

THE OSTEOPATHIC EXAMINER



A quarterly publication of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners

SEPTEMBER 2011

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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 Executive Committee Meets in Colorado Springs

Under the leadership of NBOME Board Chair **John E. Thornburg, DO, PhD**, the NBOME Executive Committee charged through a robust and exciting agenda at meetings held September 23-24, 2011 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. A major highlight of the meeting included significant work in strategic planning for the NBOME, as we work toward development of a new five-year plan that will go into effect in 2012.



Significant preparation for the most recent meeting included securing input from the NBOME Board and senior staff, as well as representatives of key NBOME stakeholders through the NBOME's Liaison Committee, which has members from medical education (students, undergraduate and graduate medical education), assessment and licensure, and leadership of the osteopathic profession.

More than 1,500 COMAT Examinations Delivered in First Two Months

The Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test (COMAT), the NBOME's new subject examination series, successfully launched in July. For the eight-week period from July 28 through September 23, the NBOME supported the administration of 1,508 individual COMAT examinations in all seven subjects to students of 16 colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs).

Overall, the NBOME has signed agreements with 18 of the COMs leaving only eight COMs that have not yet elected to use COMAT at this date.

COMAT is primarily delivered in a computer-based format through a secure NBOME browser that is loaded on computers at the site the COM has selected for administration – whether at the COM or an off-campus location. In addition, paper and pencil versions of the COMAT examinations are also available for those COMs that are progressing toward to administering the computer-based version. Regardless of the delivery mechanism, every COMAT examination is carefully monitored by a Proctor who has been trained by NBOME personnel.

If you are interested in learning more about COMAT, please contact Larry Turner, NBOME Vice President for Administration and Chief Operating Officer, at ltturner@nbome.org.

Some Client Feedback About COMAT:

From a Test Coordinator at PNWU-COM following their first COMAT administration:

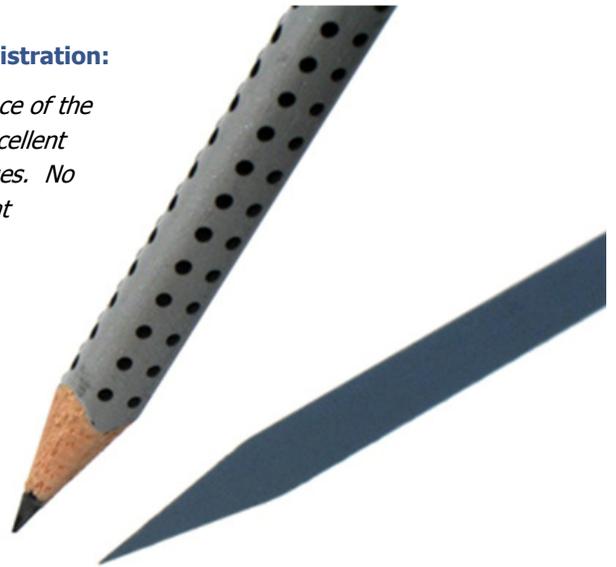
"Again, thank you so much for all of your help, patience, understanding and tolerance of the dozen questions and issues that popped up at the last minute. Overall, it was an excellent experience and I have shared all the positive things about NBOME with my colleagues. No negatives...you're perfect in every way! Please let the others who helped, know that everything they did was greatly appreciated."

From a Proctor from AT Still University following NBOME Proctor training:

"Nice presentation today. Now I feel like an expert! Thanks."

From COMAT Coordinators, Elena DeMayao and Josie D'Urso at NYCOM/ NYIT, following their first COMAT administration:

"Our COMAT launch went well due to the excellent support we had: from the preparation, instructions from Bev and Alex, and during the test."



