INFORMATION ON THE EUROPEAN BOARD EXAMINATION IN NEUROLOGY

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GENERAL

The European Board Examination in Neurology is considered to be a tool for the assessment of European neurological education and to boost its European standards. It was arranged in 2009 for the very first time during the 19th ENS congress in Milan and six successful candidates were conferred the title “Fellow of the European Board of Neurology”.

The examination (written and oral) is organized once a year by the European Board of Neurology on behalf of its UEMS activities alternating in conjunction with the annual meetings of ENS and EFNS. The next examination will take place during the 14th EFNS Congress on September 24, 2010 in Geneva – Switzerland.

The European Board Examination in Neurology is a sign of excellence and no legal consequence is attached nor the right to practice within the EU or elsewhere is affected.

FORMAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN BOARD EXAMINATION IN NEUROLOGY

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

• Certification of the fulfillment of a national training program sufficient for obtaining specialty or accreditation in neurology by the respective national authority

If implemented this includes a national examination certifying the candidate. Candidates, eligible for board certification, but not yet certified may apply. If training was served in several countries, the country of application for certification is the referral basis. Documents have to be provided in English original copy or certified translation.

• A minimum 4 years of training

In most European countries training before full registration as a neurologist is 4 – 6 years; therefore a minimum of 4 years must be fulfilled. A period of general medical training should precede the training in neurology. It must involve contact with patients and include a fair amount of acute unselected admissions as well as balanced proportions of in- and outpatients. The program must contain emergency and intensive care of neurological patients. It may take place in different training institutions provided that they are nationally recognized. Up to one year of clinical training can be exchanged with medical research. The training program shall be determined by the responsible national health authorities, but should be in line with the recommendations of UEMS-EBN and EFNS Core Curriculum (C Pontes, et al. Recommended core curriculum for a specialist training program in neurology. European Journal of Neurology 2005; 12: 743-746).

• Non-EU/EEA persons must present national accreditation and certification of a minimum of 4 years of training. A logbook, or if not available, a confirmation of skills and experiences by the respective national authority has to be presented.

The documents have to be certified by a lawyer, notary, embassy, or another authorized body to guarantee their authenticity. If the national system does not have a logbook of its own, a UEMS-EBN logbook has to be filled out by the national society and also be confirmed by an authorized person or institution as mentioned above. Certification by UEMS-EBN will be considered an additional mark of excellence.
PLEASE NOTE:
For the moment, due to organizational reasons only candidates either certified as neurologist or board certification eligible in a member country of the European Union or the European Economic Area or in Turkey will be accepted. Candidates are also eligible for the European Board Examination in Neurology if they fulfill all the conditions to sit for the particular national examination (if implemented) in accepted countries regardless of whether the candidate has already passed this examination or not. Board certification, board certification eligibility and also the fulfillment of the conditions to sit for the national examination has to be confirmed by the respective national authority. The maximum number of candidates will be limited to 40, selected on a first come first served basis.

Only candidates from whom UEMS-EBN has received the examination fee will be admitted.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION
It consists of 120 multiple choice questions including clinical case descriptions and may include images (radiology, pathology etc.) in paper format. Results are announced immediately after the examination. 75% of the questions have to be answered correctly in order to pass and to be allowed to sit the oral examination.


ORAL EXAMINATION
4 written case stories with description of findings have to be discussed with regard to diagnosis, additional diagnostic procedures and therapy; for each aspect of every case a maximum of 4 points can be obtained which totals a maximum of 48 points. Case vignettes are handed out half an hour before to allow candidates to prepare themselves. Candidates and examiners both have to stick to the given structure and prompting should be avoided. In addition, candidates may present a case history from their own practice, scientific results or other neurological achievements and thus obtain 3 extra points. The time limit for this presentation is 5 minutes. It is an oral presentation only with no audiovisuals.

In order to pass the oral examination a minimum of 36 points is necessary. Successful candidates are conferred the title “FELLOW OF THE EUROPEAN BOARD OF NEUROLOGY”

In case of failure there is no limitation of sitting at later examinations, provided examination fee payment.

COMMITTEES
UEMS-EBN cooperates with scientific neurological societies (EFNS and ENS) for the creation and maintenance of a question and case story pool and the provision of examination facilities.

A Joint Examination Committee as advisory body to UEMS-EBN is installed. It is chaired by the UEMS-EBN Examination Committee Chair and UEMS-EBN, ENS and EFNS are represented therein by two members each.

Its duties are:

- Question & Case Story Pool Maintenance
- Examination Conduct
- Examiners’ Selection & Briefing
- Dispute Settlement

Despite these co-operations the examination and its conduct lies within the sole responsibility of UEMS European Board of Neurology.
QUALITY ASSESSMENT

UEMS-EBN cooperates in the European Board Examination in Neurology with the Department of Medical Education Ege University – Izmir. Besides the internal, independent and anonymous review of the questions and case stories by the members of the UEMS-EBN Examination Committee and the Joint Examination Committee on scientific content, all submissions are externally reviewed from the technical point of view by this department. In addition the Department of Medical Education also evaluates the outcome of the examination and the candidates’ survey which will be of important value for the planning of the next examination, the gathering of new submissions and guidelines for it and the selection and editing of questions.

CONCLUSION

UEMS-EBN is eagerly awaiting the future development of the European Board Examination in Neurology and wants to emphasize its importance. It is a substantial step in the further harmonization and in the raising of the standards in European neurology. The cooperation with EFNS and ENS represents an important scientific input and a guarantee of continuous updating of the current knowledge of a European neurologist. In the light of the increasing sub specialization in neurology and also the need for scientific exchange of residents and neurologists with non European countries, in particular the USA, a commonly accepted qualification will be extremely helpful.

APPLICATION

Application will be open until end of May 2010. When applying for the European Board Examination one declares consent to take the examination in the depicted format and structure and acknowledges that cancellations are only possible according to the cancellation policy. Required additional documents, i.e. national board certification or confirmation of board certification eligibility by the respective authority and proof of identity, have to be uploaded or sent per post or fax to the UEMS-EBN secretariat.

• Confirmations:
UEMS EBN confirms reception of applications which neither implies acceptance nor confirmation of payment. Acceptance is notified separately to the applicant by UEMS-EBN upon eligibility criteria compliance and applied admission restrictions.

• Examination Fee:
At acceptance of the application the application fee of € 600.- has to be paid by bank transfer or per credit card. Please do not make any payments before your acceptance is confirmed; credit cards will be charged only at acceptance. Examination fee for candidates from UEMS-EBN accredited training centers is reduced by 30%.

• Cancellation Policy:
Cancellations of accepted applications must be made in writing, by registered letter or fax to the UEMS European Board of Neurology secretariat. For cancellations received by September 3rd, 2010 latest € 350.- will be refunded. In case of later cancellation no refund is possible.