

FAQS About The New Routes To Eligibility

The Medical Dosimetrist Certification Board (MDCB) recently announced new standards for certification in medical dosimetry designed to elevate the dosimetry profession. Recognizing the integral role medical dosimetrists play in the treatment of oncology patients, MDCB's new standards for the certification exam will raise educational requirements, increasing the quality of healthcare provided to patients.

The changes in routes to eligibility will be phased in. The MDCB currently identifies three routes to eligibility. In 2013, Routes 2 and 3 will be merged into one route. A Bachelor's Degree or registration with a recognized radiological technology credentialing organization for the newly merged Route 2 candidates will be required. In 2015, Bachelor of Science will be required for Route 1 and Route 2 candidates.

While the MDCB announced the intention in early May 2011 for one standard for all applicants by 2017, the reality is several years away. In 2017, candidates applying for certification will be required to have a Bachelor of Science degree and have graduated from a formal dosimetry program accredited by the Joint Review Committee on education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) or foreign equivalent.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: What do the changes in eligibility for 2017 mean for the international candidate?

Answer: International candidates will be eligible to sit for the exam if they have completed equivalent requirements.

Question: Will I be affected by the changes in routes to eligibility if I am not successful on my first attempt and my next attempt occurs after a change in the eligibility route?

Answer: Candidates initially approved to sit for the exam before a change in routes to eligibility will be eligible to sit for the exam for two additional attempts. Re-applicants, subject to the three attempt rule who are attempting the exam for a fourth time after the two year waiting period will be subject to the prevailing routes to eligibility.

Question: What did the MDCB Board of Directors consider before making the changes to the Routes to Eligibility?

Answer: The MDCB Board of Directors carefully considers change on an on-going basis and works closely with the AAMD in matters related to advancement of the profession. Many other professions, both medical and non-medical, have their roots in on the job training. Most of those professions evolved first to require an exam, then continuing education, accreditation and a minimum education standard. To advance as a profession, the MDCB believes that dosimetry must evolve in a similar way to meet its mission: to steer the advancement of the Medical Dosimetry profession by establishing certification and continuing education standards to enhance quality patient care.

Question: What do all these changes mean to the Certified Medical Dosimetrist?

Answer: Dosimetrists who are currently certified will remain certified by continuing to complete MDCB maintenance of certification requirements.

Question: Why is development of a minimum education standard important for the profession?

Answer: The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in its Standard Occupational Classification lists radiation therapist (29-1124). Dosimetrists are included in 29-1124 as a subset of Radiation Therapists. In 2013, the BLS will petition, to have medical dosimetrist as a stand-alone entity and to be published in the occupational handbook. Classification by the BLS will result in recognition by both the BLS and IRS as a distinct and separate profession.

Question: What will recognition by the BLS and IRS mean for the Medical Dosimetry profession?

Answer: Recognition by the BLS and IRS and will provide better planning for the future with accurate projections of supply and demand for the Medical Dosimetry field that affect both salaries and workload.

Question: What are the ramifications of development of minimum education standard for the Consistency Accuracy, Responsibility and Excellence (CARE) in Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy bill?

Answer: If the Medical Dosimetry profession receives recognition by the BLS, with the passing of the CARE bill, Medical Dosimetrists will be recognized as the occupation to provide dosimetry services.