Welcome to the Osteopathic Examiner, a quarterly newsletter providing information about the NBOME’s many activities in the arena of assessment for osteopathic competencies and related health care professions.

NBOME makes connections at AOA OMED 2012

The American Osteopathic Association’s (AOA) annual convention, held in early October in San Diego, provided the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) an outstanding opportunity to connect with key organizations in the world of osteopathic education and governance, as well as directly with osteopathic physicians.

During the AOA’s Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition (AOA OMED), NBOME representatives, led by Board Chair Janice A. Knebl, DO, MBA, made presentations to or met with each of the following organizations:

- Student Osteopathic Medical Association
- AOA-Council of Interns and Residents
- Sigma Sigma Phi Osteopathic Honor Society
- AOA Bureau of International Osteopathic Medical and Educational Affairs (BIOMEA)
- AOA Bureau of State Governmental Affairs
- AOA Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists (AOA-BOS)

- American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP)
- American Association of Osteopathic Examiners (AAOE)
- American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians (ACOP)

Highlights of the presentations included transformation of NBOME’s National Faculty (see story page 5), and NBOME’s initiatives to support the profession in continuous professional development and osteopathic continuous certification, including introduction of the NBOME’s new lifelong learning assessment tool, OPAIMs® (Osteopathic Performance Assessment and Enhancement Modules). The NBOME’s exhibit booth welcomed hundreds of visitors who stopped by to learn about these key initiatives, as well as COMLEX-USA, COMAT and COMSAE. The NBOME also served as a sponsor of the Advocates for the AOA and their 5K Fun Run, which benefitted osteopathic medical student scholarship programs.

A pair of osteopathic medical students proudly display their “COMAT User” ribbon at the recent AOA OMED.
Dr. John Thornburg receives AOA’s highest honor

NBOME Immediate Past Chair, John E. Thornburg, DO, PhD, was awarded the AOA’s highest honor during AOA OMED. Dr. Thornburg received the Distinguished Service Certificate at the conference’s opening ceremonies. The award recognizes leaders of the osteopathic medical profession who have made outstanding accomplishments and meritorious service in scientific, educational, or professional affairs. Dr. Thornburg was honored for his longstanding contributions to the NBOME and the osteopathic profession, including his tenure at the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

In a press release issued about the award, Dr. Thornburg stated: “I am deeply honored to receive such a prominent award for serving the profession that I love. I am proud to be part of a group of physicians who work so hard to ensure Americans receive the level of quality in health care that they deserve, and I am equally proud to support the NBOME’s mission to protect the public.”


Proposed single accreditation system for postgraduate training moves ahead; COMLEX-USA confirmed as required osteopathic licensure examination

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) and the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) have recently announced a plan to work together toward a new, unified accreditation system for postgraduate training. If the proposed governance system moves forward, it would commence July 1, 2015, and would include osteopathic physician representation from the AOA and AACOM. Full announcement: [http://www.osteopathic.org/inside-aoa/Pages/ACGME-single-accreditation-system.aspx](http://www.osteopathic.org/inside-aoa/Pages/ACGME-single-accreditation-system.aspx)

This unified GME accreditation effort reaffirms COMLEX-USA’s status as the required examination series and the pathway to licensure for osteopathic physicians. Two "Frequently Asked Questions" related to this point are included here:

**What does the new single, unified GME accreditation system mean for osteopathically distinctive competency assessment, licensure, and COMLEX-USA?**

- COMLEX-USA will continue to be the required examination series and the pathway to licensure for osteopathic physicians. It is widely recognized and universally accepted as the valid examination for osteopathic physician competency assessment for licensure. It is also required by accreditation standards established by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA), and is a requirement for graduation from all colleges of osteopathic medicine. COMLEX-USA is regarded by the majority of residency program directors of AOA and ACGME-accredited residency programs as an important and useful assessment tool as part of evaluation of DO residency applicants for their programs.

