitians

- Tablet-based exam that is a component of the College of Dietitians of Ontario (CDO) prior learning assessment.

Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination Part II (MCCQE Part II)

- Assessment of the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes of medical graduates at a level expected of physicians entering independent practice in Canada – Administered for the Medical Council of Canada.

National Assessment Collaboration Objective Structured Clinical Exam (NAC OSCE)

- Assessment evaluating the readiness of international medical graduates for entrance into a Canadian residency program – Administered for the Medical Council of Canada.

Nurse Practitioner Practice Assessment (NPPA)

- Assessment evaluating the clinical competence of Ontario nurse practitioners as a component of quality assurance programming.

Pre-Residency Program (PRP)

- Mandatory orientation program for international medical graduates who have been accepted into an Ontario specialty residency program.

Pre-Residency Program—Family Medicine (PRP-FM)

- Mandatory orientation program for international medical graduates who have been accepted into an Ontario family medicine residency program.

Therapeutics Decision Making (TDM) Examination

- Assessment of the therapeutic knowledge and skills of internationally trained physicians – Administered for the Medical Council of Canada and the Saskatchewan International Physician Practice Assessment (SIPPA) program.

Highlights

Over 2017-18, Touchstone Institute pursued growth and innovation in assessment administration, program improvement, and the development of our services.

ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION

- June 2017 – Launch of the Alberta Registered Nurses Assessment Program (ARNAP) in Calgary as our first satellite site using examiner tablet scoring technology for a performance assessment
- September 2017 – Launch of the redeveloped quality assurance performance assessment for practicing nurse practitioners (NPPA)
- January 2018 – Entered a contract with the Medical Council of Canada (MCC) to become a new administrative site for the MCC Qualifying Examination Part II (MCCQE Part II)
- February 2018 – First administration of the renewed Canadian English Language Assessment for Optometrists (CELAO)
- Continued growth in capacity for the national administration of the Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN), serving 2971 test takers

Highlights

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

- April 2017 – The Canadian Medicine Primer and Pre-Residency Programs launched new sessions on: rural health, interprofessional teams, palliative care, vulnerable populations, and chronic pain and addiction medicine
- April 2017 – International medical graduates participating in education programming were offered electives for the first time, with sessions on: communication, psychiatry, paediatrics, and internal medicine
- The Education and Simulation Programs collaborated with subject matter experts in the development of new simulation-based cases, providing 2017 Education Program participants with additional opportunity for experiential learning
- The Simulation team trained for over 1200 simulated interactions for education programming, and over 900 standardized clients for assessment cases

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- January 2018 – Completion of the Canadian English Language Assessment for Optometrists (CELAO) test renewal and validation project
- March 2018 – Completion of the 360° View of Communicative Competence at Work project. *The final deliverable of the project, 360° View of Communicative Competence at Work – a Framework for Intercultural Communication in the Workplace, was launched in June 2018*
- March 2018 – Received funding from the Government of Ontario to launch a communication competency project (*Communication through Simulation*) that will design, develop and pilot intensive simulation-based communication training modules in a generalized healthcare context
- Orientation videos featuring our standardized clients were developed to prepare candidates and examiners for the tablet-based assessment technology used for most of our examinations

Assessment Program

Our Assessment Program develops and administers large-scale written and clinical exams that reliably assess the competencies of health professionals and support decisions on readiness to practice in Ontario.

Exams are constructed and validated by our in-house experts, who work in collaboration with practicing health professionals and experts in healthcare from universities, professional colleges and regulatory bodies. We also offer administrative services on behalf of regulatory bodies. Our standardized processes reflect our commitment to quality assurance at every stage – from program development, administration and reporting to review, maintenance and renewal.

We develop our exams primarily for Ontario's internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs), and have now expanded our exam services across Canada to other provinces that share common needs and standards of practice.



Samantha Foreman – Project Coordinator; Tana Tugendhat – Exam Coordinator; Jannine Vicari – Exam Coordinator; Will Truong – Manager, Exam Unit; Shawn Chisholm – Exam Coordinator; Debra Sibbald – Executive Director, Assessment Program; Corey Cheung – Exam Coordinator

Communication Program



Our Communication Program provides language and communication resources, along with tools and services for regulators, government, employers, and educators to support safe and effective practice in Canada's health professions. We also house the national administrative centre for the Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses, The CELBAN Centre.

