Assessing Clinical Competency with Standardized Patients: 

An Invitation for Ongoing Dialogue

Kim Edward LeBlanc, M.D., Ph.D. 
Executive Director 
Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration

International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities 
London, England 
10 September 2014 16:00-17:00
United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)

- Step 1
- Step 2
  - Clinical Knowledge (CK)
  - Clinical Skills (CS)
- Step 3
Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration (CSEC)

A **Collaborative Partnership** between the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (**ECFMG**) and the National Board of Medical Examiners (**NBME**).

– Based in Philadelphia, PA
– Established in 2003
Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)

Mission Statement

The ECFMG promotes quality health care for the public by certifying international medical graduates for entry into U.S. graduate medical education, and by participating in the evaluation and certification of other physicians and health care professionals.
Mission Statement

To *protect the health of the public* through *state of the art assessment of health professionals*. While centered on assessment of physicians, this mission encompasses the spectrum of health professionals along the continuum of education, training and practice and includes *research in evaluation* as well as *development of assessment instruments*. 
History of CSEC

• 1998
  – Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA)
• June 2001
  – Discussions regarding collaboration initiated
  – Working groups formed
• May 2003
  – CSEC Collaboration Agreement signed
• June 2004
  – 1st administration of USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) examination
• 345,397 examinees tested (through 8/31/2014)
• 4,144,764 Standardized Patient encounters
• 54.2% USMGs – 187,356
• 45.8% IMGs – 158,041
### Step 2 CS Volumes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>USMGs</th>
<th>IMGs</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>19,360</td>
<td>14,292</td>
<td>33,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>19,319</td>
<td>13,974</td>
<td>33,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>18,888</td>
<td>14,237</td>
<td>33,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>19,485</td>
<td>14,466</td>
<td>33,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>18,983</td>
<td>15,854</td>
<td>34,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>17,711</td>
<td>17,513</td>
<td>35,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>17,711</td>
<td>16,121</td>
<td>33,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>17,473</td>
<td>15,132</td>
<td>32,605</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2 Clinical Skills Examination

• Assesses application of medical knowledge, skills, and understanding of clinical science essential for the supervised patient care

• Includes emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention, possessing fundamental skills for the safe, competent practice of medicine
Step 2 CS Examination

• Each Step 2 CS examination consists of 12, twenty-five minute encounters.
  – 15 minutes with the standardized patient
  – 10 minutes for typed patient note

• The examination lasts approximately 8 hours. Two breaks are provided:
  – 1\textsuperscript{st} break is 30 minutes long (lunch)
  – 2\textsuperscript{nd} break is 15 minutes long (snack).
Step 2 CS Examination

- Uses standardized patients (SPs)
- Communication and Interpersonal Skills (CIS)
- Spoken English Proficiency (SEP)
- Integrated Clinical Encounter (ICE)
  - Physical examination
  - Patient Note
    - Data Gathering (DG)
    - Data Interpretation (DI)
Examinees are scored on three separate subcomponents:

- Communication and Interpersonal Skills (CIS) completed by the SPs
- Spoken English Proficiency (SEP)
- Integrated Clinical Encounter (ICE)
  - Physical exam checklist completed by the SPs
  - Patient note (scored by physicians)
Step 2 CS Examination

- **Standardized patients** used to assess an examinee’s ability to:
  - gather information from patients,
  - perform physical examinations,
  - communicate their findings to patients and colleagues

- The cases cover common and important situations that a physician is likely to encounter in clinics, doctors’ offices, and emergency departments in the United States
Step 2 CS Components

• USMLE Step 2 CS is a **Pass/Fail** examination

• **Each** of the three subcomponents (CIS, SEP, ICE) **must be passed** in a **single** administration in order to achieve a passing performance on Step 2 Clinical Skills exam
**Patient Note**

**Clinical Scale Evaluation**

**Patient Note**

**HISTORY:** Describe the history you just obtained from this patient. Include only information (pertinent positives and negatives) relevant to this patient's problem(s).

**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION:** Describe any positive and negative findings relevant to this patient's problem(s). Be careful to include only those parts of examination you performed in this encounter.

**DATA INTERPRETATION:** Based on what you have learned from the history and physical examination, list up to 3 diagnoses that might explain this patient's complaint(s). List your diagnoses from most to least likely. For some cases, fewer than 3 diagnoses will be appropriate. Then, enter the positive or negative findings from the history and the physical examination (if present) that support each diagnosis. Lastly, list initial diagnostic studies (if any) you would order for each listed diagnosis (e.g., restricted physical exam maneuvers, laboratory tests, imaging, ECG, etc.).

### Diagnosis #1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History Finding(s)</th>
<th>Physical Exam Finding(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(-) Click to add row(s)

### Diagnosis #2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History Finding(s)</th>
<th>Physical Exam Finding(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(-) Click to add row(s)

### Diagnosis #3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History Finding(s)</th>
<th>Physical Exam Finding(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(-) Click to add row(s)

Diagnose Studies
• All notes are scored by Board-certified, practicing physicians
• Psychometricians are directly involved in interpreting the scores and determining the pass/fail benchmarks
Assessing Clinical Skills Globally

• Discussion:
  – Focus on how this is done in other countries
  – What are the differences?
  – What are the similarities?
  – Future directions
    • Enhanced physical findings/simulated pathology
    • Virtual reality
  – How can we work together to improve assessment?