*Continued >>*
The January 2013 deadline for implementing initiatives to comply with Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) is approaching, and the NBOME is committed to supporting specialty boards and colleges with the resources and tools they need to satisfy these and related continuous professional development requirements. Among the many services available is a new type of performance-in-practice assessment – Osteopathic Performance Assessment and Improvement Module (OPAIM®).

Developed by the NBOME’s Department of Continuous Professional Development & Innovations, OPAIMs® are web-based formative and practice assessment modules designed for clinical practice improvement for osteopathic physicians. They are osteopathically distinct and incorporate assessments of medical knowledge, practice performance, and self-reflection. They can be conveniently accessed at anytime from any location a physician has Internet access. Two OPAIMs® are now in development and will be available in early 2013.

The NBOME is working with specialty boards and colleges to develop cost-effective and convenient options for assessment of physicians in the context of continuous professional development, including development of additional OPAIMs® customized to their physicians’ individual needs.

For more information regarding OPAIMs® or other services available through the NBOME, please feel free to contact Erik Langenau, DO, Vice President for Continuous Professional Development and Innovations, at 610-825-6551 or elangenau@nbome.org.

THE NBOME offers OPAIMs®, new assessment tools for OCC
COMVEX-USA available for use by state licensing boards

The NBOME’s COMVEX-USA – the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Variable-Purpose Examination of the United States – is another valuable tool for assessing osteopathic physicians. COMVEX-USA provides state medical licensing boards with a clear evaluation of a candidate’s knowledge of current osteopathic medical practice and has been developed by the NBOME specifically for this purpose.

COMVEX-USA is an appropriate examination in the following circumstances:

- An osteopathic physician originally licensed by an examination devoid of osteopathic content now applying for a license in a state that requires an osteopathic examination
- An osteopathic physician applying for licensure in a state which imposes a time limit that has not been met by the applicant
- An osteopathic physician requesting reinstatement of a license following an interruption in his or her clinical practice
- An experienced osteopathic physician needing to demonstrate basic osteopathic medical competency

COMVEX-USA is available through the NBOME after an applicant has obtained approval through his/her individual state licensing board. The COMVEX application can be found online: http://www.nbome.org/docs/comvexapplication.pdf, and there is a section on the application for board authorization.

For more information about COMVEX, visit the NBOME’s website.

COMVEX Overview: http://www.nbome.org/comvex.asp
COMVEX Application: http://www.nbome.org/docs/comvexapplication.pdf
COMVEX Tutorial with sample test items: http://www.nbome.org/comvexcbt/index.htm

Directions for the Future
NBOME Strategic Plan 2012-2016

The NBOME has recently produced a new brochure about its 2012-2016 strategic plan.

Entitled “Directions for the Future,” the brochure covers the NBOME’s mission, vision and values, as well as the five strategic objectives and supporting goals of NBOME’s five-year strategic plan. Featured in the brochure is input from the strategic champions, along with quotes and photos from NBOME staff.

The brochure publically launched at the AOA’s Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition (OMED), in early October in San Diego, California. It will be distributed in the near future to all NBOME stakeholders. If you would like a copy, please email your request to NBOME Director for Communications, Mary Coyle, at mcoyle@nbome.org.
Distinguished leader, Dr. Hao Song, joins the NBOME

Dr. Hao Song, PhD, joined the NBOME on October 22, 2012 as Senior Director for Psychometrics and Research, leading the Division of Psychometrics and Research for the Department of Cognitive Testing. She is based in NBOME’s Chicago Corporate Offices.

Dr. Song worked as a psychometrician for the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) since 2007, serving as the psychometrics manager for three internal medicine subspecialty certification and maintenance of certification examinations.

She has held positions at the College Board, at Rutgers University, in the Newark, NJ Public School System, and at the Chauncey Group International in research and psychometric positions. She additionally has taught English as a second language in China.

