



BRINGING EVERYTHING BACK TO THE MISSION

Last year, we [updated our mission](#) to clearly articulate our goal of advancing assessment of health professionals to achieve optimal care for all. At the heart of our mission is the use of assessment to support medical learner growth and the belief that everyone deserves access to high-quality health care. This edition of *NBME Impact: A Community Report* highlights how we work to achieve that goal.

ENHANCING CAPABILITIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

To support growth and development in medical education, NBME continually enhances its capabilities.

Improving the USMLE Experience Through Digital Enhancements

Taking the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) is an important step in a medical learner's journey to becoming a practicing physician, requiring them to sort through a lot of information to register, prepare and take the exam.



To make that experience easier to navigate, the USMLE program has made these key digital enhancements:

- ▶ Launched an updated [USMLE website](#), with a redesigned homepage and improved navigation menu. The test accommodations section was streamlined from approximately **six** pages to **two**, and the exam resources section was simplified to **reduce the number of steps** needed to access practice materials.
- ▶ Provided medical schools a [toolkit of helpful documents](#) with essential information needed to take the exam series so they can better support their students.
- ▶ Replaced the existing registration system with the new **MyUSMLESM Portal**. The portal **consolidates all registration and score reporting services** for Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge into one platform, helping to ensure seamless and consistent access for all examinees.

Introducing New Workshops to Support Medical Educators' Assessment Skills

To support the development of medical educators' assessment skills, NBME is introducing **two new workshop** topics in 2025 focused on psychometric principles:

- ▶ Introduction of Measurement Concepts: Validity and Reliability
- ▶ Using Item Analysis Results to Improve Assessment

Designed with medical school faculty in mind, the workshops offer training on the fundamental measurement concepts of validity and reliability. Participants can also learn how to utilize item statistics to inform assessment development. These skills are designed to be directly applicable to the creation and improvement of exams, providing value to individuals from across institutions, educational backgrounds and health professions. Learn more and register for the remaining workshops on [NBME's website](#).

2024 Assessment and Program Highlights

We offer a diverse and impactful portfolio of assessment programs and services for medical learners and other health professionals. In 2024, NBME:

- ▶ Developed, scored and supported the administration of **more than 25 assessment programs** for over **1.2 million examinations**.
- ▶ Employed **18 psychometricians and 14 measurement or natural language processing scientists** to support assessment operations and research, publishing more than **20 studies** and **delivering 70 presentations**.
- ▶ Collaborated with **more than 275 individuals** for NBME committees and **400 individuals** for USMLE committees, helping ensure the quality and relevance of our assessments.
- ▶ Worked with **16 collaborators** for our custom programs, ranging from **in-training examinations** for medical learners to **licensure and credentialing examinations** for veterinarians and health and wellness coaches.
- ▶ Provided services to **more than 300 medical schools** with our Assess and Learn portfolio.
- ▶ Delivered around **25 Item-Writing Workshops** to **nearly 700 participants** from across the medical education community.

ACCELERATING INNOVATIONS FOR LEARNER OPPORTUNITIES

Through our research and development, we are dedicated to advancing innovative assessments that measure medical learners' skills and knowledge and provide feedback to help them grow.

Assessment for Learning Helps Meet Students Where They Are

Formative assessment, also known as assessment for learning, includes the formal and informal processes educators and learners use to gather evidence to improve learner competency as well as teaching and instruction. Assessment for learning fosters a mindset of continued growth, with definitive evidence, specific learning objectives and concrete feedback for learners. By leveraging data to customize learning at the individual level, this type of assessment can provide tools and support tailored to learners' diverse needs, helping to meet students where they are in their learning journey.

NBME is focused on supporting the development of formative solutions that provide specific and actionable feedback to help learners prepare for clinical practice and grow key competencies, such as patient-centered communication and clinical reasoning.

Read the [recent research summary highlighting NBME's work](#) to support medical learners in the development of key clinical competencies.

SUPPORTING MEDICAL LEARNERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF KEY CLINICAL COMPETENCIES

SUMMARY OF RECENT NBME RESEARCH DEDICATED
TO ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING AND FEEDBACK

Last year, we welcomed visiting scholar **Anastasiya Lipnevich**, PhD, to further our learning around formative assessment and feedback. If you're interested in learning more, check out her recent blogs:

- ▶ [How can formative assessment actively cultivate medical learners' competencies and help educators better address individual needs?](#)
- ▶ [How can guided reflection and thoughtful feedback transform learners into empathetic and effective communicators?](#)

Ultimately, NBME sees assessment for learning as a way to expand opportunities. By focusing on individual progress, all learners have the chance to succeed, regardless of their background or prior

experience. We also want to provide scalable formative solutions for medical schools, particularly for those who might need extra resourcing support.

