NBOME is pleased to announce the opening of its newest clinical skills testing site in Chicago, the National Center for Clinical Skills Testing (NCCST-Chicago). NCCST-Chicago began testing for the COMLEX-USA Level 2-Performance Evaluation (PE) examination on August 1, 2016.

With the opening of the new state-of-the-art center, the NBOME now provides osteopathic medical students with a choice of two locations for administration of the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE, which continues to be offered at the NCCST near Philadelphia. The COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE is a one-day, seven-hour standardized assessment of fundamental clinical skills, including patient-physician communication and osteopathic manipulative treatment skills, in which each candidate encounters 12 standardized patients (SPs) in simulated ambulatory clinical settings.

According to Jeanne M. Sandella, DO, Vice President for Clinical Skills Testing and Continuous Professional Development, "The NBOME team has worked to ensure that the candidate experience in the new NCCST-Chicago will be virtually identical to the examination conducted at the NCCST-Philadelphia. Rigorous quality assurance is conducted to ensure that the examination administration, cases, standardized patients and scoring of the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE provide for a standardized examination across both testing sites."

With the increased capacity of two NCCST testing locations, beginning in November 2016 the NBOME will open seats for scheduling the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examination on the first Monday of each month, nine months in advance. For example, August 2017 seats for the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE examinations will be available in November 2016. Previously seats were opened 12 months in advance. In response to preferences by the students and colleges of osteopathic medicine (COM), this change is designed to make scheduling more streamlined and less stressful for students. The change aligns better with COM internal prerequisites and procedures for granting eligibility and will allow students to schedule the examination as soon as they become eligible.

The NBOME also is partnering with a number of assessment organizations in administration of standardized clinical skills assessments, performance tests, and oral practical examination formats, including the National Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners and the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine, and looks forward to additional collaborations.

Visit the NBOME website for additional information about the NCCST and COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE.
NBOME celebrated the opening of the NCCST-Chicago by hosting the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony on August 26. After months of planning, friends and over 100 key stakeholders of the NBOME, Board of Directors, National Faculty Chairs and staff enjoyed special performances, toured the newly designed testing center and observed simulations of the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE assessments and various options in clinical skills assessments.

Joining in the celebration along with the NBOME Board of Directors and staff were key stakeholders—from deans and leaders from colleges of osteopathic medicine, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) as well as its Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists (AOA-BOS), and a number of osteopathic specialty boards and colleges, Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration Center (CSEC), Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), Education Management Solutions (EMS), SynDaver Labs, and many others. The evening was highlighted by musical and vocal performances by osteopathic medical students from nearby Midwestern University/Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine.
National Faculty Conclave

The Ribbon-Cutting Celebration coincided with the annual National Faculty Conclave at the Chicago Corporate Offices & Conference Center on August 26. The NBOME National Faculty consists of over 1,000 credentialed professionals and volunteers across the country who support the NBOME’s mission through their work on committees, sub-committees and task forces, as well as through item writing, case development, physician examiners and other activities. National Faculty chairs met to discuss leadership development surrounding the following topics: NBOME’s exciting new strategic plan “ACEL 2016-2019,” the COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint 2018-2019 and the Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains 2016, principal accountabilities, recruiting needs, NBOME ambassadorship, performance management and metrics, educational development (including innovations in assessment, chairs as committee leaders, and examination development quality improvement).

The NBOME Learning Center Launches New Item Writing 101

The NBOME Learning Center is the expanding home for online learning and assessment programs designed for use by osteopathic physicians and other health care professionals. The latest course offered on the NBOME Learning Center is Item Writing 101: Multiple-Choice Items with Realistic Clinical Scenarios. Created for new and experienced members of the NBOME National Faculty who write examination questions, Item Writing 101 is the first course in a series that provides basic training for COMLEX-USA test item writers and item writers working with colleges of osteopathic medicine and specialty boards. This interactive course includes responsive assessment activities with videos of NBOME National Faculty subject matter experts. The content of this course places an emphasis on assessing competencies for osteopathic medicine and related health care professions using realistic clinical scenarios and single-best-option multiple choice items, similar to those used in COMLEX-USA.
NBOME launched the American Podiatric Medical Licensing Examination (APMLE) Part II Clinical Skills Patient Encounter (Part II CSPE) examination on August 17. The Part II CSPE evaluates aptitude in podiatric clinical tasks needed to enter residency, and is required for licensure. Candidates are expected to perform a focused physical examination including podiatric and general medicine physical exam maneuvers appropriate for each patient presentation.

