Step 3 Addendum

to the 2014
Bulletin of Information
PURPOSE OF THIS ADDENDUM

This addendum pertains to the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) Step 3 examinations administered on or after November 3, 2014. Applications for the current Step 3 will no longer be accepted after 5 PM (Central) on July 18, 2014. If you need Step 3 results reported prior to April 2015 you must submit your application by this deadline. Applicants for the USMLE Step 3 who plan to sit on or after November 3, 2014 should familiarize themselves with this addendum and the remaining terms of the 2014 Bulletin of Information which remain in full force and effect. As USMLE policies and procedures are subject to change, applicants are urged to check the USMLE website for updates.

ENHANCEMENTS TO USMLE

The USMLE Composite Committee which establishes policy for the USMLE Program is composed of representatives of the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), the National Board of Medical Examiners® (NBME®), the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG®), and the public. In 2004, the Composite Committee initiated a process to undertake a comprehensive review of the USMLE. As a result of this review, the USMLE Composite Committee and the USMLE parent organizations (the NBME and the FSMB) approved changes to the design, format, and structure of the Step 3 exam.

Additional information about the enhancements and a summary of planned changes over the next few years is available on the USMLE website.

THE RESTRUCTURED STEP 3: Purpose, Format, and Test Length

The purpose of Step 3 is to determine if a physician possesses and can apply the medical knowledge and understanding of clinical science considered essential for the unsupervised practice of medicine, with emphasis on patient management in ambulatory care settings. The inclusion of Step 3 in the USMLE sequence of licensing examinations ensures that attention is devoted to the importance of assessing the knowledge and skills of physicians who are assuming independent responsibility for providing general medical care to patients.

The restructured Step 3 examination is comprised of two examination days, which must be taken in the following order:

Day 1

**Step 3 Foundations of Independent Practice (FIP):**
This test day will focus on assessing an applicant’s knowledge of basic medical and scientific principles essential for effective health care. Content areas covered will include application of foundational sciences; understanding of biostatistics and epidemiology/population health, and interpretation of the medical literature; and application of social sciences, including communication and interpersonal skills, medical ethics, systems-based practice and patient safety. The test day will also assess an applicant’s knowledge of diagnosis and management particularly focused on knowledge of history and physical examination, diagnosis, and use of diagnostic studies. This test day will consist solely of multiple-choice
questions and will include some of the newer item formats, such as those based on scientific abstracts and pharmaceutical advertisements.

**Day 2**

**Step 3 Advanced Clinical Medicine (ACM):**
This test day will focus on assessing an applicant’s ability to apply comprehensive knowledge of health and disease in the context of patient management and the evolving manifestation of disease over time. Content areas covered will include assessment of knowledge of diagnosis and management particularly focused on prognosis and outcome, health maintenance and screening, therapeutics, and medical decision-making. Knowledge of history and physical examination, diagnosis, and use of diagnostic studies will also be assessed. This test day will include multiple-choice questions and computer-based case simulations.

Prior to restructuring, the Step 3 examination was administered in two 8-hour test sessions, designed to be taken on consecutive days. As shown in the chart below, the restructured examination will also be two test days, but of varying length. Examinees will be able to schedule the two test days on consecutive or non-consecutive days. Exam days can be no more than 14 calendar days apart.

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<td><strong>Step 3 FIP</strong> accesses the examinee’s knowledge of basic medical and scientific principles essential for effective health care.</td>
<td>• Approximately 260 multiple-choice test questions, divided into 60-minute blocks, each block containing approximately 44 questions.</td>
<td>• One day test session – approximately 7 hours</td>
<td>For more information on Step 3, including application materials, visit the FSMB website.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 3 ACM</strong> accesses the examinee’s ability to apply comprehensive knowledge of health and disease in the context of patient management and the evolving manifestation of disease over time.</td>
<td>• Approximately 200 multiple-choice test questions, divided into 45-minute blocks, each block containing approximately 33 questions. • Thirteen computer-based case simulations. Each simulation is allotted 10 or 20 minutes of maximum real time.</td>
<td>• One day test session – approximately 9 hours</td>
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TRANSITION TO RESTRUCTURED STEP 3: TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Please note the following important dates related to the implementation of the restructured Step 3.

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<td>Applications for the current Step 3 will no longer be accepted after 5 PM (Central).</td>
<td>July 18, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin registration for restructured Step 3.</td>
<td>August 4, 2014</td>
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<td>Test administration blackout with no Step 3 administrations.</td>
<td>October 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>First release of scores for restructured Step 3 exam.</td>
<td>April 2015</td>
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STEP 3 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for Step 3, before submitting your application you must:

- obtain the MD degree (or its equivalent) or the DO degree from an LCME or AOA accredited US or Canadian medical school, or from a medical school outside the US and Canada that is listed in the International Medical Education Directory (https://imed.faimer.org/),

- pass Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS,

- obtain certification by the ECFMG or successfully complete a “Fifth Pathway” program if you are a graduate of a medical school outside the US and Canada. Visit http://www.ecfmg.org/2014ib/fifth-pathway.html for more information.

With the introduction of the restructured Step 3 examination, the USMLE program will no longer require examinees to apply for Step 3 under the eligibility requirements of a specific medical licensing authority. Removing state board sponsorship as part of the Step 3 examination application does not impact initial medical licensure requirements in the United States. Most medical licensing authorities have, and will continue to maintain, specific criteria for completion of the USMLE, such as time and attempt limits. A summary of these requirements can be found on the FSMB website.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for USMLE Step 3, visit the FSMB website.

ELIGIBILITY PERIODS AND SCHEDULING PERMITS

When you apply for the restructured Step 3 you must select a two-month eligibility period in which to take Step 3 FIP and ACM, such as November – December or December – January. A scheduling permit with
instructions for making appointments at a Prometric Test Center for both examination days will be issued to you after the FSMB processes your application and verifies your eligibility. You may schedule Step 3 FIP and ACM on consecutive or non-consecutive days within your assigned eligibility period. Step 3 FIP must be taken first, followed by Step 3 ACM. Your exam days may be no more than 14 calendar days apart. You must schedule both test dates with Prometric at the same time and at the same center.

PREPARING FOR YOUR EXAM
The best preparation for the USMLE is a general, thorough review of the examination content and test formats and running the practice test software, all of which are available on the USMLE website.

SCORE REPORTING
It is anticipated the first score release for Step 3 exams taken on or after November 3, 2014 will be in April 2015, dependent on examinee volume. Please check the USMLE website regularly for updates.

When your score is available, the FSMB will send an e-mail notification to the address you provided on your application. Follow the instructions in the e-mail notification for accessing your USMLE score report. Upon logging in to the secure site, you will be able to view, download, and print your score report. Your score report will remain available for approximately 120 days from the date of your e-mail notification. Once the score report is removed from the website, your scores will be provided to you only in the form of an official USMLE transcript.

A single score (with graphical performance profile information) and a single pass/fail outcome will be reported following completion of both examination days (Step 3 FIP and ACM).

INQUIRIES
For questions about Step 3, contact the FSMB:

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