Updated Osteopathic Competencies Document Published

The NBOME's updated *Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains* (FOMCD) document was recently approved by the NBOME Board of Directors and is now available online (<http://www.nbome.org/docs/NBOME%20Fundamental%20Osteopathic%20Medical%20Competencies.pdf>). The FOMCD document will also be available in printed format in October. For

more information or if you would like to request a printed copy, please contact André De Champlain, PhD, Director for Innovations in Testing (adechamplain@nbome.org). Or visit the NBOME booth (Number 640) at the American Osteopathic Association's annual meeting in Orlando, Florida, October 30 to November 1.

NBOME Board Members participate at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Inaugural Health Equity Summit



NBOME Board members, Stephen Shannon, DO (left) and William Anderson, DO (right) participated in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Inaugural Health Equity Summit hosted by the Institute for the Advancement of Multicultural and Minority Medicine (IAMMM) in Washington, DC. The gathering, which was in late August, was to review policy directions and model solutions to address disparities in health care and develop a cohesive momentum for moving forward. Also pictured are **Dr. Barbara Ross-Lee (standing)**, Vice President for Health Sciences, NYCOM/NYIT, and **Sister Anne E. Brooks, DO**, Medical Director of the Tutwiler Clinic in Mississippi.

Photo courtesy of the American Osteopathic Association

Novel Item Types and Enhancements to COMLEX-USA in Development

The NBOME is investigating novel item types and other enhancements that could potentially be incorporated into the COMLEX-USA examination series. Here is an update on some of the activities:

Department of Cognitive Testing

- Pilot testing with multimedia items in COMLEX-USA Level 3 started in 2007. Use of multimedia items will expand to COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2 after 2012.
- We are developing multimedia item topic outlines for COMLEX-USA so that their creation will systematically complement the areas covered in text items.
- The Advanced Items Committee and staff are developing a routine process of multimedia item development including media content development and review.
- Video production for multimedia items has been an organizational effort. Staff from the National Center for Clinical Skills Testing (NCCST) filmed videos at the NCCST in accordance with guidance and direction provided by members of the Advanced Items Committee. Day-long video shoots took place in March and August. The Cognitive Testing department hopes this will be an ongoing collaboration. Also under consideration are options for shooting in a variety of settings, such as emergency rooms, intensive care units, nursing homes and home visits.

Department of Clinical Skills Testing

For the past two years, candidates who have taken the

COMLEX-USA Level 2-Performance Evaluation (PE) have been requested to fill out a post-exam survey. One of the areas addressed in the survey is the use of electronic health record and keyboard data entry during their clinical rotations and school-based Standardized Patient experiences. Survey results from the past year show that 67.3% of candidates reported using keyboard data entry "often" or "occasionally." And when asked if they preferred writing or typing post-encounter notes, only 30.3% preferred writing over typing.

In response to this increase in the use of keyboard data entry by candidates, the NBOME has initiated several research studies to investigate the use of keyboard data entry for the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE. Research protocols were developed over the last six months. The projects received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval last month and began in mid-August. They are expected to be completed by the end of November so that findings can be presented to the NBOME's Board of Directors for consideration during its December 2011 meeting.

Department of Innovations in Testing

Staff members and two committees are currently exploring two major categories of innovative items. They are:

- (1) Video-based items that focus on cultural competency elements, such as communicating with a patient who displays limited English proficiency, and
- (2) Items that focus on critical interpretation of medical literature (use of evidence-based medicine), such as pharmaceutical company advertisements and abstract searches.

Dr. De Champlain Represents the NBOME Internationally



On August 28th, Dr. André De Champlain, NBOME Director for Innovations, presented a workshop entitled the "ABCs of IRT (Item Response Theory)" at the annual meeting of the Association for Medical Education in Europe (AMEE), in Vienna, Austria. The workshop was very successful and presented to several dozen participants who represented more than a dozen countries from Europe, North & South America, Asia and Australia. Dr. De Champlain reported that comments were favorable and participants felt confident they could apply some of the information shared during the workshop at their respective medical institutions.

