

2018-19

TOUCHSTONE
INSTITUTE
COMPETENCY EVALUATION EXPERTS



Annual Report

Explore how Touchstone Institute
innovated and progressed in 2018-19

Building the Vision

**We are bound by our mission
to excel for society**

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.

Touchstone Institute fosters strong relationships with key stakeholders to share knowledge, promote dialogue and implement programs with cross-sectoral impacts. 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.

OUR VISION

**Public confidence in
professional competence.**

OUR MISSION

**To excel in providing
competency assessment
and education services
that meet professional
and societal needs.**



Strategic Leadership

2.0

Our skilled and experienced board ensures value and fiscal strength

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Belief in the Future



John McKinley

Chair of the Board

As the population grows and our demographics show increasing age, it is clear that the health human resource workforce must keep up. Our own graduates have long been complemented by clinicians who studied abroad, but standards are not always well aligned. Touchstone Institute has the expertise needed by regulators to make the determinations required to ensure that we continue to address our human resource needs with competent and safe practitioners. This is not just relevant for Ontario regulators as labour mobility provisions mean that licensure from any jurisdiction in Canada must be respected. This has resulted in a movement towards common approaches and standards among licensing bodies. In recent years, Touchstone Institute has shown it can develop exams accepted across Canada, and can administer remotely through partnerships and technology. This has been another successful year that aligns fully with our corporate plans for growth and our societal mission.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Progress on the Plan



Sten Ardal

CEO

It has been two years since the board endorsed a plan to promote our services more broadly. Our communication strategy has focused on sharing our expertise at professional gatherings, and listening to the needs of current and aspiring clients. In the past year we added a new therapeutics assessment for Optometry, a CELBAN communication examination site in Saskatchewan, we began to administer the Medical Council of Canada's Qualifying Exam II, and saw the implementation of an agreement with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada to administer several of their qualifying exams. Our Learning programs for IMGs underwent significant positive change, and Visa Trainee programming was re-conceived to be more accessible and to better promote integration with other IMGs. These new lines of business have meant stronger relations with our pan-Canadian partners and the welcome sight of new team members at our Toronto offices.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John McKinley
Board Chair

Dan Faulkner
Board Member

Ella Ferris
Board Member

Brain Hodges
Board Member

Lianne Krakauer
Board Member

Murray Klein
Board Member

Hanika Pinto
Board Member

Parveen Wasi
Board Member

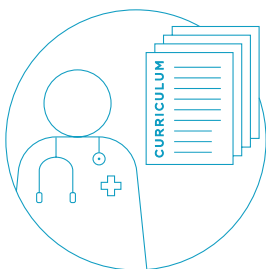
For the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO), the Federation of Optometric Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FORAC), and the Canadian Centre for Language Benchmarks (CCLB) we have established joint oversight as shown in the graphic.

Governance



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors determines corporate strategy and other groups make decisions that govern ongoing operations.



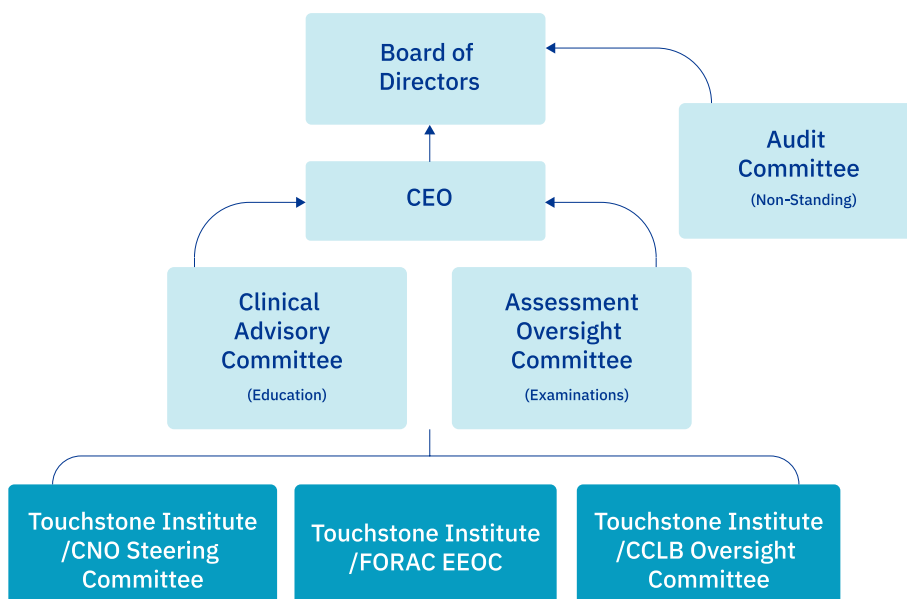
Curricular Advisory Committee

The Curricular Advisory Committee is a group of physician leaders with post-graduate medical school appointments. They are responsible for the design and oversight of our physician learning programs.



