

National Board Report

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Career Choices

In the May 2013 issue of this newsletter, I announced my plan to retire as NBVME Executive Director in the summer of 2014. At this time, a new Executive Director has not been named, but notice will be posted on the NBVME website as soon as the search process is complete.

Unlike many who enter this profession, I did not grow up wanting to be a veterinarian. That decision was not made until my freshman year in college. As an agriculture major at Michigan State, I enjoyed biological science, and came to see veterinary medicine as a career that would allow me to combine both interests. Further, I felt strongly that whatever I ended up doing, I wanted to be in a position to provide service to others.

In veterinary school, it became clear to me that clinical practice was not what I wanted to do, but I was inspired by some of the basic scientists who taught us, and developed an interest in microbiology. I was able to spend some time in a research laboratory during my senior year, and served my first two years after graduation in a research position with the US Army Veterinary Corps. Graduate school in microbiology led to a faculty position teaching bacteriology to veterinary students. A career change led me to the AVMA, where I worked with the National Board Examination Committee. When the NBEC left the AVMA in 1995 to become an independent organization, I left to become its first, and so far only Executive Director. It's been a wonderful experience.

John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD
Executive Director

NAVLE Collaboration Gets Underway

For the past three years, the NBVME and the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) have been engaged in discussions to establish a collaborative relationship between the two organizations, focused on the NAVLE®. Those efforts led to the development of a collaboration agreement, which was signed on February 27, 2014.

The agreement creates a Collaboration Governance Committee, whose responsibilities include oversight of the Collaboration for Veterinary Assessments (CVA) and the NAVLE Assessment System. The members of the governance committee met for the first time in Philadelphia on May 2.

Each of the parent organizations appoints four members to the governance committee, plus one alternate member. The terms are three years, with the initial terms staggered. The NBVME's initial members are Dr. Meg Glattly, who was elected Chair at the May 2 meeting, and Drs. Rick Tubbs,

Jack Wilson, and Leah Steinberg. The NBVME's Chair-Elect will serve as its alternate member for a one-year term. The NBME's initial members are Dr. Stacy Lankford, who was elected Vice Chair, Dr. Donald Melnick, Dr. Peter Katsufraakis, and Mr. Jack Hinke. Dr. Gerry Dillon is the NBME's alternate. Dr. Lankford is a physician, a member of the NBME's Executive Board, and a past chair of the Federation of State Medical Boards. Dr. John Boyce was designated by the NBVME as the initial Administrative Officer for the collaboration.

At the May 2 meeting, the members reviewed the responsibilities of the committee as outlined in the collaboration agreement. They also agreed to develop rules of operation for the committee. Given that the primary purpose of the collaboration is to enhance the NAVLE, the committee spent some time reviewing the May 2013 report of the NBVME's Collaboration Strategic Planning Group (Co-Strat) and its seven recommendations.

(continued on page 3)



Dr. John Boyce, NBVME Executive Director; Dr. Dennis Feinberg, NBVME Past Chair; Dr. Donald Melnick, NBME President; and Dr. Gary Gackstetter, NBVME Chair.

A New Direction for the QE

Last fall, the AAVSB informed the NBVME that it intended to develop its own basic science examination for the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Educational Equivalence (PAVE). As a result, the QE will no longer be used by PAVE after May 2014. The NBVME has worked with the NBME to restructure the QE program to make the examination more attractive to veterinary schools.

To date, six schools have used the QE as an independent assessment of basic science knowledge. Until now, the test had to be administered on the same three common dates used by PAVE, and the score reports compared the school's students with the PAVE candidates who took the same form of the examination.

Beginning this fall, schools will be able to schedule the web-based QE on any date that fits their academic schedule. Further, all students who take the QE during the same testing year will take the same form of the examination. This will allow annual score reports to show how the school's students performed on the examination, compared with all other students who took that examination.

On June 12, over 20 basic science faculty members from 13 different schools will meet at Iowa State University to review items from the QE item bank. This review will select items suitable for use on future test forms, and will identify clinically-relevant basic science items that could be used on the NAVLE.

New NBVME Member: Dr. Bruce Louderback

Dr. C. Bruce Louderback of Foxfield, Colorado was appointed to the NBVME last September by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards. He is one of four board members appointed by the AAVSB, and succeeded Dr. Meg Glattly.

A native of Illinois, Dr. Louderback graduated from veterinary school at the University of Illinois in 1970. He has owned and operated Mission Viejo Veterinary Hospital, a companion animal practice in Aurora, Colorado, since 1976. Prior to that he worked in mixed practices in Vermont and Illinois.

Dr. Louderback was appointed to serve two terms on the Colorado State Board of Veterinary Medicine

from 1999 to 2007, and served a year as board president. His work with the Colorado Board led to his involvement with the AAVSB, where he served as a Director, Secretary-Treasurer, and as President in 2009.



Dr. Louderback was honored by his peers by being selected as Colorado Veterinarian of the Year in 2009.

In his community, Dr. Louderback has served as a precinct committee person, political delegate, and as trustee and mayor of the town of Foxfield.

Dr. Louderback and his wife Jody have three adult children and two grandchildren. In his spare time, he enjoys working in his yard and visiting his children.

Species Specific Examinations Available

Revised species specific examinations addressing companion animal and equine practice are now available for use by licensing boards. The NBVME sent a memo to each licensing board on April 11 with information on ordering. There are two

forms of each examination available. The 100-item paper-and-pencil examinations may be given at any time, and are scored in the NBVME office. Boards interested in using these examinations should contact Anita Casey-Reed in the NBVME office.