With an emphasis on inter-professional collaboration and practice, the Communication Program explores issues associated with occupation-specific language competence and its impact on professional communication competencies. Our work focuses on internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) as they traverse the pathway from registration to employment.

As an emerging centre of excellence, we have expertise in the development, administration, and evaluation of communication competency assessments, frameworks, and communication training.

Luxshi Amirthalingam – Exam Coordinator, The CELBAN Centre; Diane Hipkin – Examiner Trainer & QA Specialist, The CELBAN Centre; Kelly Partington – Project Coordinator; Daniel Grossutti – Manager, The CELBAN Centre; Karina Winston – Exam Coordinator, The CELBAN Centre; Yzelle Duran – Exam Coordinator, The CELBAN Centre; Meagan Bowie – Exam Coordinator, The CELBAN Centre; Andrea Strachan – Director, Communication Program; Claudia Aldecoa – Project Coordinator

Education Program

Our Education Program offers curriculum, orientation, supports and services to prepare international medical graduates (IMGs) and visa trainees from various training backgrounds for a successful transition into residency in the Canadian healthcare context.

Our curricula are developed with the support of Ontario's medical schools, and in consultation with physicians from various specialties and communities throughout Ontario. Sessions are delivered by consulting physicians and medical educators from across Ontario and include many scenarios using our simulated clients as an integral component of the learning experience.

Our programming utilizes a multitude of learning modalities to not only address learning types and needs, but also to capture the diverse patient care needs of Ontario.



Tania Gamage – Program Coordinator; Jessica Wood – Program Coordinator; Adrian Frisina – Manager, Education Program; Lisa Bellstedt – Program Assistant

Simulation Program



Our Simulation team trains individuals for high-stakes assessments and formative learning contexts. The Simulation Program supports Touchstone Institute's services and programs, contributing expertise in standardized client training, program development and orientations to objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs).

Our database of standardized clients includes a large pool of individuals ranging in age (16 to 75), physical types, ethnic groups, and backgrounds. Portraying patients, colleagues, or other key roles, these standardized clients simulate real-world situations that allow participants to practice their skills or demonstrate their expertise.

Karen Huszar – Senior Standardized Client Trainer; Mansi Patel – Standardized Client Trainer; Alex Tran – Director, Exam Administration; Sana Khan – Standardized Client Trainer

Technology, Research & Analysis

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Our Research and Analysis team provides psychometric support to all of our programs. Through rigorous, evidence-based processes, they guide the development of fair, reliable assessments and ensure defensible results. They work alongside our clients to deliver reports that meet their requirements. Data is also used to evaluate and evolve our programs to ensure their continuing validity.

TECHNOLOGY

Our Technology team is dedicated to the innovation of our assessment services, contributing to administrative efficiencies, enhancing quality assurance measures, and strengthening test security. Through our tablet-based technology, we have expanded our reach with the remote administration of our exams in other Canadian jurisdictions.

Touchstone Institute's tablet-based assessment technology was developed in collaboration with our partners at the Umbrella Consortium for Assessment Networks (UCAN).



Simon Nguyen – *Exam Technologist*; Karen Coetzee – *Psychometrician*; Sandra Monteiro – *Director, Research and Analysis*; Sana Chughtai – *Program Assistant, Technology*; Tabasom Eftekari – *Test Analyst*

Program Support & Development



The staff providing program support are critical to the success of the organization. They provide administrative support, executive assistance, project management, and contribute to the development of new and existing programming.

Rae-Ann Iacucci – *Senior Project Coordinator*; Umayangga Yogalingam – *Project Coordinator*;
Jocelyn Dilworth – *Executive Assistant to the CEO*; Laura Jamieson – *Administrative Assistant, Special Projects*

Corporate Services

Touchstone Institute's programs run smoothly and efficiently thanks to our corporate services team. They ensure our organizational infrastructure is functioning optimally, managing financial systems, human resources, taking care of our unique facilities, and supporting communication needs for all programs.