Assessment Oversight Committee

The Assessment Oversight Committee is a cross-departmental group with a mandate to provide leadership in exam development and ensure reflective, strategic and critical review of all exams and the issues arising from assessment processes.



2018-19 Financial Performance

\$11,166,460

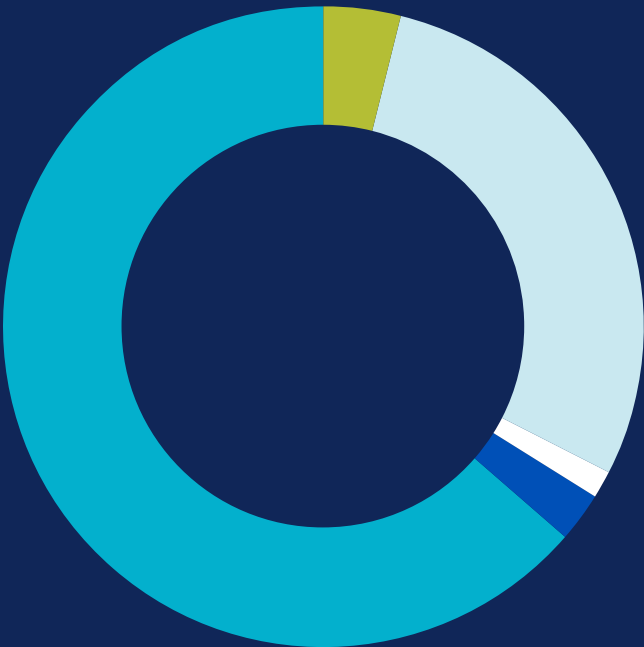
REVENUE

\$10,472,109

EXPENSES

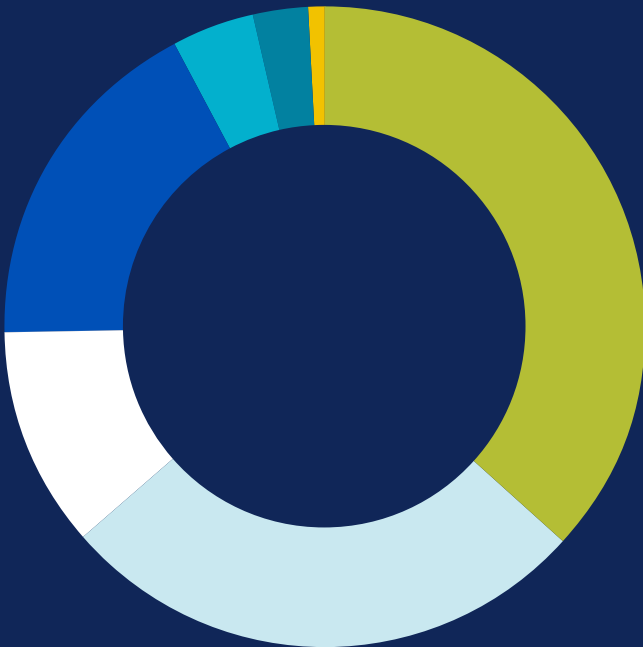
2018-19 SOURCES OF REVENUE:

- 63% Ministry of Health
- 30% Exam fees, development and application fees
- 4% Funding from Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
- 2% Amortization of deferred capital funding
- 1% Other revenues



2018-19 OPERATING EXPENSES:

- 37% Employees salaries and benefits
- 27% Examiners and support staff
- 17% Facility rental and occupancy
- 11% Other operating expenses
- 4% Clinical funding transfers
- 3% Bursaries paid out
- 1% Professional fees



Fairness and Validity

Touchstone Institute Developed Exams

Alberta Registered Nurses Assessment Program (ARNAP)

There were two ARNAP administrations this year, held simultaneously at the University of Alberta in Edmonton and the University of Calgary in Calgary, Alberta. The first administration was in June 2018, and the second in January, 2019 with a total of 99 examinees.

