



## A Message to Our Readers

This newly created publication is intended to help you comprehensively learn about NBME's ongoing activities, new initiatives and various responses to the needs of the medical education community. We encourage you to share this report to keep those within your professional and educational circles informed and engaged as well.

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## COLLABORATING FOR CHANGE: ADDRESSING CHALLENGES WITH NEW SOLUTIONS

Many in the medical education community have shared with NBME that the pandemic has irreversibly impacted medical education. Your experiences have given us much to think about—and even more to act upon.

Since the pandemic began, the continuous communication we have engaged in with so many of you about your evolving needs has furthered our commitment to the “Collaborating for Change” mindset. NBME is revisiting worthwhile projects to accelerate innovation, reconceptualize assessment delivery and reimagine ways to create value for the medical education community.

## RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Working together with colleagues and organizations enabled expanded testing opportunities for thousands of examinees during this public health crisis.

### **In-Training Exam (ITE) Delivered Remotely for American College of Physicians® (ACP)**

NBME and ACP continue their collaboration to facilitate the educational progression of future Internal Medicine physicians. Part of this collaboration involves NBME's participation in delivering the ACP-ITE® exam annually. To stay on course and deliver this exam amidst the pandemic, NBME and ACP communicated promptly with chief proctors about an option to deliver the exam through Web-Conferencing with Remote Proctoring; solicited their feedback; and met with chief proctors virtually to address their questions. As a result, the exam administration was completed as planned across the country.

- ▶ From Aug. 20 to Sept. 9, 2020, nearly 30,000 examinees from over 550 programs were able to sit for the ACP exam either in-person at their institutions or remotely in their homes. This was possible through third-party remote conferencing software to connect proctors and examinees.
- ▶ In a survey, over 80% of ACP proctors who assisted with the delivery of remote administrations rated their overall experience as “Very Good” or “Excellent.”

### **Expanding United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) Testing**

Pandemic-related public health guidelines monumentally disrupted testing. To address the needs of individuals whose testing windows were impacted, the medical education community and the USMLE program worked together to create new testing options for examinees. Specifically, this past



summer, U.S. medical schools hosted regional testing locations and offered [event testing](#). This expansion in testing capacity provided examinees with opportunities to test at their medical school or a medical school in their geographical region.

## IMPROVING ASSESSMENT SERVICES & OFFERINGS

With your needs top of mind, continuous improvement efforts at NBME focus on creating positive assessment experiences and enhanced support services.

### Introducing the MyNBME<sup>SM</sup> Services Portal – An Improved Online Experience

A new MyNBME Services Portal was developed to replace the NBME Services Portal. Based on user feedback, this system was designed to make working with NBME online even easier. The new portal, which delivers a modern look and improved functionality, enables you to perform familiar tasks and exam administrative functions more intuitively and autonomously. This fall, 485 institutions (with approximately 4,800 users) transitioned to the new system and were provided with educational materials to support this process. Migrations are anticipated to be completed by Jan. 30, 2021.

### iPad Pilot in Place for NBME<sup>®</sup> Assessments

A newly developed NBME Exam Delivery iPad app will soon be available for [NBME<sup>®</sup> Subject Examinations](#) in response to your request that students have the option to complete assessments on devices they already use for learning. The app, which is in a pilot stage, is anticipated to be more widely available later in 2021. We also anticipate that soon educators will receive information about the app for delivery of [Customized Assessment Services](#).

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

DEI is a focus for all of us. Recently, NBME updated its [Item Writing Guide](#) and added new content that provides guidance on including patient characteristics in test items. We will share more about NBME's DEI initiatives in the next edition of this report.

## SUPPORTING THE MEDICAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY

NBME remains committed to investing in support for the medical education community.

### Encouraging Research in Assessment Through 25 Years of the Stemmler Fund

- ▶ This year marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stemmler Fund, a program that supports researchers in their work to develop innovative approaches for assessment in medical education. [A new website, NBME Contributions](#), was created to inspire prospective Stemmler Fund applicants through the stories and learnings of recipients and their lasting contributions. You can learn about these accomplished individuals and their [Stemmler journeys here](#).

### Fostering Learning and Self-Assessment

Those of you working with students saw first-hand how the pandemic caused some of them to feel increased stress and uncertainty around testing. Along with a disruption to assessments, some study plans were upended, and students told us they needed more resources.



- ▶ This summer, NBME launched a new video series, *Unlocking Assessment*, to support examinees by providing the opportunity to hear how their peers and faculty would approach answering NBME test questions. With over 7,500 views so far, the series has been a well-received resource for educators and students alike. Please share this new video series, which can equally serve as a helpful teaching tool when adapting curricula to expanded virtual learning environments. You can view all four episodes on the [Learning Resources page at NBME.org](#).
- ▶ Between Apr. 3 and Sept. 30, 2020, we were pleased to offer seven complimentary [NBME® Self-Assessments](#). More than 400,000 free self-assessments were ordered during this time. Examinees who ordered complimentary self-assessments had until Dec. 31, 2020 to complete them.

## STAYING CONNECTED WITH YOU

We recognize that staying connected is vital to providing you with innovative solutions to meet your needs during the pandemic and beyond.

### Virtual Town Hall

On Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020, 285 educators, deans and chief proctors talked with NBME about the pandemic's impact on assessment during a town hall, "Collaborating for Change: *Addressing Challenges with New Solutions*." NBME responded to participants' questions and discussed its activities to meet the changing needs of medical education. On NBME.org, you can [watch a recording](#) of this town hall.

### New *USMLE Connection* Podcast about Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) Revitalization

To continue providing information about the relaunching of a modified USMLE Step 2 CS exam, a Nov. 19, 2020 [USMLE Connection](#) podcast episode is available for listening and sharing with others. You will learn about the strategy for revitalizing performance-based assessment; feedback from the medical education and regulatory communities during the discovery phase; and information about the format of the modified exam.

### Follow NBME on Social Media

Connect with us on NBME social media channels and share NBME stories and milestones that resonate within your respective professional or educational circles. You can connect with us on LinkedIn [@NBME.org](#), follow us on Twitter [@NBMENow](#) and like us on Facebook [@NBME.org](#).

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**We hope this first edition of *NBME Impact: A Quarterly Report* finds you healthy and well.**

Thank you for your continued engagement and support, especially in light of the additional demands asked of your professional skillsets and energies during this time.

If you have any questions about the content within this report, please e-mail [Communications@NBME.org](mailto:Communications@NBME.org).

