1. **What is the appropriate use of ITE scores?** The only validated use of ITE scores is to provide one piece of information to EM residents and their faculty to determine the residents’ degree of preparedness for taking the ABEM Qualifying Examination.

2. **Can I compare my program’s ITE scores with other residency programs?** No. The ITE is not a program evaluation tool nor is it a recruiting tool. ABEM has never ranked resident training programs and believes that ranking programs is not in the best interest of the specialty.

3. **Can I share a resident’s score outside of the program?** ABEM privacy rules require the resident’s written permission before sharing scores outside the program. Scores should be held in confidence between the program director and the resident.

4. **May residents discuss the content of ABEM’s ITE after its administration?** Yes. The ITE is viewed as a learning opportunity. ABEM policy allows residents to discuss the content of the examination so long as test questions are not used or shared in any enduring form.

5. **Are candidates for ABEM’s certification exams allowed to discuss those exams’ content with others?** No. ABEM’s certification process is categorically different, since its purpose is assessing whether a candidate meets the standards for certification. Candidates taking the Qualifying or Oral Certification examinations should be aware of this difference to avoid the consequences of violating ABEM’s irregularity policies.

6. **How is the reported ITE score determined?** For security purposes, the ITE is administered using multiple versions. Any given resident is unlikely to receive the same version of the examination as another resident. After calculating a resident’s count of questions answered correctly, a statistical process called equating is applied to arrive at the reported score. Equating is necessary to ensure scores reflect the same level of ability across examination administration years.

7. **How is the percent predicted to pass the ABEM Qualifying Examination calculated?** ITE scores can be used to predict performance on a resident’s first attempt on the Qualifying Examination. To predict Qualifying Examination scores, residents’ ITE scores from recent administrations are matched to their first Qualifying Examination scores. The results of this analysis are shown on the residents’ report and in the Summary of Residents Taking The 2020 In-training Examination by EM Residency Training Level.

   Beginning in 2019 new prediction models were reported. To increase the reliability of the predictions, the models are now tailored to each level within the two largest program training formats (e.g., PGY 1-3 or PGY 1-4). Because of this, one program’s predictions may not be the same as another’s.

8. **Why are EM Residency Training Levels 3 and 4 no longer combined on the ITE Score Reports?** There is now a sufficient sample size to provide an accurate predictive model for each level separately, as well as for different predictive models for the PGY 1-3 and PGY 1-4 formats.

9. **Can my program’s predicted probability be compared to a program that trains residents in a different format (e.g., PGY 1-3 vs PGY 1-4)?** No.
10. **Why is some information missing on my resident’s score report?** Residents in combined training programs, advance match residents, and residents in international programs represent groups too small and diverse to provide useful comparison data.

11. **What is the standard error of measurement?** Every examination score contains a degree of measurement error. To assess this error, ABEM uses a statistic called the standard error of measurement (SEM) which is calculated using a reliability statistic (coefficient alpha) and the standard deviation of ITE scores. The SEM is similar to, but not the same as, confidence intervals used for inferential statistics.

12. **How is percentile rank calculated?** The percentile rank is calculated for each score by adding the percent of residents at each EM residency training level who achieve that score or less.

13. **Who can I contact if I have a question about my program’s reports?** If you have any questions about your program’s ITE reports, please feel free to contact Kevin Joldersma, Ph.D., at the ABEM office by phone at 517.332.4800, extension 338, or by email at kjoldersma@abem.org.

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