Assisted Reproductive Technology Lab Exam (ART Lab Exam)

The Canadian Fertility and Andrology Societies ART Lab Exam launched on April 13, 2018, and is to be administered by CFAS annually. The exam is offered in both English and French at several locations across the country.

Internationally Graduated Optometrist Evaluating Examination (IGOEE)

The IGOEE is comprised of long case OSCE stations, short case OSCE stations, and a general MCQ. There were 44 IGOEE examinees this past year. We have collaborated with the College of Optometrists of Ontario to develop a Therapeutics Prescribing Assessment for Optometry (TPAO) which is an additional component of the assessment to be implemented in 2019-2020.

Nurse Practitioner Practice Assessment (NPPA)

This assessment is administered to randomly selected NPs as a component of the CNOs quality assurance mandate. In October, Touchstone Institute administered the exam to 71 examinees.

Canadian English Language Assessment for Optometrists (CELAO)

The Canadian English Language Assessment for Optometrists (CELAO) is a profession-specific language assessment for internationally educated optometrists pursuing professional registration in Canada. The assessment evaluates the extent to which language skills of optometrists enable successful spoken interactions with clients, clear written communication, and comprehension of optometric reading and listening passages. CELAO is recognized by the University of Waterloo's International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP).

Internationally Educated Nurse Competency Assessment Program (IENCAP)

Touchstone Institute administered the IENCAP six times this year. The IENCAP has two portions: a Multiple Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) and an Objective-Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) composed of twelve (12) stations. Both portions rely on tablet technology for administration. Capacity has been increased to accommodate increasing referrals from the College of Nurses of Ontario.

Knowledge and Competency Assessment Tool (KCAT)

The Knowledge and Competency Assessment Tool (KCAT) for internationally educated Dietitians was administered across two sites in May, 2018 to 47 examinees. Touchstone Institute shipped exam materials to the Nova Scotia Dietetic Association who administered this tablet-based assessment.

Under License

Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN)

Last year 2,618 CELBAN examinees were assessed at eight testing locations across Canada, from Halifax to Vancouver. New test forms were finalized in the summer of 2018. Test practice materials aligned with the new test versions were launched for purchase on the CELBAN website in January 2019. The CELBAN Practice Handbooks provide an opportunity for IENs to engage with relevant nursing material while practising skills needed for the CELBAN and nursing communication in general.

In February, the CELBAN Centre moved to an electronic system of sharing Official CELBAN Test Results with regulators and other organizations that regularly receive CELBAN test results. The transition has resulted in reduced wait times for results, elimination of shipping costs, increased security, simplified tracking, and has reduced our environmental impact.



Medical Exams Administered

National Assessment Collaboration (NAC) Examination

Touchstone Institute continues to act as a full-service assessment centre on behalf of the Medical Council of Canada (MCC) for the National Assessment Collaboration (NAC) examinations. On September 9, 2018, the Michener Institute of Education at UHN was contracted as a secondary site to run two tracks (in addition to the four tracks at Touchstone Institute).

Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Exam Part 2 (MCC QEII)

Touchstone Institute has been contracted by the MCC to administer the MCC QEII. We have been hosting mostly test accommodation examinees because of our expertise in meeting identified needs and our accessible facility. This year two administrations of the MCCQEII were held with 50 examinees being assessed at Touchstone Institute.

Medical Council of Canada Therapeutics Decision Making (TDM) Assessment

Touchstone Institute administered the TDM for the Saskatchewan International Physician Practice Assessment (SIPPA) and has offered this service to other jurisdictions assessing the practice readiness of international medical graduates (IMGs) pursuing licensure in family medicine. Three iterations of the TDM assessment took place at Touchstone Institute in the 2018-19 year examining a total of 53 IMGs.

Royal College Specialty Examinations

Touchstone Institute has partnered with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada to facilitate a number of their specialty examinations. This fall, Touchstone Institute supported the administration of the Cardiology Adult (76), Respiriology Adult (47), Thoracic Surgery (11) and Cardiology Paediatric (4) exams, for a total of 138 examinees.

Preparing Tomorrow's Clinicians

Learners excel in our interactive and multi-modal programs

Each year, the Pre-Residency Program (PRP) and the Pre-Residency Program for Family Medicine (PRP-FM) curriculums are reviewed to ensure that they meet the current needs of both the Family Medicine learners and those pursuing other specialties.

