



June 14, 2010

ABR Trustee Statement Regarding Eligibility Requirements for the Part 1 Examination in Radiologic Physics

Recently, there have been some concerns regarding the American Board of Radiology's requirements for taking the Part I exam in radiologic physics. The requirement as related to medical physics courses was posted on the ABR website as of April 30, 2009 (http://theabr.org/ic/ic_rp/ic_rp_req.html), prior to opening the July 1, 2009, registration window for the 2010 written examinations. The requirement reads as follows:

“You hold a master's or doctoral degree from an approved institution (accredited by a regional accrediting body) in medical physics, radiologic physics, physics, or other relevant physical science or engineering discipline. If the ABR determines that the degree or documented training is not directly relevant to the practice of medical physics, the ABR may request that the candidate document a minimum of three graduate courses in medical physics (these might include, for example, a course in general medical physics, a course in radiation dose measurements, and one from the chosen medical physics specialty).”

This requirement is consistent with the recommendations of AAPM Report 197 and CAMPEP guidelines. It reflects national medical physics organizations' consensus that prospective medical physicists should have the appropriate education in medical

physics so that they can practice independently and are able to meet future challenges. While some formal medical physics education has been a general requirement, more specific guidance was developed to assist candidates in preparing their applications. The ABR plans to keep this requirement in place until the 2012 initiative goes into effect, wherein enrollment in or graduation from a CAMPEP-accredited program (graduate or residency) is mandatory in order to be eligible for the Part 1 examination.

It should be noted that the ABR is willing to evaluate appeals if a candidate feels that he or she was incorrectly rejected for Part I. It may be possible that a candidate does have three courses in medical physics even though they were not evident to the reviewers. In this case, the candidate should identify the courses for the ABR's review and provide supporting documentation (for example, college catalog descriptions).

In addition, the ABR will consider on a case-by-case basis candidates who have been working independently with more than five years of clinical experience that could serve as a substitute for the medical physics courses.

The mission of The American Board of Radiology is to serve patients, the public, and the medical profession by certifying that its diplomates have acquired, demonstrated, and maintained a requisite standard of knowledge, skill, and understanding essential to the practice of diagnostic radiology, radiation oncology, and radiologic physics. The ABR physics trustees feel that adherence to the requirement for a minimal formal education in medical physics is consistent with and supports that mission.