



Policy on Maintaining Open Applications to Regain Certification

BACKGROUND

To track the applications of formerly certified physicians who are attempting to regain ABEM certification, applications for regaining certification have been designated as open or closed. The Board has defined the examination activity that formerly certified physicians must maintain to keep their applications for regaining certification open. This policy was created in 2011 and affects all formerly certified physicians who have open applications for regaining certification in or after 2011.

POLICY

Initially approved applications for regaining certification are considered open. Formerly certified physicians with open applications to regain certification may register for an examination. Physicians must take an examination at least once every three years for their applications to remain open. Taking an examination is defined as completing 80 percent of the questions on the ConCert™ Examination, or five of the six cases used for scoring the Oral Certification Examination.

Formerly certified physicians can register for and take the ConCert Examination during the designated registration periods and may take it during the regularly scheduled biannual examination windows the year in which they registered for the examination. Former diplomates may take the ConCert Examination only once per year.

Applications of formerly certified physicians who pass the ConCert Examination remain open. Those physicians will be assigned to either the spring or fall Oral Certification Examination in the year following the one in which they passed the ConCert Examination. Formerly certified physicians who pass the Oral Certification Examination become certified.

Failure to take an examination at least once every three years will result in permanent closure of the application to regain certification. If the application is closed, the physician cannot take any examination. To regain access to examinations, the physician must reapply to regain certification. Prior examination attempts cannot be transferred from a closed application to a new application.

PROCEDURES

ConCert Examination

The ConCert Examination is administered twice each year, in the spring and fall. Former diplomates whose applications to regain certification are approved by the deadline may register for the ConCert Examination.

Oral Certification Examination

Former diplomates regaining certification must take an Oral Certification Examination within three years after the end of the year in which they passed the ConCert Examination, or their application to regain certification will be closed.

Formerly certified physicians who take but do not pass the Oral Certification Examination must retake the examination within three years after the end of the year in which they failed the examination, or their certification application will be closed.

The Oral Certification Examination is administered twice each year. Once each year, ABEM randomly assigns a maximum number of physicians whose certification applications are open to the oral examinations for that calendar year. The number of available examination assignments is limited, and some physicians may not be offered an assignment in a given year. Initial certification candidates who passed the most recent Qualifying Examination are assigned first, along with formerly certified physicians regaining certification who passed the ConCert Examination in the previous year.

Because ABEM assigns physicians to specific examinations, and examination assignments are limited, it is possible that a physician will not receive an assignment within three years of his or her last examination attempt. In that case, the physician's application will remain open, and the physician must accept the first examination assignment ABEM offers, or the application will be closed.

EXCEPTION

None

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