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2007 ABHP Activities

Shawn Googins
2007 ABHP Chair

The American Board of Health Physics (ABHP) had a successful year due to the continued efforts and hard work of the board, as well as the Part I and Part II panels. I'd like to take this time to outline the board's activities throughout 2007 and thank those who made all this possible. The ABHP held its fall board meeting in McLean, Virginia, 16-17 November 2007. The following is a summary of significant issues and actions addressed by the board at the fall meeting and in the latter half of 2007.

2007 ABHP Certification Exam

One of the primary missions of the board is to steward the development and preparation of a new exam each year. This monumental task could not be accomplished without the dedication of the individual Part I and Part II panel chairs and the members of the respective panels. I would like to especially thank Part I Chair Rob Forrest and Part II Chair Gus Potter for their exceptional efforts in developing a fair and challenging exam.

Part I of the 2007 exam was passed by 59 of 121 candidates, a passing rate of 49 percent (compared to the passing rates of 46 percent in 2006 and a 56 percent 20-year-high pass rate in 2005). Part II of the 2007 exam was 32 percent (as compared to 39 percent in 2006 and 20 percent in 2005).

10 CFR 35 Rulemaking Comments

The ABHP board chair and the American Academy of Health Physics (AAHP) president cosigned a letter to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in support of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine's (AAPM) Petition for Rulemaking (PRM-35-30). The purpose of the petition was to request a

change to NRC's regulations that would allow grandfathering of medical physicists who were certified by either the American Board of Radiology or the American Board of Medical Physics prior to 25 October 2005 to be listed on NRC licenses as authorized medical physicists (AMPs) or radiation safety officers (RSOs). The letter supported the AAPM's petition and suggested that this approach be applied to the grandfathering of CHPs to allow ABHP certified individuals to meet the requirements for RSO based on their certification.

The AAHP and ABHP also requested support for the petition from its members who provided the overwhelming majority of comments; 78 percent of all comments were from CHPs. At the present time the NRC has taken no action on the petition. However, within the NRC, an Agreement State/NRC working group has been established and is also examining this issue. Hopefully the efforts of the AAPM, AAHP, and the ABHP will be successful.

Board Accreditation Efforts

The ABHP board continued its accreditation by the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards while examining the possibility of accreditation under American National Standards Institute, Inc., (ANSI) Standard ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024 “Accreditation of Bodies Operating Certification of Persons.”

The ABHP submitted a budget request to the AAHP board to fund an informal look at the status of the ABHP procedures and processes. This informal evaluation was performed in November of 2007 and the board is reviewing the results to determine the possibility of ANSI accreditation; and, if possible, changes to the board's policies or procedures will be

required to achieve ANSI certification. A brief self-assessment conducted by the board chair was discussed by all board members and will be added as a topic for the board's summer meeting.

Policy and Procedures Manual Changes

The ABHP board had no new changes to the policy or procedures manuals for the latter half of 2007. Revisions to the board's good things to know (GTTK) and the development of exam preparation and test-taking tips were introduced for use in 2008.

2007 Fall Board Meeting

During its fall 2007 meeting, the board reviewed the results of the 2007 certification exam, evaluated exam question performance, and confirmed the results of the 2007 exam. The results of all the exam questions were evaluated for performance and assurance that there were no errors in any of the questions on the exam.

An ad hoc committee was formed to review and update grading guidance and the evaluation of the statistical methods used to evaluate grader performance and to assure that exam questions which are balloted, but not included in a particular exam, are properly captured for future years. This ad hoc committee will also discuss the development of procedures for capturing grader comments, questions, and stock solutions on a formal basis to ensure the continual

improvement and development of the Part II question bank.

The board reviewed and discussed requirements for International Organization for Standardization (ISO)/ANSI accreditation and established an ad hoc committee to continue investigation of the requirements after a review of the informal review of the ABHP procedures and policies as compared to the ISO/ANSI accreditation standards.

Continued discussion with regard to the administration of the certification exam through commercial online exam services such as Pearson Vue, Sylvan, and Kryterion services was conducted with an emphasis on exam security and the ability to offer the exam internationally and multiple times per year. The board appointed an ad hoc committee to further examine the issue of remote testing.

The board also discussed two issues with regard to the use and revocation of ABHP certification status. Two individuals were sent letters cosigned by the board chair and AAHP president due to their misrepresentation of certification status.

Additional discussion with regard to the certification status of individuals who were convicted of felonies was brought up for discussion and the possible development of a policy and board action. This item will be added as an agenda item for the winter AAHP meeting and further discussed at the board's summer 2008 meeting.



2007/2008 ABHP Panels of Examiners members and chairs, left to right, Anthony Huffert (2008 Part I Panel Chair), Gus Potter (2007 Part II Panel Chair), Shawn Googins (2007 Chair), Rob Forrest (2007 Part I Panel Chair), Kent Lambert (2008 Vice Chair), Jerry Hiatt (Member), Cheryl Olson (2007 and 2008 Parliamentarian), Jim Tarpinian (2008 Chair), Jack Higginbotham (2007 Secretary), Nora Nicholson (Member), Jim Willison (Member of the Part I Panel), Trish Milligan (2008 Secretary), and Nancy Johnson (ABHP Program Director)