Collaborating with Medical Schools for the Communication Learning Assessment

Effective communication skills are essential for physicians to establish rapport and trust with their patients, which can improve health outcomes. To help medical students practice these essential skills in a lower-stakes environment while providing timely feedback, NBME is working on a communication learning assessment (CLA).

Building on 10 years of foundational research, we recently began a collaboration with Florida State University College of Medicine to employ CLA to help improve their students' communication skills and increase their confidence in interacting with patients. In CLA learning modules, students are presented with simulated patient encounters that model communication challenges they are likely to encounter in practice. The encounters are focused on providing information and responding to emotions, tailoring their responses to the specific details of the patient.

In April, we plan to expand the use of CLA to other medical schools, implementing learnings from the first round of testing and adding more content.

ADVANCING CAUSES THAT PROMOTE BETTER HEALTH FOR ALL

From refining assessment practices to fostering industry-wide conversations, everything we do at NBME is dedicated to promoting better patient care for all.

Reflections on the Second Equity in Measurement and Assessment Conference

All future and practicing physicians deserve equitable opportunities to learn and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed to provide optimal care for all. To advance this goal, we collaborate with like-minded organizations to foster opportunities for collaboration and learning.

In 2024, NBME again joined with the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American Board of Internal Medicine and the Association of American Medical Colleges to co-host the second **Equity in Measurement and Assessment Conference (EMAC)**.



Following our first successful EMAC, the conference reconvened experts in measurement, assessment, medical education and diversity, equity and inclusion to delve deeper into the critical topic of equity in assessments within medical education.

Take a look at our [Top 10 Reflections](#) and view some of the [session recordings](#) to learn how we continued the thoughtful conversations related to medical education assessment.

Paving the Way for a Diverse and Compassionate Health Care Workforce

We contribute to the medical education and assessment communities with the goal of improving patient care through quality assessment of medical professionals, supporting the development of a diverse and compassionate health care workforce. To achieve this goal, NBME – in collaboration with the Association of STEMM Pathway and Bridge Programs (ASPBP) – awarded a total of \$350,000 in grants to programs that investigate the effectiveness of strategies that increase the representation of individuals in the medical profession.

By providing resources to assist programs and building collaborations that aid learners with education, mentorship and resources at a crucial time in their development, we hope to help programs develop and utilize best practices to drive positive changes in medical education in the long term and support ASPBP in developing a pathway program community of practice.

You can view our 2024 awards and look out for the 2025 grant cycle on [NBME's website](#).

RECOGNIZING NBME TALENT AND LEADERSHIP

NBME leaders and professionals aim to contribute and make impactful advancements in assessment, research and their specific areas of expertise.

NBME Leaders Contribute and Get Recognized Within Our Communities

- ▶ NBME President and CEO **Peter J. Katsuftrakis**, MD, MBA, was named one of the Philadelphia Business Journal's 2024 Most Admired CEOs. The Journal's editorial board selects recipients based on current role responsibilities, organizational impact, how the nominee has served their community and how they have positively impacted Greater Philadelphia. Dr. Katsuftrakis was featured in a [special edition of the Philadelphia Business Journal](#) for his commitment to advancing medical education, promoting health equity and fostering a supportive and inclusive working environment. Learn more on [NBME's website](#).
- ▶ In April, **Linda Gadsby**, Esq., Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer will receive the Alpern Award from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Recognizing career achievements and service, the Alpern Award is one of the highest awards given by the school. Learn more on [ilr.cornell.edu](#).

Welcoming New Faces



Pamela Matias joined NBME as Vice President of Infrastructure Services in the fall of 2024. Matias brings over 20 years of experience in designing and delivering high-performing technology solutions and building inclusive, cohesive teams.

Adrienne Austin joined the organization as Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in January. Austin brings a wealth of DEI leadership experience in criminal justice, public education and health care. In this role, Austin aims to drive impactful DEI initiatives across the organization, embracing a multi-disciplinary approach as we continue to advance the quality of care for all.





In December 2024, **Jennifer Higgins** joined NBME as Director of Customer Success. Higgins has a proven track record of establishing customer success teams in the health care industry. She has also effectively collaborated with physicians to address their unique challenges and needs, consistently prioritizing customer satisfaction in all her efforts.



Dave Mehrstens also joined the organization in December 2024 as Technical Product Innovation Director. Prior to NBME, Mehrstens spent more than 20 years providing strategic direction and operational management for product development, sales and support to empower educators with the tools to succeed.

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- ▶ **Send us** feedback about the content in this edition by emailing NBMECommunications@nbme.org.
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- ▶ **Access [previous editions](#)** of this report to learn about NBME's efforts in other areas.

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