This programming is mandatory for all International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who are accepted into residency in Ontario. We also offer the Canadian Medicine Primer for visa trainees in residency or fellowship programs. This is an integrated program that includes specialized sessions targeted to their unique needs.

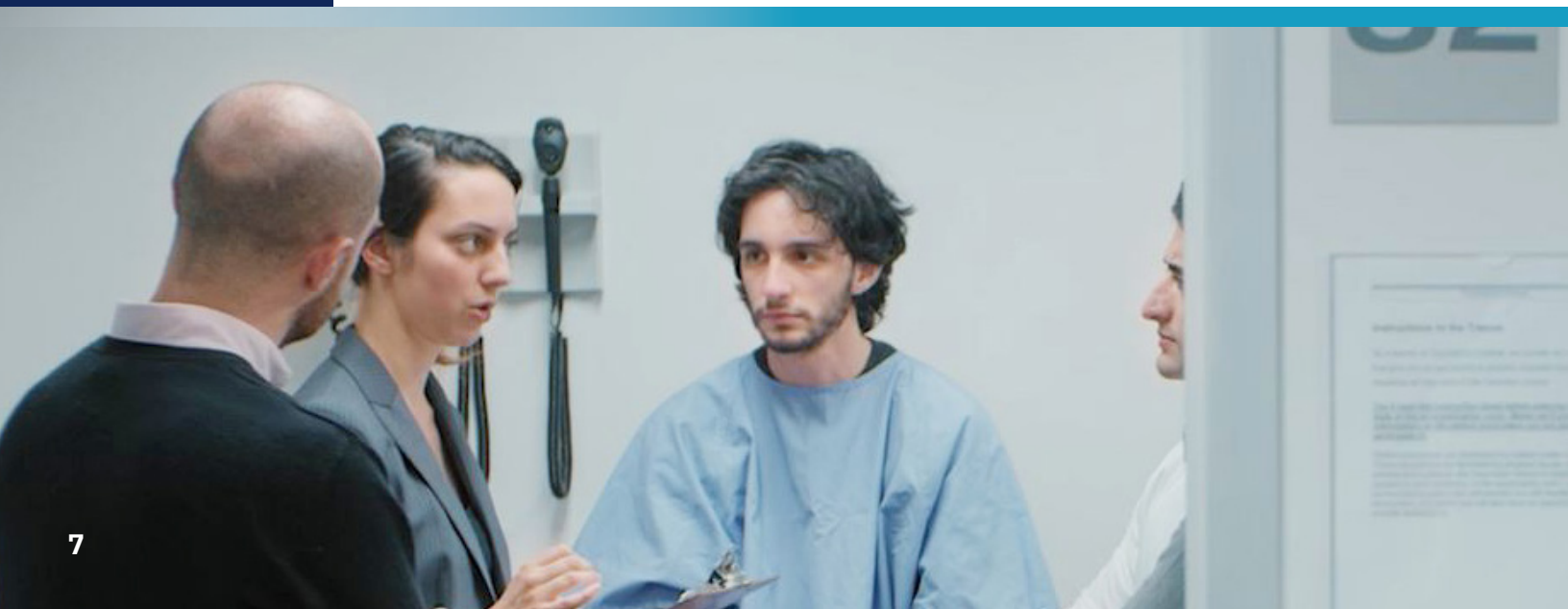


283

Learners participated in the Education Program at Touchstone Institute in 2018-19.

1,186

1,186 simulated encounters between patients and IMGs



Our Learning Programs

PRP: Core Program

PRP is the core education program delivered at our facility. Our core Pre-Residency Program (PRP) is mandatory for candidates who have been accepted into a specialty residency training program in Ontario. PRP takes up to three weeks and includes Interactive classroom sessions, online modules and simulated patient encounters.

Lectures cover key competency areas as well as: communication, law and ethics, privacy, confidentiality, and challenging situations. We also added new programs in:

- Cross-Cultural Competency and Cultural Safety
- Foundations of Allied Health
- Managing a Clinical Team
- Indigenous Health

PRP-FM: Family Medicine Program

After completing the PRP core program, PRP-FM learners participate in an additional week of family medicine-tailored education before joining their matched university orientation.

