COMLEX-USA Updates:
Enhanced COMLEX-USA Launches

The COMLEX-USA is transitioning to a contemporary, two-decision point, competency-based COMLEX-USA blueprint and evidence-based design informed by extensive research on actual osteopathic physician practice, expert consensus and stakeholder surveys. The new COMLEX-USA assesses representative measurable outcomes of the seven competency domains and focuses on high-frequency clinical presentations or high-impact health issues, and clinical presentations that affect patients across the life span.

The enhanced COMLEX-USA rollout began with a two-day Level 3, which started testing around the country on September 10, 2018. To support the launch of the new exam, a Prometric command center was set up to monitor exam administrations and report to our Client Services team. As of early September, more than 4,000 candidates (DO residents) requested or received an attestation by their residency program director and were preparing to take the Level 3 examination in the 2018-2019 test cycle. We are sincerely thankful to all those who played a part in the development and successful launch of the enhanced COMLEX-USA Level 3.

We will be continuing this roll out in spring of 2019, with an updated Level 2-PE launching in March, Level 1 in May and Level 2-CE in June. This launch has culminated nearly 10 years of work by experts and leaders from across the organization and country who contributed in all areas of creation and deployment of this state of the art assessment, as well as the efforts of our staff and partners. In addition to a new test administration design that tests over two days, the Level 3 was the first to implement the competency-based COMLEX-USA blueprint.

New Passing Standards for COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 3

In May 2018, the NBOME Board reviewed the minimum passing standard for COMLEX-USA Level 1, and a new standard was implemented for the 2018-2019 testing cycle. A new passing standard will be implemented for each COMLEX-USA examination with the transition to the new Master Blueprint in 2018-2019, beginning with the COMLEX-USA Level 3 new two-day Level 3 examination. With the initial score releases for the enhanced COMLEX-USA examinations, reports are anticipated to be longer than the usual time to allow sufficient time for the standard setting process to set a minimum passing score and statistically validate candidate performance for the new testing cycles. The Level 3 score release dates are now available, with the first testing cohort receiving their scores in late January 2019. After the initial score release, the usual schedule for Level 3 score release is approximately 8-10 weeks after the beginning of the each testing window.

Temporary Alternate Attestation Pathway for Level 3

Beginning with the 2018-2019 COMLEX-USA Level 3 examination, candidates must receive attestation from an American Osteopathic Association (AOA) or Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited residency program director that they are in "good academic and professional standing" and meet the professional requirements of the residency program.
Continued—COMLEX-USA Updates

program and are eligible to continue as a resident in the program.

A small number of graduates may not be able to acquire attestation by a residency program director due to not matching to a residency program. In response to these concerns about the challenge the new requirement for attestation by a residency program director may present for some candidates in the era of changes related to the Single Accreditation System for Graduate Medical Education, the NBOME Board approved a Temporary Alternate Pathway for COMLEX-USA Level 3 attestation that allows deans to attest to “good academic and professional standing” for their graduates who are not in a residency program.

Candidates who meet the requirements may petition the NBOME for consideration to take the Level 3 examination, with attestation of good academic and professional standing as of the date of graduation from their college of osteopathic medicine. The petition is available for a limited time through 2020 and the temporary pathway will be further studied and reevaluated during that time. The Temporary Alternate Pathway for Level 3 Attestation guidelines and petition are available on the NBOME website.

CORRE Registration is Open

NBOME’s new examination, CORRE (Core Osteopathic Recognition Readiness Examination), is designed for physicians and medical students applying to residency programs who have applied for or have achieved osteopathic recognition status through the American Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The results of CORRE will be used by program directors to assist with assessing an applicant’s readiness with respect to their basic introductory understanding of osteopathic concepts, philosophy, diagnosis and treatment. Developed in partnership with the American Academy of Osteopathy (AAO), CORRE was developed by experts in content and examination best practices in response to requests by osteopathic program directors and other stakeholders.

CORRE is available to be administered internationally at Prometric Test Centers in 2018 through November 29, with scores available to examinees electronically by January 15, 2019, with subsequent test cycles to be announced shortly.

COMAT Program Updates

The Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test (COMAT) series consists of the Foundational Biomedical Sciences (FBS) and Clinical Subject examinations. All but three colleges of osteopathic medicine currently participate in the COMAT Program, and most have signed up to deliver the new COMAT FBS comprehensive examination during a special complimentary introductory period for COMAT COMs during December 2018 through January 2019.