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The purpose of the *National Board Report* is to educate, to inform, and to communicate information about the objectives and programs of the NBVME. The opinions and views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official opinions, views, or policies of the NBVME or any of its members, unless expressly so stated.

Jon Betts, DVM; Linda L. Blythe, DVM, PhD; Robert Cherenon, DVM; Dennis A. Feinberg, DVM, *Past Chair*; Joyceanne Fick, *Public Member and Secretary-Treasurer*; Gary D. Gackstetter, DVM, MPH, PhD, *Chair*; Jay Hedrick, DVM, *Chair-Elect*; Jayne Jensen, DVM; Karen E. Lehe, DVM, DACVPM; Bruce Louderback, DVM; Patricia J. Provost, MS, VMD, DACVS; Mark Russak, DVM; Jack Wilson, DVM. John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD, *Executive Director*

2014 NAVLE Form Review

On April 8-9, the annual NAVLE form review meeting was held at the NBME office in Philadelphia. The purpose of this meeting is to review draft forms of the NAVLE to be administered in the upcoming November-December and April testing windows. During the meeting, teams of reviewers verify that the test items are relevant to entry-level private clinical practice, and that the forms are balanced with regard to content. Items are edited, moved or deleted as necessary to ensure that the forms are ready for administration to NAVLE candidates. Each of the four review teams is assisted by an editor from the NBME's test development department.

Participants in the April review included nine of the 13 NBVME members, nine of the 10 members of the

NBVME's Examination Development Advisory Board, two representatives from the AAVSB Board of Directors (Drs. Frank Walker and Mark Olson), and four recent veterinary graduates.



The NBVME invites recent graduates to participate in the NAVLE form review every year, to help ensure that the test forms reflect content that

is taught in accredited schools. This year's recent graduates are pictured here, and include, left to right: Dr. Chelsey Petz, a 2012 graduate of Washington State University, working in a large animal animal practice in Three Forks, Montana; Dr. Liz James, a 2009 graduate of the University of Oregon, serving in the US Army Veterinary Corps in San Antonio, Texas; Dr. Kim Hester, a 2013 graduate of the University of Guelph, working in a small animal practice in Toronto; and Dr. Rachel Baratz, a 2004 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, working in a small animal practice in Philadelphia.

After the form review is completed, the forms are prepared for transmission to Prometric for administration during the upcoming test cycle.

JULY NBVME MEETING

The NBVME will hold its summer meeting in Montreal, Quebec, July 24-27. The General Session, which is open to guests, is scheduled for all day on Saturday. Please contact the NBVME office for additional information.

Dr. Linda Blythe, the NBVME member appointed by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, will complete her third three-year term in July. Her successor has not yet been named.

Dr. Gary Gackstetter will chair the July meeting.

NAVLE Collaboration Gets Underway

(continued from page 1)

Initial efforts will focus on possible NAVLE enhancements that can be made relatively soon. These include:

- increasing the coverage of clinically-relevant basic science topics on the NAVLE;
- revising the NAVLE blueprint, basing it on a new job analysis and a broad range of entry-level veterinary competencies;
- delivering the NAVLE using web-based testing at sites at veterinary schools as well as Prometric; and
- adding items to the NAVLE that address critical thinking and evidence-based medicine.

Other enhancements recommended by the Co-Strat, including development of computer-based clinical case simulations, creating a multi-step NAVLE, and exploring options for

assessing clinical communications, are more time-consuming and expensive to accomplish, and will be addressed in the future.

An important feature of the Collaboration Governance Committee is asymmetric voting. For any votes taken by the committee that involve issues related to veterinary medicine or veterinary licensure, such as standard setting, the test blueprint, candidate eligibility, and score reporting, the NBVME members have two votes each and the NBME members have one vote each. Further, the collaboration agreement provides that the parent organizations must approve any decisions of the committee that involve significant policy or financial matters.

NBVME Examination Updates

NAVLE®

With only a few late scores to report, a total of 1,028 candidates took the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE®) during the April 14-26, 2014 testing window, an increase of 50 from April 2013. The majority of scores were reported to licensing boards on May 14.

Applications for the November-December 2014 NAVLE testing window will be accepted beginning in early June, and the NBVME application receipt deadline is August 1. The 2014-2015 edition of the NAVLE Bulletin of Information for Candidates will be available on the NBVME's web site (www.nbvme.org) in June. The NAVLE fee for 2014-15 will be \$590, an increase of \$20.

All NAVLE candidates must be approved by a licensing board to take the examination. For the 2014-15

testing cycle, the NBVME office will approve candidates applying through 29 states: Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia. These candidates can complete their state NAVLE application and pay the corresponding state application fee on-line, through the NBVME's website. Information for candidates applying through other licensing boards is available in the Candidate Bulletin and on the NBVME website.

Qualifying Examination (QE)

The QE is a 200-item web-based basic science examination developed for use as step three of the AAVSB's Program for the Assessment of Veterinary

Education Equivalence (PAVE). The QE has also been used by several accredited veterinary schools as a comprehensive assessment of basic science knowledge, and to provide students with experience taking a standardized multiple-choice examination similar to the NAVLE.

The QE was administered to 16 PAVE candidates on May 15 in Grand Cayman, South Korea, and at six sites in the US. The May QE was also administered to 130 students at the Ross University College of Veterinary Medicine. Scores will be reported in mid-June.

As explained on page 2, the May 2014 administration was the last use of the QE in the PAVE program. Beginning this fall, the QE will be offered only to veterinary schools. Schools interested in using the QE should contact the NBVME office.