

Research *Rounds*

The Centre for Health Education Scholarship (CHES)
invites you to Research Rounds with:

Dr. Cynthia Whitehead

**Title – Playing the part: Does
constructing competency as roles mask
important values?**

Date: Wednesday, October 15, 2014

Time: 12:00pm to 1:30pm
(Lunch will be served at DHCC)

Venue: Diamond Health Care Centre 2267

With videoconference to PCC 201C, IRC 305, MSB 107,
KGH CAC 237, NHSC 9-374, Surrey Central City (Manning Rm)

**Please be aware that this session will be recorded and made
available online to CHES members on a password-protected site.*



Dr. Cynthia Whitehead

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ABSTRACT Within the CanMEDS framework, physician competency is broken down into a series of Roles. These Roles provide a relatively straightforward and easy-to-understand schema for both trainees and teachers. The framework explicitly highlights the need for physicians not only to be biomedical experts and technically skilled, but also to effectively communicate, advocate and collaborate. There is an underlying assumption that if learners can perform well in each of these defined areas, the amalgam of these competencies will ensure competent practice. Recent research, however, provides cause for re-consideration of this assumption. Roles definitions—designed to be teachable, observable and measurable—may not sufficiently capture all the important aspects of the competent doctor. Once roles are defined, areas that are under-emphasized risk being ignored. Roles, moreover, are not static ‘truths’ about a universal ideal physician, but describe desirable qualities of a doctor in a specific context and culture. Recent research findings suggest that the medical education community needs to pay greater attention to the effects of the historical and cultural construction of roles, to values that may go missing in current constructions, and to unintended consequences of particular ways of framing roles definitions.

ABOUT Dr. Cynthia Whitehead, MD, PhD, is the Vice-President Education, Women’s College Hospital and Associate Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Toronto. She obtained her MD from McMaster in 1987, and her PhD from the University of Toronto in 2011. She is an active staff member of the Family Health Team at Women’s College Hospital, former site Residency Program Director, Scientist at the Wilson Centre for Research in Education, Education Scientist at the Centre for Ambulatory Care Education, and an AMS Phoenix Fellow.

Dr. Whitehead’s program of research focuses on deconstructing ‘truths’ of medical education to expand our understandings of possibilities for change. Some of her specific content areas of research interest include globalization of medical education, outcomes-based education, interprofessional education, primary care education, education scholarship and the history of medical education.

Dr. Whitehead is involved in teaching, curriculum design, curricular evaluation and educational administration. Internationally, she has provided education consultations and worked collaboratively with educators in multiple countries in Asia, South America, North America and Europe.

Mainpro-M1 study credits confirmed; Section 1 study credits to be advised.