

PROCEDURE GME 30

Subject:
PASSAGE OF MEDICAL LICENSING EXAMINATIONS

Effective Date:
July 1, 2015

Applies to:
HOUSTON METHODIST HOSPITAL
GME PROGRAMS

Date Revised:
March 1, 2022

Originating Area:
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Target Review Date:
March 2025

I. GENERAL STATEMENT

The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) assesses a physician's ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles, and to demonstrate fundamental patient centered skills, that are important in health and disease and that constitute the basis of safe and effective patient care. Each of the three Steps of the USMLE complements the others; no Step can stand alone in the assessment of readiness for medical licensure.

In the United States and its territories, the individual medical licensing authorities ("state medical boards") of the various jurisdictions grant a license to practice medicine. Each medical licensing authority sets its own rules and regulations and requires passing an examination that demonstrates qualification for licensure. Results of the USMLE are reported to these authorities for use in granting the initial license to practice medicine. The USMLE provides them with a common evaluation system for applicants for initial medical licensure.

The Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX) serves as the equivalent examination for residents who completed osteopathic training in the United States, and the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination (MCCQE) serves as the equivalent examination for residents who completed medical training in Canada.

To ensure that residents and fellows complete the necessary steps required for licensure by the Texas Medical Board, the GMEC believes that it is beneficial for residents to have successfully passed all parts of the USMLE early in their residency training.

II. POLICY

A. USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) (or COMLEX) - Prior to appointment to a PGY-1 position in a Houston Methodist GME Program each Program and the GME Office shall verify that the applicant has successfully taken and passed USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) (or COMLEX, for graduates of an osteopathic medical school) within the three attempts permitted by the Texas Medical Board for Texas licensure. Graduates of international medical schools must have passed both USMLE Steps 1 and 2, or equivalent Canadian Medical Licensing Examination, and hold a valid ECFMG certificate.

B. USMLE Step 3 -

1. Prior to appointment to a PGY-3 position or above in a Houston Methodist GME Program, each Program and the GME Office shall

- verify that the applicant has successfully taken and passed USMLE Step 3.
2. Advancing Residents in a Houston Methodist GME Program, must provide evidence to the GME Office of a passing score for USMLE Step 3 COMLEX Part 3 within the three attempts permitted by the Texas Medical Board for Texas licensure, prior to January 1 of their PGY-2 year. Failure by a resident to provide evidence of a passing score for USMLE Step 3 prior to January 1 of their PGY-2 year may result in Houston Methodist seeking an institutional Adverse Academic Action, up to and including non-renewal of their appointment, unless the Resident has received prior approval for an extension of time from the DIO. Residents who do not pass USMLE Step 3 within the three attempts permitted by the Texas Medical Board shall not have their appointment renewed at the end of their current PGY year.
- C. Residents who transfer or enter into a Houston Methodist GME Program – All residents who transfer or enter into a Houston Methodist GME Program and who would be entering at the PGY-2 level or higher, must provide documentation to the GME Office of successful passage of all three steps of USLME, COMLEX or MCCQE within the three attempts permitted by the Texas Medical Board for a physician to be licensed in Texas.
 - D. Residents must pass all parts the USMLE, COMLEX or MCCQE within seven years as set forth by the Texas Medical Board. Residents who fail to pass all parts within this seven year time period may be subject to an Adverse Academic Action, up to and including non-reappointment.
 - E. Applicants to a Houston Methodist GME Program who have exceeded the number of exam attempts permitted by the Texas Medical Board for any portion of the USMLE or COMLEX, or who fail to pass any part within the seven year time period shall not be eligible to enter a Houston Methodist GME Program.
 - F. Individual training programs may institute more restrictive deadlines for completion of the USMLE, COMLEX or MCCQE.
 - G. Adverse Academic Actions that result from implementation of this policy may be appealed according to GME Procedure 10.
 - H. This policy does not apply to residents who hold an unrestricted Texas Medical License.

III. COMMITTEE REVIEWING OR APPROVING PROCEDURE:

1. Graduate Medical Education Committee [11 June 2015][14 June 2018] [15 March 2022]

AUTHORITATIVE REFERENCES:

1. Texas Medical Board Rules, Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 9, Chapters 163 and 171.