Milan Milanovic – *Manager, IT*; Sara Bull – *Human Resources Coordinator*; Meng To – *Facilities Coordinator*; Suzanne Ward – *Operations Assistant*; Bill Quinn – *Senior Finance Coordinator*; Juliana Gallo – *Corporate Communication Specialist*; Venkata Marella – *Director, Finance*

Our Events

TOUCHSTONE INSTITUTE COMPETENCY EVALUATION EXPERTS

ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Perspectives is an annual one-day symposium hosted by Touchstone Institute. Our Perspectives Symposia combine research and theory with examples of practical applications. We facilitate connections among disciplines to encourage communication and knowledge-sharing around topics in assessment and education for health professionals.

On January 22, 2018, our fourth annual symposium was held at our facility, exploring the topic of assessment validity. 118 attendees from medical education, healthcare practice, and professional regulation attended this year's event to discuss the best practices in competency assessment. Brian Hodges (University Health Network) and Ara Tekian (University of Illinois) led the event as our keynote speakers.

Next year's event is Perspectives on Professionalism. For more information, visit perspectives2019.com.



CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION CONSULTATION

On June 1, 2017, Touchstone Institute held a large stakeholder consultation to support the 360° View of Culture and Communication project and framework development. 56 participants attended representing employment, education, government, settlement, business, and diversity and inclusion sectors. Findings from this event were leveraged to guide the development of the project's final deliverable, Communicative Competence at Work – a framework for intercultural communication in the workplace released in June 2018.

For more information, visit 360communication.ca.

Knowledge Sharing

We continually seek out opportunities to connect with others in the field of competency assessment and medical education to share our research, experience and learning. In 2017-18, we participated in the following events in Canada and internationally.

WORKSHOPS

Implementing electronic scoring for OSCE (workshop), 2017 Canadian Conference on Medical Education (Winnipeg, Manitoba), April 2017 – Sandra Monteiro, Ilona Bartman, & Hollis lai

Introduction to progress testing: A pan-Canadian (and Dutch) perspective (workshop), 2017 Canadian Conference on Medical Education (Winnipeg, Manitoba), April 2017 – Sandra Monteiro & Kulamakan Kulasegaram

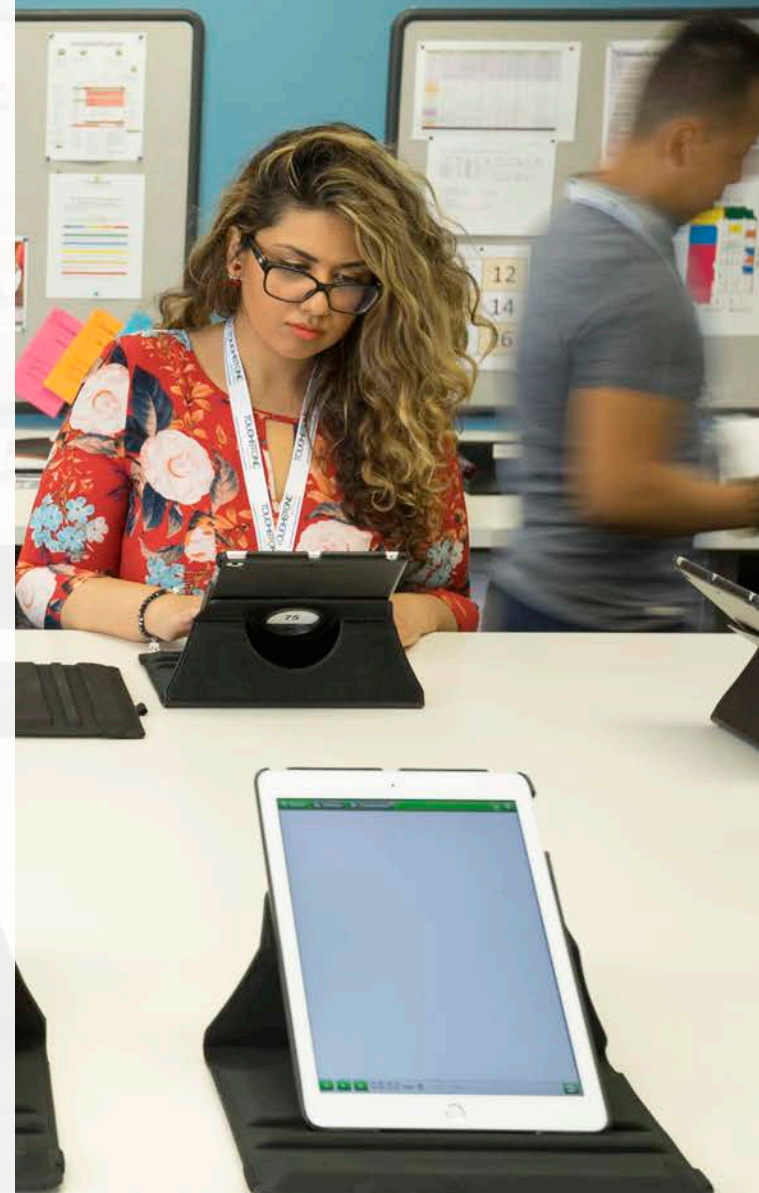
Strengthening the weakest link: How to optimize OSCE examiner training (workshop), London International Advanced Assessment Course (London, England), October 2017 – Debra Sibbald

