

NMTCB REPORT

Nancy Sawyer, CNMT, Chair

In July 1996, the Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board offered the first computer adaptive testing (CAT) examination. As of September 11, 1996, 609 individuals have applied to take the new exam. While the board has only preliminary statistical information on the performance on the exam, early individual feedback has been positive. Voluntary comments have noted the friendliness of the testing center personnel, the ease of making appointments, the smooth administration of the test and receipt of the results immediately upon completion of the examination. The NMTCB will review the available examination performance statistics at the end of October and report the results as soon as possible.

Examinee results fall into one of four classifications: pass with highest distinction, pass with distinction, pass and fail. While candidates receive their pass/fail results immediately upon completion of the test, the NMTCB office mails the official score report, score classification, membership card and certificate within about ten working days of receipt of the test results. Since each individual answers a different set of questions, the algorithm used in the NMTCB CAT adjusts for differences in test form difficulty. For example, candidates who receive a CAT that is easier, relative to the benchmark examination, must answer more items correctly to receive a passing score. Conversely, if a candidate receives a set of items that is more difficult, she is required to answer fewer questions correct to pass the examination. Each NMTCB CAT is equated so that the passing level is appropriate for the set of items administered to each candidate. This is why a candidate with a lower percent correct can receive a higher pass level than another candidate with a higher percent correct.

Two board members will retire at the NMTCB fall meeting: Mark Crosthwaite, CNMT, and Dr. Robert Meckelnburg. Mark preceded me as board chair and set an excellent example for me to follow. Mark's last project with the board is to spearhead the creation of a Web page for the NMTCB. E-mail information pertaining to the project has been exciting. Send any suggestions or infor-

mation that you feel would be helpful to the NMTCB office in Atlanta.

Dr. Meckelnburg was instrumental in creating a vision committee. At board meetings we always have plenty to do, with many sessions lasting well into the evenings. But people like Dr. Meckelnburg help to remind us that we must plan for the future now and can only continue to meet the needs of our membership by being prepared. I offer my thanks and appreciation to both individuals.

The NMTCB is composed of 16 people. According to the bylaws of the organization, "At all times, one director is a physician from the Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM); one director is a physician from the Board of Registry of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (BOR/ASCP); one director is a technologist from the BOR/ASCP; one director is a member of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM); one director is a member of the American Board of Nuclear Pharmacy; and all other directors are technologists from the SNM-Technologist Section." Each board member serves on one of the four subgroups that comprise the examination: radiation safety, instrumentation, clinical procedures and radiopharmacy. The committees and chairs of the NMTCB are: Bylaws Committee, Frances L. Neagley, CNMT; Competency Committee, Myron Polycove, MD; Credentials Committee, John R. Findlay, CNMT; Examination Committee, Mark A. Richard, CNMT; Finance Committee, James Wirrell, CNMT; Long Range Planning Committee, Robert L. Meckelnburg, MD; Publications Committee, Michael V. Yester, PhD; and Task Analysis Committee, Patricia Wells, CNMT. The Executive Committee is composed of the board officers: Nancy S. Sawyer, CNMT, chair; Miriam K. Miller, CNMT, chair-elect; Frances L. Neagley, CNMT, secretary; and John R. Findlay, CNMT, treasurer.

The office staff in Atlanta are: James E. Greene, Jr., PhD., executive director; Trisha Patterson, BBA, examination administrator; Alfred L. Shellman, data-

base manager; Jean M. Martinson, manager of member services; and Jennifer R. Brown, BS, administrative assistant.

At the spring NMTCB board meeting, an amendment for emeritus status was approved for "active certificants who have been certified for at least 10 yr and are over 62 yr of age and are retiring from the field of nuclear medicine. Retiring active certificants under the age of 62 shall be eligible for emeritus status if they have been certified for the immediate 15 yr prior to retirement. Emeritus members enjoy all the benefits of active certificants but do not pay renewal fees." Please contact the office if you believe you qualify for emeritus status.

With the advent of the CAT, the NMTCB is considering offering specialty examinations for individuals whose career paths have developed into subspecialties within nuclear medicine, such as radiation safety officer, instrumentation technologist or computer application specialist. If you are interested in taking a specialty exam or would like to volunteer to write questions in a subspecialty, please contact the NMTCB office.

As part of planning for the future, the NMTCB will begin developing a new task analysis at the fall board meeting. The exam content is based upon a periodic review of the practice of nuclear medicine. Approximately every five years, the NMTCB surveys our membership on what constitutes current practice. What procedures are you performing? What quality control tests on instruments or radiopharmaceuticals are you performing? What advanced training are you receiving? Should this training be incorporated into entry-level practice? For graduates who are just beginning practice, which areas do you feel were under-represented on the NMTCB exam? These questions and many others will be surveyed. Please respond if you receive a copy of the survey. We need input from our members to keep our exam up-to-date.

Any comments, criticisms or compliments are welcomed by the NMTCB. Please contact our office at: NMTCB, 2970 Clairmont Rd., Suite 610, Atlanta, GA, 30329-1634, 404-315-1739, fax 404-315-6502, e-mail at regjeg@panther.gsu.edu.