

NBCE Exam Fees to Increase In Spring 2002

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS FORMED

Greeley, CO- While we reported in the September 24 issue that the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) Board of Directors had agreed to raise fees in 2002, the timing and the amounts had not been determined. The board has since voted unanimously to accept the recommendations of its finance and executive committees to increase fees beginning in the spring of 2002, the first increase since 1992.

Here are the increases:

Part I exam: \$ 100
Part II exam: \$ 100
Part III exam: \$ 100
Part IV exam: \$ 125
Physiotherapy exam: \$ 50
Special Purpose Examination for Chiropractic (SPEC): \$ 100
Part I and Part II Retake:\$25 per subject

"We considered this fee increase with a profound sense of concern for the financial burdens of chiropractic students," NBCE President Peter Ferguson said. "The entire board remains steadfast in our goal to keep fees to an absolute minimum, while still maintaining the quality of the NBCE exams."

To keep fee increases to a minimum, as we noted in the September 24 issue, the board has focused this year on reducing costs where possible. At its annual meeting in April, the board voted to make budget cuts by decreasing directors' honoraria; travel; the number of days for board meetings; and the budget of the professional relations and communications department. The board also voted to postpone expansion of the NBCE headquarters and to close a Part IV test site.

As another cost-saving measure, the NBCE will reduce its grant to the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards by 20 percent in 2002. The board is also reviewing other grants and memberships for possible reductions.

Ready to Aid International Chiropractic Community

Dr. Ferguson has announced the formation of an ad hoc committee on international affairs. "When I became president of the National Board," he explained, "I envisioned projects including implementing computerized testing and improving relations with those whom we serve. Equally important was expanding the NBCE's role in chiropractic at the international level."

NBCE Director-at-Large Dr. D. Brent Owens will chair the new committee. "We are excited about the prospect of being part of the international explosion of chiropractic throughout the world," said Dr. Owens. "Addressing international testing represents one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by the National Board since its inception."

The NBCE will offer its testing expertise to foreign jurisdictions, and work with the World Federation of Chiropractic and other international groups, government agencies, and chiropractic organizations and associations to further the cause of international test development.

The NBCE says its goal is to allow the scope of individual practice to be determined at the local level, but to provide third-party assessment of international chiropractic education programs for registration and licensure.

"As in this country," observed Dr. Owens, "the respective chiropractic examinations given in foreign countries will be a reflection and blend of the practice patterns, laws and standards established by authorized agencies within the respective jurisdictions."

One country already in partnership with the NBCE is Japan. While at the WFC Congress held in July in Paris, NBCE Vice President Dr. James Badge signed an agreement to collaborate with the Japanese Association of Chiropractic. This agreement will help develop an appropriate Japanese registration examination.

The NBCE will continue to work with established chiropractic colleges in the United States and other countries on individual projects involving translated examinations that meet the unique needs of each jurisdiction.

"We would be especially interested in talking to representatives of countries thinking about test development and the various approaches to chiropractic practice assessment," noted Dr. Owens.

NBCE Holds Examinations on Schedule after Terrorist Attacks

After the tragic events of September 11, the NBCE Board had to decide whether to proceed as scheduled for the September 14, 15, and 16 exams.

"We spoke with the college presidents and staff, as well as state board members," said NBCE President Peter Ferguson. "We all agreed that it would be unfair to our examinees not to go ahead with the exams. We really had no other choice."

NBCE Director of Administration Pam Kurtz attended the exam administration at a Los Angeles test center. "I would estimate that about 98 percent of the expected examinees were at the site I attended," she reported.

Part IV Item Writers Meet

Fifteen members from chiropractic colleges across the U.S. met August 24-25 at the NBCE headquarters in Greeley, Colorado, to write items for an upcoming NBCE Part IV Practical Examination. By drawing on their own experiences as chiropractors, the item writers help add to the realism of the Part IV exam.

The Part IV examination assesses candidates for chiropractic licensure in diagnostic imaging (x-ray), chiropractic technique and case management.

Now that the case scenarios have been written, they will be reviewed by NBCE staff and consultants. A test committee comprised of state board members will later select the items to be included on the exam.

Dr. Paul Townsend, the director of practical testing, noted the changes in testing today compared to 30 years ago. At that time, standards for entry-level practice varied widely, as each state had its

own licensing examination. Today, the NBCE Part IV examination is accepted or required in 44 states. This has created a virtual nationwide standard for entry-level knowledge and skills for the profession.

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