NBOME Corporate Office and Conference Center

The NBOME has recently completed a remodel and expansion of its Chicago offices, and has given the location a new name to reflect the changes: The NBOME Corporate Offices and Conference Center. In addition to housing the NBOME's Cognitive Testing, Human Resources and Finance Departments, as well as hosting numerous meetings of the NBOME's National Faculty throughout the year, the facilities now boast meeting and conference facilities that can be rented to outside organizations.

Facilities and services available include:

- **Two large conference rooms, each of which can be divided into two smaller conference rooms and are equipped with projectors, speakers, etc.**
- **State-of –the-art video conference facilities**
- **Computers**
- **Business Center with high speed internet, printer, fax, etc.**
- **Wireless Internet available throughout the facility**
- **On-site audiovisual and technical support**
- **NBOME staffing for reception**
- **Coffee break area**
- **Catering area to seat up to 45 individuals**

- **Support for lodging and catering arrangements through the NBOME's Conference Center Administration**



Dee Grimes, NBOME's Vice President for Finance, is handling the arrangements with outside groups who wish to rent the facilities. For more information and for rates, please contact her at dgrimes@nbome.org.

NBOME Staff Get Published in a Variety of Outlets

Competency-based classification of COMLEX-USA cognitive examination test items.

An article by **Erik Langenau, DO**, NBOME Vice President for Clinical Skills Testing, **Bill Roberts, EdD**, Director for Psychometrics & Research and former NBOME employee, **Gina Pugliano, MA**, published in June's *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association* is focused on competency-based classification, which is particularly relevant to the "new" COMLEX-USA and the work of the NBOME's Blue Ribbon Panel.

Over the past 15 years, there has been a growing national and international trend toward developing frameworks for defining, applying, teaching, and measuring the competency of a physician. Many organizations have developed criteria to define and measure competency, stemming from efforts of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) with their *Skills for the New Millennium* project, which eventually evolved

into the *CanMEDS Roles* framework. Following this work, a number of organizations proposed physician competency-based frameworks to guide their own efforts.

More recently, the NBOME, under the guidance of its Blue Ribbon Panel on Enhancing COMLEX-USA, published its own *Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains Document* (FOMCD) which outlines terminology and measurement strategies to guide the transformation of COMLEX-USA examinations towards a (seven) competency-based schema and construct.

This article represents an early effort to categorize current COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2-CE according to this framework. This work will provide useful information to guide further test and item development efforts, specifically as they pertain to competency domains that might not be well targeted in the current COMLEX sequence.

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Coalition for Physician Accountability Holds Charter Meeting in Washington, DC

Dr. John Thornburg, NBOME Board Chair; Dr. John Becher, Secretary/Treasurer; and Dr. Gerald Osborn, Senior Vice President for Cognitive Testing, attended the Charter Meeting of the Coalition for Physician Accountability in Washington, D.C. on August 16, 2011, hosted by the Association of American Medical Colleges.

The "Coalition" is a new iteration of the former National Alliance for Physician Competence. The organizations represented were: Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, American Board of Medical Specialties, American Osteopathic Association, Association of American Medical Colleges, Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates, Federation of State Medical Boards, National Board of Medical Examiners, and the NBOME.

The Coalition will pursue ongoing conversations and study of the overall medical profession's ability to promote and ensure the life-long competencies of physicians practicing in the USA. Core values include Professionalism, Integrity, Trust, Diversity, Mutual Respect and Transparency.



NBOME Board Chair, **Dr. John Thornburg**, is pictured far right in the front row at the charter meeting of the Coalition for Physician Accountability. Directly behind him is **Dr. John Becher**, NBOME Secretary/Treasurer, and **Dr. Gerald Osborn**, Senior Vice President for Cognitive Testing, is pictured at right in the next-to-last row.

