

[STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY] HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Item #: X
Code: Resolution A-16 X-XX
Title: **Transfer of Jurisdiction over Required Clinical Skills Examinations to U.S. Medical Schools**

Sponsor: **Names of Individuals/Districts/Schools**

Referred to: Reference Committee X
, MD, Chair

Whereas, the USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) examination was launched in 2004 to serve as a communication competency exam; and

Whereas, American Medical Association Policy H-275.956 states, "It is the policy of the AMA to recognize that clinical skills assessment is best performed using a rigorous and consistent examination administered by medical schools,"; and

Whereas, over 90% of U.S. medical schools currently administer an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) or variant on this principle, and 74% of these schools require a passing score for graduation¹; and

Whereas, medical students from across the country must travel to one of only five standardized-testing centers in the US to take the Step 2 CS exam; and

Whereas, the current registration fee for the Step 2 CS is \$1,275², plus the costs of travel and lodging; and

Whereas, in 2014, 19,801 medical students took the Step 2 CS exam, amounting to \$25,246,275 in exam fees alone¹; and

Whereas, students incur more debt in paying for the examination with loans, leading to a more accurate calculation of the cost of the exam of \$36.2 million annually³; and

Whereas, there was a reported 96% pass rate amongst first time test takers, and examinees required to retake the test had a pass rate of 84%¹. This amounts to 1 double-failed student for every 156 students who take the test, or roughly \$200,000 to identify each unskilled graduate in exam fees alone⁴, and

1 USMLE Performance Data: 2014 Step 2 CS. United States Medical Licensing Examination.

http://www.usmle.org/performance-data/default.aspx#2014_step-2-cs. Accessed March 21, 2016

2 USMLE Examination Fees. United States Medical Licensing Examination. <http://www.nbme.org/students/examfees.html>. Accessed March 21, 2016.

3 Lehman EP, et al. The Step 2 Clinical Skills Exam -- A Poor Value Proposition. *New Eng J Med* 2013; 368:889-91.

4 USMLE Examination Fees. United States Medical Licensing Examination. <http://www.nbme.org/students/examfees.html>. Accessed March 21, 2016.

[Whereas, our Massachusetts Medical Society opposes the implementation of a routine clinical skills assessment examination as a part of the physician relicensure process, unless validated specialty-specific criteria are established and unless such an examination has been shown to provide a health benefit to the citizens of the Commonwealth ; and] if your state has similar policy already

Whereas, recent studies found weak correlations between Step 2 CS scores and end-of-year evaluations of internal medicine interns, while clinical skills scores added no additional predictive value beyond the written USMLE exams^{5,6,7}, and

Whereas, all **{insert state}** medical schools, **[insert school names]**, offer a more rigorous form of the clinical skills exam multiple times throughout undergraduate medical education; and

Whereas, all **[insert state]** medical schools require a passing grade for the school-administered clinical skills exam at the end of MS3 as a graduation criterion; and

Whereas, each **[state]** medical schools' clinical skills requirement fulfills the guidelines outlined by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education; and

[Whereas, our [state] Medical Society's strategic priorities for 2014-2017 include advocating for health care environments that foster a culture of professionalism to ensure patient-centered, physician-led care, promoting professional satisfaction and meaning, providing an optimal educational and training environment for the next generation of physicians; and] most states require a whereas clause that specify the strategic priority that encompasses the topic of the resolution.

Whereas, the Step 2 CS Exam offered by the NBME **[if there are DO schools, insert and the COMLEX Level 2 PE are]** is an extraneous financial burden and an unnecessary redundancy; so be it

RESOLVED, That the **[State Medical Society]** advocates for the [State Medical Board] to eliminate the Step 2 CS Exam **[and the COMLEX Level 2 PE if applicable]** requirement for U.S. Medical Graduates who have passed a school-administrated clinical skills examination.

⁵ Winward ML, Lipner RS, Johnston MM, Cuddy MM, Clauser BE. The relationship between communication scores from the USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills examination and communication ratings for first-year internal medicine residents. *Acad Med.* 2013;88(5):693-698. doi:10.1097/ACM.0b013e31828b2df1.

⁶ Cuddy MM, Winward ML, Johnston MM, Lipner RS, Clauser BE. Evaluating Validity Evidence for USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills Data Gathering and Data Interpretation Scores: Does Performance Predict History-Taking and Physical Examination Ratings for First-Year Internal Medicine Residents? *Acad Med.* 2016;91(1):133-139. doi:10.1097/ACM.0000000000000908.

⁷ Hauer KE, Hodgson CS, Kerr KM, Teherani A, Irby DM. A National Study of Medical Student Clinical Skills Assessment. *Academic Medicine.* 2005;80(10):S25.