The first full COMAT-FBS test cycle will commence in March 2019. Registration for the COMAT FBS opens November 19, 2018.

Medal of Merit Award

Ronald A. Burns, DO, member of NBOME’s Board of Directors and Executive Committee, received the Medal of Merit award from the Ohio University Alumni Association for his work as a physician and as a leader in the osteopathic medical community. Dr. Burns, a distinguished leader in the osteopathic medical profession, is the 2019 President-Elect for the American Osteopathic Association and the owner of his own private practice for over 25 years. In the past, he has received the Florida Society of Osteopathic Family Physicians’ Physician of the Year award in 2015 and the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association’s Physician of the Year award in 2002. His substantial contributions to NBOME have included serving as Chair of the Nominating Committee, and as a member of the Level 3 Advisory Committee. Dr. Burns is a valuable contributor to the osteopathic medical community, and we value his years of leadership and service.
COMLEX-USA and Emergency Medicine Program Director Connection!

On October 1-3, 2018, the NBOME attended the 50th anniversary of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA. The "leading advocate for emergency physicians, their patients and the public," ACEP promotes the highest quality of emergency care and represents more than 38,000 MD and DO emergency physicians, residents and medical students. The meeting was attended by more than 7,000 members of the emergency medicine (EM) community. While the NBOME has attended the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Medicine’s annual conference in the past, this was the first ACEP meeting attended by the NBOME.

Emergency medicine is a popular specialty for DOs, with 10 percent of practicing DOs (>8,200) in EM practice, and the numbers are growing, with an increasing number of DO students entering EM programs to train. NBOME was present at the meeting to share information about the use of COMLEX-USA with the 1,000 EM program, fellowship and clerkship directors, and with over 1,000 osteopathic EM physicians, residents, and medical students interested in EM who attended the meeting. NBOME was on hand to advocate for a holistic admission process for resident selection and the use of COMLEX-USA to evaluate DO applicants as the most appropriate assessment for osteopathic medical students and graduates.

AOA’s OMED18

On October 5-8, 2018 the NBOME participated in the Osteopathic Medical Education Conference (OMED) in San Diego, California. The American Osteopathic Association’s (AOA) annual conference brought together thousands of osteopathic physicians, medical students and other health professionals from across the country for medical education, inspiration, networking and entertainment.

NBOME exhibited at the conference, featuring our COMLEX-USA examination series, the enhanced Master Blueprint, COMAT, and opportunities for physicians to explore the NBOME National Faculty program. Attendees visiting the NBOME booth were greeted by Drs. John Gimpel and Michael Finley, and Melissa Turner and Sandra Waters, who had meaningful conversations with many visitors and were on hand to answer student, faculty, practicing physician and others’ questions.

During OMED, Dr. Gimpel met and presented updates on NBOME and COMLEX-USA to DO student groups with audiences of over 150 at the Council of Student Government Presidents (COSGP) Business Meeting, and of over 250 at the Conference Sessions of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA). He represented NBOME along with Board member James Andriole, DO at the Bureau of International Osteopathic Medicine (BIOM) International Seminar. Meetings with several NBOME client organizations were also held.

Friday evening the NBOME sponsored a table at the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) Gala, with Board Vice-Chair Geraldine O'Shea, DO, and her husband Mark Eastman, DO, joining Dr. Gimpel as co-hosts for the evening which benefited osteopathic medical student and resident scholarship programs. This year, AOF named Ryan Michael Smith, DO, MSEd, as the 2018 award recipient for the James M. Lally, DO, Emerging Leader Award. This award recognizes DOs in practice less than five years whose accomplishments and actions have inspired and motivated others to improve the osteopathic profession and public health.

Dr. Smith is highly involved in the medical community, and has done a great deal of work for NBOME as a member of our National Faculty serving as the COMAT Psychiatry Examination Chair. He will continue to serve on the National Faculty for the next three-year cycle as the Psychiatry, Neurology and Clinical Neurosciences Department Chair beginning in 2019.
Continued–AOA’s OMED18

Dennis J. Dowling, DO, MA, delivered the 2018 lecture series to the Student American Academy of Osteopathy at the American Academy of Osteopathy Annual Convocation 2018, and was acknowledged at the American Osteopathic Foundation Gala at the AOA OMED Convention. Dr. Dowling is highly involved with NBOME, serving as Coordinator for OMM Assessment for the Level 2-PE since 2004, and Content Committee Chair for Point of Care Knowledge, Education and Testing (POCKET) novel test item initiative with the National Faculty.

