

Council on Medical Education liaison committee for specialty boards

The American Medical Association's Council on Medical Education, in conjunction with the American Board of Medical Specialties, sponsors the Liaison Committee for Specialty Boards (LCSB). Following is the criteria for approval of subspecialties by the AMA Council on Medical Education (AMA/CME), the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

Approval of new examining boards in medical specialties

Since 1934, medical specialty boards have been officially approved jointly by action of the ABMS and the AMA/CME. This process begins with review by the LCSB, an organization sponsored by the ABMS and the AMA/CME.

The LCSB consists of 4 voting representatives from the ABMS Executive Committee and 4 voting representatives from the AMA/CME. The chairman of the AMA/CME serves as chairman of the LCSB. A senior staff member of the ABMS serves as secretary of the LCSB (without vote). The secretary of the AMA/CME also serves on the LCSB (without vote). The LCSB meets on the call of the chairman at no fixed intervals, but meets annually.

The functions of the LCSB are to:

- Receive applications for approval as a medical specialty certifying board
- Evaluate applications according to the current version of the *Essentials for Approval of Examining Boards in Medical Specialties*
- Hold hearings on such applications if appropriate to do so
- Have the Secretary forward approved applications to the sponsors of the LCSB (the ABMS and the AMA) along with the recommendations of the LCSB. Both the ABMS and the AMA/CME must act affirmatively by a 2/3 majority if a new board is to be approved. LCSB is not required to ratify the actions of its sponsors
- Notify the applicant of the action of the sponsors of the LCSB. If the application is disapproved, the applicant may reapply after 12 months.

Action on applications for approval of examining boards in medical specialties is based on the *Essentials for Approval of Examining Boards in Medical Specialties*, a collaborative effort of the ABMS and the AMA/CME begun in 1934. The original *Essentials for Approval of Examining Boards in Medical Specialties* was based on recommendations of the ABMS Committee on Standards and Examinations and was approved by the AMA House of Delegates in June 1934. The *Essentials* have undergone several revisions, both major and minor, since 1934. The present 12th revision of the *Essentials* is a joint document approved by both organizations. It embodies the policies of both the ABMS and the AMA pertaining to specialty boards while retaining each organization's privilege of independent consideration and action. The *Essentials* describe the standards and procedures by which applications for approval of new examining boards are evaluated.

A current list of approved specialty boards and of categories of certification in each of those specialties, as well as the most recent *Essentials for Approval of Examining Boards in Medical Specialties*, can be obtained from the American Board of Medical Specialties.