



NATIONAL BOARD OF ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY, INC.

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Raleigh, NC 27607

Phone: (919) 861-5582

Web site: www.echobards.org

Setting standards for knowledge in Echocardiography

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President

A Message from the President

By Marcus Stoddard, MD, President

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The coronavirus pandemic has adversely impacted virtually every fabric of society with no clear immediate end in sight. Although global measures are stemming the spread of Covid-19, we have been forced to adapt to this new challenge. The demonstration of special competency in echocardiography in the fields of adult cardiology, cardiac anesthesiology, and critical care medicine, by achieving certification and recertification from the National Board of Echocardiography remains important with potential impact on future careers. Accordingly, the NBE process of testing and certification has adapted to the pandemic. I wish to bring to your attention the steps that the National Board of Echocardiography has taken to adapt to the impact that the current crisis is having on training and certification.

As an initial step, examinations originally scheduled for July 2020 have been postponed and rescheduled for September 2020. These examinations include the adult echocardiography certification (ASCeXAM) and recertification (ReASCE) examinations, and cardiac anesthesiology advanced transesophageal echocardiography (Advanced PTE), recertification (RePTE) and basic (Basic PTE) examinations. Please visit the National Board of Echocardiography website (www.echobards.org) for specific details on dates. This postponement of examinations has allowed the Prometric testing centers who administer the National Board of Echocardiography examinations, to meet all necessary stringent safety criteria to alleviate concerns of our examinees. I anticipate that the change in examinations dates may not be feasible for some or create other unintended difficulties. With that in mind, please do not hesitate to contact the National Board of Echocardiography office at (919) 961-5582, (833) 270-1444 or info@echobards.org.

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Importantly, the impact of the current pandemic has greatly hampered training in transesophageal echocardiography for individuals in cardiac anesthesiology and adult cardiology fellowships. Cardiac anesthesiology programs have experienced a dramatic reduction in transesophageal echocardiography due to a cessation of non-emergent cardiac surgery operations. Similarly, many adult cardiology fellowships have practically curtailed the vast majority of transesophageal echocardiography procedures. In addition, transthoracic echocardiography training in cardiology and critical care has likewise been adversely affected. Thus, obtaining the required case experience during fellowship training may not be fully achievable. As such, the NBE is allowing additional time for those impacted in this manner, to acquire additional case experience following fellowship training. The practice experience pathway will be reinitiated for examinees who seek certification, who were in fellowship during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please review all pertinent details and criteria specific for each certification on the National Board of Echocardiography website (www.echobards.org). It is most important to note that the rigorous standards of the National Board of Echocardiography for special competency in echocardiography will be maintained and such individuals obtaining certification via these alternative pathways will have achieved excellence in echocardiography as per the NBE standards.

I wish to thank all of our healthcare providers during these challenging times. I personally on a daily basis continue to confront the emotional stresses that Covid-19 has provoked in patient management and echocardiography procedures. I trust that the adaptations put forth by the National Board of Echocardiography will help in alleviating some of this stress. Lastly, the National Board of Echocardiography will monitor the current situation and make appropriate additional changes as deemed appropriate.