PUBLICATIONS

A call to investigate the relationship between education and health outcomes using big data. *Academic medicine: Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*, March 2018 – Saad Chahine, Kulamakan Kulasegaram, Sarah Wright, Sandra Monteiro, Lawrence Grierson, Cassandra Barber, Stefanie Sebok-Syer, Meghan M. McConnell, Wendy Yen, Andre De Champlain, & Claire Touchie

Customizing the standard to the purpose of the assessment. *Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation* Volume 14, Issue 30, April 2018 – Debra Sibbald & Sandra Monteiro

i-Assess: Evaluating the impact of electronic data capture for OSCE. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 1-10, February 2018 – Sandra Monteiro, Debra Sibbald, & Karen Coetzee



Knowledge Sharing

PRESENTATIONS

A 360° View of Culture and Communication: Developing a communication competency framework for intercultural workplaces, The Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects (ONESTEP) Perspectives 2017 (Mississauga, Ontario), November 2017 – Andrea Strachan

A customized nursing language assessment: Easing inequity and barriers, Partners in Education & Integration of IENs 11th Annual Conference (Halifax, Nova Scotia), April 2017 – Andrea Strachan

Competency-based assessments, Conference Board of Canada Canadian Immigration Summit 2017 (Ottawa, Ontario), May 2017 – Andrea Strachan

Competence: Concepts and challenges, Touchstone Institute 360° June 1st Event (Toronto, Ontario), June 2017 & North American Fertility Nurses Working Group (webinar), August 2017 – Debra Sibbald

Cultural and individual predictors of competence, Touchstone Institute 360° June 1st Event (Toronto, Ontario), June 2017 – Sandra Monteiro

Customizing the standard to the purpose of the assessment, Canadian Conference on Medical Education (Winnipeg, Manitoba), April 2017 & Ottawa/International Conference on Medical Education (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), March 2018 – Debra Sibbald & Sandra Monteiro

Developing an OSCE to differentiate between non-medical expert roles: Mission impossible?, 2018 Ottawa/International Conference on Medical Education (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), March 2018 – Sandra Monteiro, Sheila Harms & Meghan M. McConnell

Ensuring SP safety during invasive optometry assessments, Association of Standardized Patient Educators 16th Annual Conference (Alexandria, Virginia), June 2017 & Association for Simulated Patients in Healthcare: Delivering Quality (Telford, England), November 2017 – Sarah Kaff

Examiner training & scoring demonstration, Perspectives on Assessment Validity 2018 (Toronto, Ontario), January 2018 – Debra Sibbald & Tammy McParland

Exploring healthcare regulators' "indigenous criteria" for communicative competence in reference to the needs of internationally educated health professionals, American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Annual Conference: Moving Towards Social Change (Chicago, Illinois), March 2018 & 21st Conference on Language for Specific Purposes: Interdisciplinary Knowledge-Making (Bergen, Norway), June 2017 – Andrea Strachan & Ibtissem Knouzi

Fit-for-purpose standard setting: Experiences with the Cohen method for written and OSCE licensure screening exams, Canadian Conference on Medical Education (Winnipeg, Manitoba), April 2017 & Association of Medical Education of Europe (Helsinki, Finland), August 2017 – Debra Sibbald & Sandra Monteiro

The added value of the Pre-Residency Program: Preparing international medical graduates for their residency program in Canada, 2018 Ottawa/International Conference on Medical Education (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates), March 2018 – Sandra Monteiro, Ryan Brydges, & David Rojas



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