Dr. Song has an impressive resume of peer-reviewed publications and presentations, and is likewise well known and respected in the psychometric community. She earned a BA from Nanjing Normal University in China, an EdM in Educational Statistics and Measurement as well as a PhD in Educational Statistics, Measurement & Evaluation from Rutgers University.

Recruitment for the positions of NBOME Vice President and Senior Vice President of Cognitive Testing continues.

The NBOME Seeks National Faculty Leadership

The NBOME National Faculty consists of the many professionals and volunteers across the country who support our mission through their work on committees, subcommittees and task forces, as well as through item writing, case development and other activities. Consistent with our 2012-2016 Strategic Plan, the NBOME is beginning an exciting and transformational endeavor aimed at broadening our National Faculty expertise and further enhancing the quality of examination content.

Effective January 1, 2013, the NBOME is reorganizing and expanding our National Faculty with new leadership positions and changes in processes related to both credentialing and test item development. Our focus at this time is on NBOME committees directly involved with developing and reviewing content for our COMLEX-USA cognitive examinations and our COMAT examinations.

As part of this transformative process, we will be recruiting to fill a number of faculty leadership positions, descriptions for which can be found here. We are creating a number of new departments that organize our subject matter experts by specialty, so they can be easily and quickly deployed to respond to the needs of a given examination. In addition, we are also recruiting qualified item writers.

Those interested in an open NBOME National Faculty leadership role are invited to visit our “Employment Opportunities” page.

Thank you for your interest in joining the NBOME and supporting our mission to protect the public.

NBOME introduces standard scores for COMAT

Now that sufficient data on national examinee performance is available, the NBOME recently introduced standard scoring for COMAT examinations. COMAT – the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test – are a series of osteopathically distinctive subject examinations used by the colleges of osteopathic medicine to assess students in core osteopathic medical disciplines, such as end-of-course or clinical rotation student assessment.

In addition, to assist colleges of osteopathic medicine in the transition, the NBOME will continue to provide percent correct scores for all COMAT examinations through the entire 2012-13 academic year.

A series of webinars was held in October to introduce the new standard scores and allow COMAT users to pose questions to NBOME staff, and also to their peers, to elicit information about how other COMs think about COMAT usage. Attendees posed questions about remediation for students who failed a subject, how COMAT correlates with the expected performance of students, and how COMs set their own cut score within the percent correct structure.

The NBOME team learned a great deal from the exchange of information, in particular, that the COMs find COMAT to be very reliable for their purposes. In addition, a number of schools have compared COMLEX-USA Level 2-Cognitive Evaluation with COMAT and found a high level of correlation.
The NBOME is pleased to announce it has implemented electronic score reporting for all COMLEX-USA examinations. While COMLEX-USA candidates have been able to access results online via a secure portal for a number of years, they can now also access the detailed score reports that were previously sent to them by US mail.

Electronic score reporting is now available for COMLEX-USA Level 2-Performance Evaluation (PE) examinations administered July 1, 2012 and after. (Detailed score reports from prior to this date are not available online.) Also now available electronically are score reports from COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-Cognitive Evaluation and Level 3 examinations that were taken September 1, 2012 and after. (Detailed score reports for examinations taken prior to September 1, 2012 are not available online.)

With the implementation of electronic score reporting, the NBOME will no longer mail paper copies of the individual score report.

The new electronic score reporting system automates the process for delivering detailed score reports to candidates and deans. They are able to receive these reports directly from their account in the NBOME’s Client Registration System. The reports will remain on the site indefinitely and can be printed directly or downloaded and stored.

Score reports printed from the NBOME’s system do not take the place of an NBOME certified transcript. If a certified transcript is needed (e.g., to be sent to a third party), please refer to the guidance on page 33 of the COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information (http://www.nbome.org/docs/comlexboi.pdf).

Reminder: Keyboard entry planned for COMLEX-USA Level 2-Performance Evaluation

As announced in late 2011, the NBOME will transition to keyboard entry for SOAP Notes for the COMLEX-USA Level 2-Performance Evaluation, beginning July 1, 2014. SOAP Note documentation will be entered as a document (similar to Word) and will not be in the form of electronic medical record at this time.