Early Sunday morning, a strong team of 14 NBOME runners and walkers came out to join in the Advocates for the American Osteopathic Association (AAOA) Fit for Life Run 2018 and served as the starting line race sponsor, supporting osteopathic medical student scholarships and support services.

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

NBOME Abroad at IAMRA
On October 6-8, 2018, Dana C. Shaffer, DO, NBOME Board Chair, represented the NBOME at the invitational International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA) meeting in Dubai, UAE. IAMRA’s purpose is to encourage best practices among medical regulatory authorities worldwide in the achievement of their mandate to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public by ensuring proper standards for the profession of medicine. Representatives from many of the assessment organizations for physicians in the United States and Canada as well as other countries were in attendance.

Medical Council of Canada Annual Meeting
J. Michael Finley, DO, attended the Medical Council of Canada (MCC) Annual Meeting in Ottawa, Canada, from September 23-25, 2018. While there, he provided COMLEX-USA and NBOME updates to MCC’s 80 member Council and guests, participated in workshops, and attended plenary sessions on numerous topics in assessment. The MCC develops and administers the licensure/registration assessments for licensure in Canada, which includes a Part 1 that consists of multiple-choice and clinical decision-making test items, and a Part 2 that is a standardized patient-based Objective Structured Skills Examination. We also join the MCC in saying farewell to longtime colleague and friend to the NBOME, Dr. Ian Bowmer, who has recently resigned from his position as the MCC’s Executive Director.
**INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS**

**Osteopathic International Alliance**

John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, President & CEO, attended the Osteopathic International Alliance (OIA) meeting in Dubai, UAE, with several of our international colleagues. The OIA is the leading organization for the advancement and unity of several professions that comprise the global osteopathic health care footprint, and represents 120,000 osteopathic practitioners from 72 organizations from 21 countries across 5 continents. Their mission is to encourage systems of education and regulation that will ensure high standards for safe and effective health care from osteopathic physicians as well as osteopaths and envision a world in which every person has access to high-quality osteopathic health care.

As a member of the OIA Board of Directors, Dr. Gimpel discussed OIA projects to promote international osteopathic practice along with Ron Burns, DO, NBOME Board Member, AOA 2019 President-Elect, who presented a keynote speech on Osteopathic Medicine: 21st Century Patient-Centered Medicine.

**Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Meets with NBOME**

On August 10, 2018, a historic meeting took place at the Philadelphia Executive Offices between NBOME and Dr. Ziad Nakshabandi, Chief Academic Officer, and Dr. Fadi Munshi, Executive Director of Assessment, of the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS) on behalf of the General Secretary, Professor Ayman A. Adbo. The meeting of the two organizations was to sign an agreement for NBOME to provide consultation services and intellectual property to SCFHS to set up a state-of-the-art clinical skills testing center in Saudi Arabia. The SCFHS guests enjoyed a tour of the National Center for Clinical Skills Testing and commented on their excitement about the collaboration of both organizations with a commitment to similar missions to protect the public.

**Osteopathic Medical Regulatory Summit**

**United States Osteopathic Medical Regulatory Summit**

**Mar. 1, 2019**

**Naples, Florida**

**Plans for a 2019 US Osteopathic Medical Regulatory Summit are coming together.** A planning group has set the date for March 1, 2019, and is working on key topics for representative groups in osteopathic medical education across the continuum, including undergraduate osteopathic medical education, graduate medical education (GME), osteopathic continuing medical education, and licensure and certification in the U.S. to address the importance of osteopathic distinctive assessment for licensure and board certification. Previous Osteopathic Medical Regulatory Summits were held in 2012 and 2014 and focused on patients and protecting their access to quality health care by DOs.

