



# NBPME Reports

The National Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners Newsletter



Front Row (left to right): Drs. Thomas Leecost, Jonathan Haber, Mindy Benton, Mary Jones Johnson, Kathleen Pyatak-Hugar and Wayne Axman; Back Row (left to right): Drs. Roy Corbin, Russell Sticha, Barbara Showers, Judith Beto, Gregory Davies, Charles Lombardi and Michael LaPan

## **The Board Meets in Washington, D.C.**

On March 19, 2011 the National Board met for its mid-winter meeting in Washington, D.C. The board discussed many topics paralleling with the mission. The mission of the board is to develop and administer examinations of such high quality that the various legal agencies governing the practice of podiatric medicine may choose to license those who have successfully completed such examinations for practice in their jurisdictions without further examination. Further, the board may at its discretion develop examinations of the same caliber to meet the various needs of groups within the profession.

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### **Clinical Skills Examination Committee (CSEC)**

As announced in the Fall 2010 newsletter, a committee is investigating the feasibility of introducing a clinical skills component to the Part II examination using live, standardized patients in an examining room setting. The committee presented a report to the board at the March meeting. The following competencies were identified as essential to practice and as relevant to the CS examination.

All CS exam forms will include stations that test an examinee's ability to:

- *perform a complete history & physical*
- *perform a problem-focused history & physical*
- *demonstrate a biomechanical exam*
- *communicate and gather information*
- *demonstrate interpersonal skills*
- *share information with patients and colleagues*
- *demonstrate behavioral counseling/patient education*
- *demonstrate clinical decision making*
- *appropriately document information*
- *synthesize a differential diagnosis*
- *design an appropriate management plan*
- *address a difficult situation (i.e., disclose errors, deliver bad news, etc.)*

The board accepted the report and agreed to proceed with a second step to develop a pilot examination. This will be completed and evaluated before the board makes a final decision on whether to incorporate this test into the series. The task force will be meeting in the next few months to begin the pilot exam design process.

### **Part I and II Practice Analysis**

The test specifications for all three parts of the APMLE are based on detailed, structured studies of the knowledge and skill items that a practitioner must possess for safe practice. These should be re-evaluated periodically to establish that the specifications reflect current practice requirements. The NBPME routinely conducts these studies. This summer, NBPME and its testing firm, Prometric, will develop a practice analysis to update the Parts I and II test specifications last revised by the previous study five years ago.

The first step is a workshop by a 15-member task force scheduled for June. The outcome of the two and a half-day meeting will be the outline of a survey instrument that will be promulgated widely to gain broad, representative feedback. The survey will ask practitioners in a variety of practice settings details of the tasks they perform, their importance, and how often each is done. The task force will later help translate the data into revised specifications that will be put in use for the 2012 examinations.

## **APMLE Part II Timing and Score Reports**

The NBPME is concerned that organizations who base decisions, at least in part, on candidate test scores in the APMLE obtain those scores in a timely manner from a primary source. That is, from Prometric as NBPME's testing agent, or from the FPMB on behalf of state licensing boards. Part I scores are now reported to the CASPR program prior to the residency match for most candidates. All state boards require primary source reporting of test scores prior to licensure. One significant gap was with Part II scores because the March test was scheduled so close to the match date, and because a candidate release is required before scores are released to anyone other than the candidate.

The board has taken two actions in concert with the AACPM and COTH to alleviate this problem. First, for all future examinations, the candidate application will specify that scores will be reported directly to CASPR unless the candidate chooses not to allow the release. In the interim, residency programs are encouraged to require applicants to have a valid score report issued by Prometric sent directly to the program.

Second, a January test session has been scheduled for 2012 to allow sufficient time to process and report scores prior to the residency match process. Thus, there will be two test dates that occur before the 2012 match. The May test will also be held as scheduled. However, because there is a substantial expense involved with each administration, the NBPME is reserving judgment on the number and schedule for Part II tests in subsequent years. The objective is to be as responsive to the needs of the candidates, the schools and the residency programs as possible.

## **Expert Panel Members Sought**

Perhaps the most significant contribution practitioners can make to the continued validity of the APMLE examination series is to participate in the test development and test review workshops. Each workshop involves a nationally representative selection of practitioners to ensure that each question and test form is fair, appropriate, and pertinent to the purpose of the Part I, II or III design. NBPME is continually seeking additional names to supplement the Expert Panel list.

All workshops are held in Arlington, VA. Depending on the topic and purpose, the workshops vary in length from one day (typically Saturday) to two and a half days (Friday to Sunday). A new group of panel members is invited to each workshop. The objective is to gain input and perspective from a variety of practitioners. Travel costs and a modest honorarium are paid to each participant. CE credits commensurate with the length of the workshop are also awarded. Any person wishing to participate is invited to send a CV to [nbpmeofc@aol.com](mailto:nbpmeofc@aol.com).

## **APMLE Website ([www.apmle.com](http://www.apmle.com))**

NBPME launched its new website on February 25, 2011. The purpose of the site is informational. At the site you can learn about the mission of the National Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners, the purpose of the exams, registration, test center regulations, preparation for the exams, practice tests, Part I/II tutorial and much more. Please visit the site at [www.apmle.com](http://www.apmle.com).

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