Over the course of one year, NBOME worked closely with the National Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners (NBPME) and with the CSPE committee that incorporated new orientation videos, updated candidate information bulletin, exam software and ensured that the new examination maintained the same pass/fail standard and had the ability to run simultaneously with the COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE.

NBOME expects to administer 50 sessions in the current test cycle of the APMLE Part II CSPE examination through October 29, 2016, with additional administrations taking place beginning in February 2017.

The NBOME team announces the recent release of three new publications:

1. The COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information 2016-2017

The COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information 2016-2017 is now posted on the NBOME website. Updated and released annually in July, the COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information is provided to candidates and colleges of osteopathic medicine as a single source for important policy and procedure information about the COMLEX-USA examination series, including descriptions for each examination, eligibility, registration, scheduling, administration and scoring. According to Joseph Flamini, MBA, Vice President for Administration and Operations/COO, “We redesigned the Bulletin of Information this year to provide a better user experience for candidates, deans and faculty with easier access to important information.”

This year for the first time, the COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information 2016-2017 features a more streamlined design for improved readability and navigation, and is presented in a “flip-page” format on the website.
2 Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains 2016

Unveiled in July 2016, the NBOME Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains 2016 (FOMCD 2016) represents expert consensus of a distinguished Blue Ribbon Panel on the required elements and measurable outcomes for seven core competency domains as related to the practice of osteopathic medicine. The FOMCD 2016 was informed by research related to the practice of osteopathic medicine and evidence-based competencies required for safe and effective osteopathic care of patients. The seven competency domains are outlined predominantly from the assessment perspective, particularly as related to summative high-stakes assessment for licensure for osteopathic medical practice.

"The FOMCD 2016 is the groundbreaking culmination of the esteemed NBOME Blue Ribbon Panel’s vision for an expanded competency framework and is the result of years of extensive input from leading organizations in osteopathic medicine. We remain grateful for the expertise and collaboration of the panel, and the NBOME Board of Directors, National Faculty and staff in making the FOMCD 2016 a reality. Importantly, this will set the stage for the development of future assessment frameworks," said John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, NBOME President and CEO.

The NBOME Blue Ribbon Panel included representatives from the American Osteopathic Association, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators, the Organization of Program Director Associations, the Federation of State Medical Boards and the American Association of Osteopathic Examiners.

The FOMCD 2016 was published as a supplement to the September 2016 issue of the Journal of the American Osteopathic Association (JAOA), accompanied by an editorial authored by Dr. Gimpel.

3 COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint 2018-2019

The FOMCD 2016 also serves to inform the NBOME’s newly introduced, enhanced, competency-based COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint 2018-2019. In response to substantive changes in the evolution of osteopathic medical practice, and to ensure the COMLEX-USA examination series remains current in meeting the needs of state medical and osteopathic medical licensing boards and other stakeholders, the NBOME Board of Directors commissioned the Blue Ribbon Panel to conduct a comprehensive review of the COMLEX-USA examination series and explore enhancements to its redesign. A major component in the redesign was the evidence-based development of the new COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint 2018-2019.

"We are very proud to introduce the new COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint as a significant step toward ensuring that the entire COMLEX-USA examination program will continue to set the standard for assessment in osteopathic medicine," NBOME President and CEO John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, said. "We acknowledge and thank our partners in osteopathic education, licensure and assessment for their contributions as we continue to evolve our examination series.”

The new COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint will be implemented beginning with the 2018 test cycle for the new, two-day COMLEX-USA Level 3, followed by the implementation for COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE and Level 2-PE, beginning in 2019.
American Osteopathic Association Inaugurates Dr. Buser as 120th President

On July 23, 2016, the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) installed Boyd R. Buser, DO, as its 120th President. Dr. Buser served as NBOME Board Chair from 2003 to 2005, and was the longtime Chair of NBOME’s Product Committee. In 2013, he received the NBOME Santucci Award and continues to serve on the COMLEX-USA Composite Examination Committee.

Dr. Buser currently is the Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean of the University of Pikeville-Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine. Previously he served as the interim vice president and dean of the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine in Biddeford, Maine, as well as associate dean for clinical affairs. Upon earning his osteopathic medical degree from the Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Buser completed his postdoctoral medical training at the former Cranston General Hospital in Cranston, Rhode Island.