By working collaboratively to ensure that the integrity of osteopathic medical regulation aligns with the NBOME’s strategic goal to expand outreach to key stakeholder groups on COMLEX-USA and other osteopathically distinctive assessments in the era of a single accreditation system for GME, we hope to ensure Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) programs endorse COMLEX-USA and allow AOA board certification. With confusion and misinformation about licensing exams and the requirement for DO students to pass COMLEX-USA to graduate and enter residency and ACGME program requirements, NBOME’s collaboration with the other Summit participants (the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, American Association of Osteopathic Examiners, ACGME, AOA, Federation of State Medical Boards, Osteopathic Founders Foundation and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation) is critical to educating students and residents on osteopathic board certification and its advantages and opportunities.
On September 14, 2018, the NBOME hosted the 2018 National Faculty Conclave at our Chicago Corporate Offices and Conference Center. Over 30 National Faculty Exam Chairs and Department or Division Chairs, along with senior staff representatives, participated.

Our National Faculty includes over 700 active, engaged leaders from across the nation with expertise in clinical practice in osteopathic health professions and specialties, osteopathic medical education and evaluation in our nation’s colleges of osteopathic medicine and teaching hospitals, and osteopathic physician licensure and regulation. At the National Faculty Conclave, representatives convene to honor leaders for their service, onboard new leadership, update leaders on NBOME priorities and initiatives, and facilitate their input and vision on the evolving practice of osteopathic medicine and assessment.

Leaders honored for their service to the NBOME and National Faculty Leadership included Outgoing Chairs Joel Dickerman, DO, Family Medicine Department Chair (now full-time NBOME Vice President for Assessment Services); Tami Hendriksz, DO, COMAT Pediatrics Examination Chair; Jed Magen, DO, MS, Psychiatry, Neurology and Clinical Neurosciences Department Chair; Mary Jo Robinson, DO, Pathology Division Chair; and Ryan Smith, DO, MEd, COMAT Psychiatry Examination Chair.

New Chairs were welcomed and these individuals will begin their three-year cycle in 2019: Alissa Craft, DO, COMAT Pediatrics Examination Chair; Thomas Rosenzweig, MD, Pathology Division Chair; and Ryan Smith, DO, MEd, Psychiatry, Neurology and Clinical Neurosciences Department Chair.

The NBOME is recruiting for two Chair positions that will be recommended to the NBOME Board of Directors in December 2018:

- Family Medicine Department Chair
- Psychiatry COMAT Examination Chair
Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Roundup

NBOME is visiting over 20 Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (COMs) over the 2018-2019 academic year! The purpose of the visits is to communicate with osteopathic medical students and COM leadership and faculty regarding NBOME assessments, assure they are up-to-date on the latest enhancements to COMLEX-USA and other news. NBOME has been a great resource to the COMs for assessment expertise and contributes to faculty development by offering training in item writing and case development. COM visits also provide a good opportunity to recruit National Faculty members in needed areas. In late summer, J. Michael Finley, DO, Senior Vice President for Assessment, began joining John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, President & CEO, on several COM visits. With additional NBOME physician leaders, Joel Dickerman, DO, Vice President for Assessment Services, and Gretta Gross, DO, Vice President for Clinical Skills Testing, will be participating in the future as well. Recently, we’ve visited the following COMs:

- On August 28th, Drs. Gimpel and Finley visited Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine (KCU-COM). They met with both faculty and students to deliver NBOME and COMLEX-USA updates, and followed this up with an Item Writing Workshop. A video conference was held with the Joplin campus of KCU-COM as well for those who were unable to attend in person.

- On September 5th, Dr. Gimpel visited Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine (ICOM) on the day of their beautiful new building’s ribbon-cutting ceremony. He met with both faculty and students to deliver NBOME and COMLEX-USA updates.

- On September 6th, Dr. Finley visited Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine in California (TUCOM). He delivered NBOME and COMLEX-USA updates to the students.
Continued–Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Roundup

- On September 20th, Drs. Gimpel and Finley visited Marian University (MUCOM) in Indianapolis and delivered NBOME and COMLEX-USA updates to faculty and students.

- Dr. Finley visited Western University of Health Sciences/College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific (Western U/COMP) in California on October 10 to provide NBOME and COMLEX-USA updates to faculty and students.

Upcoming COM visits include:

- Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine (LUCOM) on October 31
- New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology at Arkansas (NYITCOM at Arkansas State University) on November 1
- Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine (ARCOM) on November 2
- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine at Georgia (GA-PCOM) on November 8
- Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine (DMU-COM) on November 12
- Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine of Midwestern University (AZCOM/MWU) on November 13
- A.T. Still University-School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (ATSU-SOMA) on November 14

AOA Business meeting

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) 2018 Annual Business Meeting took place in Chicago on July 16 -22, with more than 500 DOs and medical students gathered to consider proposed resolutions, enact AOA policy, elect new officers, and celebrate the osteopathic profession. A contingent of NBOME governance and staff attended the meetings, including Dana C. Shaffer, DO, NBOME Board Chair, John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, President and CEO, Michael J. Baldwin, MBA, CPA, VP for Finance/CFO, Joel L. Dickerman, DO, VP for Assessment Services, J. Michael Finley, DO, SVP for Assessment, and Sandra Waters, MEM, VP for Collaborative Assessment & Initiatives.