CMP: Meeting the needs of visa trainees

The Canadian Medicine Primer has been developed to address the needs of visa trainees or clinical fellows who are working in Ontario. The program's population is based on referrals from medical schools. The program follows a very similar curriculum to the PRP with several courses focused on issues only affecting visa trainees. The CMP was designed in collaboration with Ontario medical schools to support successful integration to safe practice in the Canadian context.



Creativity and Insight

We create authentic environments and are supported by customized technologies

SIMULATION PROGRAM: PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Touchstone Institutes' Simulation Program provides support to our programs by recruiting and training individuals to simulate real-life scenarios. During the 2018-19 year, 935 standardized clients were recruited and trained for 19 exam days, and provided support for our training and learning programs. In all, simulated clients were engaged in over 12,000 encounters.

The simulation unit has embarked on large scale recruitment of French-speaking individuals to simulate patient scenarios for bilingual exams. Bilingual training methodologies have been developed to support these exams, and our new standardized clients.



19

Exam days in 2018-19

935

Standardized clients
recruited and trained

12,000

Simulated clients were engaged
in over 12,000 encounters



COMMUNICATION THROUGH SIMULATION

SIM 360° is a project focusing on the development of an experiential learning program (Communication through Simulation) targeting professional communication skills for the health care workplace. The Communication through Simulation curriculum builds on the final deliverable of Touchstone Institute's 360° Project – A View of Communicative Competence at Work: Competency Framework for Intercultural Communication.

Rooted in Design Thinking methodology, the project began with a Discovery Phase, engaging a Working Group committee populated by five simulation experts, four IEHPs, four language and communication educators, three competency experts, and one patient advocate. The Working Group developed 15 simulated communication challenges based on experiences authentic to members of the group. Next, the Working Group moved the project into its Ideation and Experimentation phases, with particular focus on curriculum development in advance of the program piloting scheduled for February 2020.

SIM 360° is funded by the Government of Ontario.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The psychometric unit supports the assessment and learning programs at Touchstone Institute by ensuring both high quality data and validity evidence. This unit is continually looking for ways to improve assessment processes while ensuring the integrity of the outcomes. This past year we have updated the way in which OSCE stations are developed for exams. Moving from pre-set station sets we now use a committee based decision making process to plan out groupings of stations based on prior performance (ease or difficulty), now tracking how stations perform in real assessments. In one exam we have made the move from twelve stations to ten stations plus two pilot stations, which can be tested and added to the item bank for future use.

Examiner training is an essential tool which ensures the validity of results. Recently, we revised the approach to examiner training to include feedback on prior rating performance. Aligning the training more closely to the station rubrics and incorporating input from examiners. In order to reduce costs and increase accessibility for our new and returning examiners, we have begun development of online video modules to guide training. These videos are currently being beta tested and will be launched in individual major assessments over the coming year.

ASSESSMENT TECHNOLOGY: UCAN

Touchstone Institute is a member of the Umbrella Consortium for Assessment Networks (UCAN). Their tEXAM and tOSCE applications have been used in 12 assessments this year and we are continuing the transfer of existing exam content to the item management system (IMS). In the past it has been a challenge for subject matter experts to create, edit, and deliver content to examination administrators, but with the implementation of UCAN's Item Management System (IMS) we have transitioned to a much more efficient, effective and secure platform for content creation and storage.

In May of 2018 Touchstone Institute hosted a four day Technology and Assessment training workshop with UCAN partners from Germany. An interactive session was also offered to stakeholders and organizations interested in the UCAN tools.

Touchstone Institute developed an orientation video for our KCAT examination orientation. This proved to be an efficient method to deliver orientation to remote sites delivering exams with UCAN tools.

Collaborative Excellence

Sharing knowledge and insights

OUR SYMPOSIUM

Touchstone Institute hosted its fifth annual Perspectives Symposium at its facility on January 31, 2019. The theme for this year was: Perspectives on Professionalism, and it attracted attendees from medical education, health care practice, and professional regulation. The discussions touched on many aspects of professionalism including: strategies for educating individuals on professionalism, establishing expectations for professionalism, and reporting unprofessional behaviour. Six speakers presented on various topics, including one interactive workshop that encouraged thoughtful reflection and discussion. A total of 112 participants attended the day.

RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Touchstone Institute staff were active participants at conferences and contributed to several respected international journals. A list of over 20 presentations and publications can be found in the web version of this annual report.

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