



## Report of the American Board of Prosthodontics

July 2007

The American Board of Prosthodontics has undertaken an extensive review of the examination process for certification with the intent to increase the objectivity and scientific evidence basis of the examination process, to ultimately reduce the cost and inconvenience of examination, and to improve the overall rate of participation in the examination process with an eye toward strengthening the specialty.

In the past six years the focus has been on the written Part 1 examination and the Board feels that the product of those efforts has been an objective, criterion referenced testing vehicle that has enhanced the validity and discrimination capability of that examination tremendously. The recent shift from a localized written examination given in February in Chicago has been replaced with the examination being given at remote testing centers throughout the country. This shift has dramatically decreased the expense of this portion of the examination for candidates by eliminating the need for travel and lodging and minimizing the time out of the office.

The next phase of review and restructuring will involve what to date have been the three-patient presentation examinations with the goal of improving the objectivity and relevance of the examination. The Board has retained a professional test construction consultant to assist it in generating criterion referenced, objective, evidence based scenario type examinations to partially replace (at least initially with the possible ultimate complete elimination of) individual candidate generated patient presentations. This restructuring of the examination process, for obvious reasons, must be done carefully and with close support from our testing consultant. Changes will be introduced gradually over the next few years. For this reason, candidates for examination must make sure that they frequently review the Guidelines for Certification document available on the ABP Web site [www.prosthodontics.org/abp](http://www.prosthodontics.org/abp) so that they are aware of the most current changes. It is the intent of the Board to create a highly discriminating, valid, objective and reasonable examination that will reduce the time and expense to the candidate involved in completing the process.

The Board currently does not have the resources to completely fund this restructuring. In the past several years the Board has increased annual diplomate dues from \$100 to \$200 annually (during a three-year period through 2009). This dues increase is still below the dues level of other dental specialty boards. The fees for examination have also been increased in an attempt to offset the increasing costs of the examination as well as the new costs of restructuring. Unfortunately, these increases have only partially offset the increasing costs of test construction and evaluation.

At a recent meeting the Board felt that additional increases in dues and examination fees beyond these new levels would be inappropriate as it should not be solely dependent on current diplomates to fund future examination changes. A request for financial assistance to accomplish the restructuring has been made.

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