Drs. Shaffer and Gimpel presented to the AOA Board of Trustees regarding new NBOME physician staff leaders. The presentation also included enhancements to COMLEX-USA and the new Master Blueprint, with changes to eligibility requirements and attestation by residency program directors, and NBOME’s assessment clients across the continuum. Updates were also provided during the week to the Association of Osteopathic Examiners (AAOE) and the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP).

The American Academy of Osteopathy (AAO) received the AOA STAR Award for its dedication to advancing osteopathic medicine. The award honors programs and activities that align with the initiatives in the AOA’s strategic plan and selected the AAO for its investment in the future of osteopathic medicine. The NBOME nominated the AAO in recognition of the AAO’s partnership with the NBOME and work in developing the Core Osteopathic Recognition Readiness Examination (CORRE) to assess introductory concepts of osteopathic philosophies for readiness of applicants to enter residency programs with osteopathic recognition.
Continued—AOA Business meeting

Jamie Beckman, MS, OMS III, COSGP National Chair, John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, and SOMA President Kate de Klerk, OMS IV, National President, at the AOA House of Delegates meeting

The American Academy of Osteopathy (AAO) receiving the AOA STAR Award

The Osteopathic Interest

Journal of Graduate Medical Education Article

Kimberly Hudson, MEd, Research Scientist, Yi Wang, MS, Principal Research Associate, and John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, President & CEO, along with colleagues from the ACOFP, published a paper in the *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, the official journal of the ACGME, entitled "Association Between Performance on COMLEX-USA and the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians In-Service Examination." The authors appreciate the tremendous support given to the project by many others, including Edward Tsai, PhD, and Sandra Waters, MEM. The study found a strong intercorrelation between COMLEX-USA Level 3 and the ACOFP's in-service examination (ISE-1) and that performance on COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2-CE significantly predicted performance on ISE-3. The ACGME and the JGME tweeted that the study contributes to the evidence that supports the use of COMLEX-USA as part of holistic application review for residents entering into residency programs. https://bit.ly/2OuiqdD

Ronald R. Burns, DO, and Janet Burns
Stephen C. Shannon, DO, Announces his Retirement

Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH, is planning to step down as President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), effective June 30, 2019. Congratulations and many thanks to Dr. Shannon on his years of service and commitment to the osteopathic profession and osteopathic medical education. Dr. Shannon, an NBOME board member from 2001-2010, has served as AACOM’s President and CEO for 11 years.

American DOs Eligible for Canadian Residency

All 10 Canadian provinces now recognize the qualifications of American osteopathic medical school graduates as equal to that of MDs trained in the US. According to the Canadian Osteopathic Association (COA), this will open up more residency training opportunities in the country for DOs.

Can Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Work?

A recent paper published in the Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges questioning the usefulness of MOC was published by David W. Price, MD; Helene Biernacki; and Lois Margaret Nora, MD, JD, MBA. After compiling a list of studies, the authors examined the relationship of MOC to physician knowledge, clinical practice processes, and/or patient care outcomes. Out of the 39 studies used for analysis, 37 of them reported at least one positive outcome. It was concluded that overall MOC tends to correlate with positive impacts on physician knowledge and patient care processes or outcomes. To read the full study, go here: https://bit.ly/2nf5EAf

Thomas Cavalieri, DO, Honored

U.S. Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos reappointed Thomas A. Cavalieri, DO, to serve on the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA). Dr. Cavalieri is a former Chair of NBOME’s Board and serves as Dean of Rowan University-School of Osteopathic Medicine in New Jersey.

Dr. Cavalieri accepted the appointment, having previously served on the NCFMEA from 2015-2017. This follows after a long and illustrious career in medicine, including nearly 100 peer-reviewed writings, multiple fellowships and numerous National and State-level council placements.

Quick Links for Osteopathic Medical Students

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The NBOME’s Mission

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