Final research is being conducted and further details will be communicated when available. It is anticipated that an instructional module on SOAP Note Keyboard Entry will be available on NBOME’s website by early 2014.

Meeting Roundup

Osteopathic International Alliance

Janice Knebl, DO, MBA, NBOME Board Chair (pictured below); Dana Shaffer, DO, NBOME Executive Committee member and President of the American Association of Osteopathic Examiners; and John Gimpel, DO, MEd, NBOME President & CEO, attended the Annual Conference and General Meeting, Educational Forum, and Regulator’s Forum of the International Osteopathic Alliance (OIA) held in Paris, France, September 20-23. There they had the opportunity to give two presentations highlighting NBOME assessment tools – including COMLEX-USA and OPAIMs® – and to network with representatives from more than 20 different countries.

Medical Council of Canada, International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities

In early October, Dr. Gimpel attended and presented at the annual meeting of the Medical Council of Canada (MCC), and the meeting of the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA), both held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Continued >>
Meeting Roundup—continued

This marked the MCC’s centennial year, and Dr. Gimpel attended the gala celebration where he presented a plaque to MCC leadership, commemorating this important milestone.

At the IAMRA meeting, Dr. Gimpel was joined by NBOME Board members John Thornburg, DO, PhD, Immediate Past Chair; Wayne Carlsen, DO, Vice Chair; and Geraldine O’Shea, DO, also Vice-President of the American Association of Osteopathic Examiners. Also in attendance were AOA President, Ray Stowers, DO, and AOA Executive Director, John Crosby, JD.

The NBOME was a Bronze sponsor of the bi-annual meeting.

Bureau on International Osteopathic Medical Education and Affairs

Dr. Gimpel attend the meeting of the AOA’s Bureau on International Osteopathic Medical Education and Affairs (BIOMEA), held October 8 during the AOA’s Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition (OMED) in San Diego, California. The NBOME is an official voting member of the BIOMEA, and as such, Dr. Gimpel provided an update to BIOMEA members on relevant NBOME initiatives.

Administrators in Medicine

NBOME Vice President for Administration & COO, Larry Turner, recently attended two important Administrators in Medicine (AIM) meetings.

On November 9-10, he participated in AIM’s “Institute Educational Workshop: Physician Licensing and Technology,” held in New Orleans, LA, where he made a presentation about current NBOME activities and future plans. Attendees – executive directors and staff of state medical boards from around the country – were very interested in the NBOME’s post-licensure activities, and future plans for COMLEX-USA as guided by the NBOME’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Enhancing COMLEX-USA

Participants were particularly interested in the NBOME’s planned changes to our policy on Individual Candidate Attempt Limits for COMLEX-USA examinations.

On September 17 and 18, Mr. Turner attended the annual meeting of AIM’s Eastern and Southern Region, held in Boston, MA. Executive directors and staff of state medical boards from around the country met to share current issues and best practices within their business. During the meeting, Mr. Turner made a presentation on current interests of the NBOME as they relate to the State Board’s interests.

INTERESTED IN AN NBOME VISIT?

NBOME representatives regularly provide updates to groups and organizations wishing to learn the latest developments on the COMLEX-USA examination series for licensure and other assessment tools, such as the COMAT series of subject examinations, certification/re-certification examinations, etc. If you would like an NBOME representative to visit your organization to provide an update, please contact Jen Schlacter at jschlacter@nbome.org.

Send submissions, questions or comments about The Osteopathic Examiner to Editor:
Mary C. Coyle, MJ, Director for Communications
National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners

Executive Offices
101 W. Elm St., Suite 230 • Conshohocken, PA 19428
PH: 484.351.2242 / FX: 610.825.9511
mcoyle@nbome.org

www.nbome.org

The NBOME’s Mission

To protect the public by providing the means to assess competencies for osteopathic medicine and related health care professions