Dr. Wattleworth Joins NBOME as Chief Physician for Test Development

A member of the NBOME Board of Directors since 2011, Dr. Wattleworth has worked closely with the NBOME since 2001 as an active member of the NBOME National Faculty. Among her many contributions, she served as Vice Coordinator for the COMLEX-USA Level 3 examination from 2005 to 2008, as Coordinator from 2008 to 2011, and as a committee member for the NBOME COMVEX examination, an evaluative instrument for physicians to demonstrate current osteopathic medical knowledge. She has served the NBOME with numerous initiatives, including the Advanced Items Committee and Clinical Decision-Making Task Force, and as Coordinator for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.

A board-certified specialist in family medicine, Dr. Wattleworth has over 20 years of experience in the medical education environment. A graduate of Des Moines University-College of Osteopathic Medicine, she completed residencies in both anesthesiology and family medicine, and has many years of experience as a practicing physician and medical educator. Most recently, Dr. Wattleworth was Associate Dean of Medical Education, and Professor of Family Medicine, at Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Lynchburg, Virginia. Previously, she served as Chair of the Department of Family Medicine and Professor of Family Medicine at Des Moines University-College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Wattleworth also holds master’s degrees in public health and health care administration from Des Moines University-Osteopathic Medical Center and is a Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (FACOFP).

Roberta A. Wattleworth, DO, MHA, MPH, FACOFP, was recently named as the NBOME new Chief Physician for Test Development, Assessment Services. In this new role, Dr. Wattleworth provides expertise in the development and review of questions, or test items, that appear on NBOME cognitive examinations, including the COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE and Level 3 examinations that provide the pathway to licensure for osteopathic physicians.

She serves as a content expert in partnership with NBOME National Faculty subject-matter experts to support test development initiatives, including test item and clinical case writing and editing, referencing, test item review, key validation, test item coding, and related quality assurance and improvement processes, as well as leading novel test item development for innovative initiatives.

Dr. Roberta A. Wattleworth, DO, MHA, MPH, FACOFP, Chief Physician for Test Development, Assessment Services
COMAT Update Webinar

**In July and August,** Edward Tsai, PhD, Associate Vice President for Assessment Services and Research, and members of the NBOME COMAT team, Marc Lukasik, PhD, Senior Test Development Specialist; Steve Johnson, Test Development Specialist; Cathy Shao, Psychometrician and Alex Massa, Senior Client Services Representative, delivered two COMAT program webinars to 46 attendees from colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs). Attendees included deans, COMAT examination coordinators, COM faculty and administrators. The program focused on the 2016-17 COMAT program updates including system enhancements, standard score reporting, COMAT-Emergency Medicine and current utilization and experience. The NBOME anticipates facilitating a pre-conference workshop in April 2017 at the Annual AACOM Conference that will include a COMAT Update.

American Osteopathic Association Annual Conference—OMED 2016

**NBOME will attend the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Annual Conference—OMED 2016, September 17-20 in Anaheim, CA.** The NBOME will be an exhibitor at booth 625, at OMED16, sharing information about NBOME assessments and services. The conference will be attended by Gary Slick, DO, MA, NBOME Board Chair; Dana Shaffer, DO, NBOME Board Vice Chair, as well as other members of the NBOME Board. In addition, NBOME staff including John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, President and CEO; Jeanne Sandella, DO, Vice President for Clinical Skills Testing and Continuous Professional Development; Laurie Gallagher, DO, Chief Physician Trainer; Melissa Turner, MS, Associate Vice President for Strategy, Quality and Communications and Sandra Waters, MEM, Vice President for Collaborative Assessment and Initiatives will attend the conference.

During OMED16, Jeanne Sandella, DO, will present on Assessment Innovations for Physician Licensure and Recertification at the Osteopathic International Alliance (OIA) annual meeting.

In the News

Sandella JM, Gimpel JR, Smith LL, Boulet JR. *The use of COMLEX-USA and USMLE for residency applicant selection. Journal of Graduate Medical Education.* May 2016. doi:10.4300/jgme-d-15-00246.1. A study that investigated medical student performance on COMLEX-USA Level 1 and USMLE Step 1 found scores and pass/fail status correlated within the two examinations.


John Gimpel, DO, MEd, NBOME President & CEO, was recently interviewed by the Osmosis organization about the growth of the osteopathic medical profession and changes in medical education and the health care system. The interview is featured in June’s Leaders in Medical Education series.

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

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