Meet NBOME Staff at Upcoming Conferences

The NBOME invites you to visit our representatives at two upcoming conferences – The American Osteopathic Association's annual Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition, October 30 – November 1 in Orlando, Florida (Booth

640), and the Association of American Medical Colleges' Annual meeting, November 6-7 in Denver, Colorado (Booth 422). Note: Dates listed represent exhibition days and not the entirety of the conferences.

NBOME Staff Get Published in a Variety of Outlets (continued)

Full reference: Langenau E, Pugliano G, Roberts W. Competency-based classification of COMLEX-USA cognitive examination test items. J Am Osteopath Assoc. 2011; 111(6): 396-402.

Article on Misrepresentation of Clinical Findings Published

An article entitled Pass/fail patterns of candidates who failed COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE because of misrepresentation of clinical findings on post-encounter notes, written by NBOME Vice President for Clinical Skills Testing, **Dr. Erik Langenau**, and Associate Director for Case Development & Training, **Dr. Jeanne Sandella**, was published in the July issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*.

Article Accepted by *Advances in Health Sciences Education*

Bill Roberts, Ed.D, Director of Psychometrics and Research for the National Center for Clinical Skills Testing, was the lead author on an

article entitled: Modeling relationships between traditional preadmission measures and clinical skills performance on a medical licensure examination which was recently accepted for publication by the journal *Advances in Health Sciences Education*. Co-authors on the piece were **Dr. Jack Boulet**, NBOME consultant, and former NBOME employee **Gina Pugliano**. The article is yet to be published.

Letter to the Editor Accepted

A letter to the editor, by **Drs. Langenau, Sandella, and Gimpel**, was recently accepted for publication by the journal, *Family Medicine*, the official journal of the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine. The letter was titled: Response to "Do Students Falsify Information in Clinical Notes?" The letter is yet to be published.

NBOME Attends MOL Pilot Collaboration Information Forum in Euless, Texas

NBOME President and CEO, Dr. John Gimpel; Dr. Gerald Osborn, Senior Vice President for Cognitive Testing, and André De Champlain, Director for Innovations in Testing, met with senior staff members from the AOA-Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists, the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) on Sunday and Monday August 21-22 at the FSMB offices in Euless, Texas. Led by Hank Chaudhry, DO, FSMB President and CEO, the group received an update on the various initiatives and work groups that are currently meeting regarding the implementation of Maintenance of Licensure (MOL).

Want to be an NBOME Item Writer?

The NBOME welcomes enthusiastic, interested and qualified individuals to consider writing test items in your respective specialty for use in COMLEX-USA and/or COMAT examinations.

You may qualify to join the small but unique group of individuals who contribute to the future of osteopathic medicine by writing or reviewing test items for COMLEX-USA or COMAT examinations, if:

- You have received your DO degree, are licensed to practice and have completed COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-Cognitive Evaluation, Level 2-Performance Evaluation and COMLEX Level 3 (or the predecessor examinations, NBOME Parts 1, 2 and 3).
- You are non-DO faculty member (e.g., PhDs, EdDs) who teaches at a college of osteopathic medicine or in an osteopathic residency program.

The COMLEX-USA and COMAT examinations are developed with the assistance of experts in osteopathic medical education – faculty at osteopathic colleges/schools, residency program directors and practicing physicians. Members of the medical licensing community are also key contributors. The NBOME is regularly in need of qualified individuals to join the team and contribute to the examination development process.

As NBOME item writer, you are provided with the necessary training and your participation makes you eligible for AOA continuing medical education credits (currently category 1B).

If you are interested in learning more about being an item writer or contributing to the COMLEX-USA or COMAT examination development process, please contact Candice Pernell at cpernell@nbome.org.

THE NBOME'S MISSION IS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC BY PROVIDING THE MEANS TO ASSESS COMPETENCIES FOR OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE AND RELATED HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS.

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 and give an update, please contact Taunya Cossetti at tcossetti@nbome.org

Send submissions, questions or comments about *The Osteopathic Examiner* to Editor:

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