



NBCE
50 YEARS

1963.2013



A FIFTY-YEAR HISTORY

OF CHIROPRACTIC'S INDEPENDENT TESTING ORGANIZATION

By chiropractors, for chiropractors, in service of the highest standards for the chiropractic profession and thereby public safety

2013 MARKS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY of the **National Board of Chiropractic Examiners.**

The hundreds of chiropractic leaders who have served on the NBCE board and testing committees and the many staff members and consultants who have created and administered tests under the board's direction are deservedly proud of the NBCE's essential role in the chiropractic profession.

Because of the NBCE, there is a single path to chiropractic licensure in use by all 50 states. Rigorous exams test every chiropractic candidate's knowledge and readiness to practice and yield scientifically valid, reliable and legally defensible results.

Throughout its history and continuing today, the NBCE has evaluated and improved its exam development and administration processes. Our commitment to leading-edge assessment helps ensure quality care and, in turn, the building of public trust in chiropractic.



IN THE BEGINNING

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, or NBCE, was formed in 1963 and administered its first exams in 1965. Before that, chiropractic candidates took the same basic science exams as medical doctor candidates. But because each state created its own exam, testing was not standard and did not uniformly uphold the highest standards.

Three visionary Texas chiropractors led the charge to establish the NBCE – Dr. Devere Biser, Dr. E.L. Bauknight and Dr. Gerald Brassard. They believed that testing was essential to the profession’s credibility and safety.

1963

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners is incorporated in Dallas, Texas. Before this date, chiropractic candidates for licensure were required to take the medical boards’ basic science exams.

1965

The NBCE administers its first exams to 1,200 candidates for licensure (Parts I, II and Physiotherapy). The NBCE headquarters is relocated in the **personal residence** of its president, Dr. Gordon Holman.

1968

Official recognition of NBCE exams reaches a total of 29 states and 37 licensing boards.

BY CHIROPRACTORS, FOR CHIROPRACTORS

From the beginning, the NBCE has been governed by a board of directors and an executive vice president. The eleven board members consist of five elected by their districts, four who serve as at-large representatives and two appointed by the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards.

The first NBCE board of directors had just seven members: Dr. Edward Saunders; Dr. Charles Lynch; Dr. Jacob Fischman; Dr. Major Bertrand DeJarnette; Dr. Devere Biser; Dr. Gordon Holman; and Dr. Robert Runnells.



THE FIRST EXAMS

The first NBCE tests consisted of what we still call the Part I and Part II exams.

Part I tests students in general and spinal anatomy, physiology, chemistry, pathology and microbiology.

Part II assesses knowledge of general diagnosis, neuromusculoskeletal diagnosis, diagnostic imaging, principles of chiropractic, chiropractic practice and associated clinical sciences.



1972

The board establishes a reserve fund of five percent of gross revenues to provide for future growth of the NBCE.

1974

The board approves the purchase of an apartment building in Cheyenne, Wyoming, to provide NBCE office space at a cost of \$53,000.

CREATING THE EXAMS

Creating the NBCE exams is no simple feat. Which questions should be asked? How should they be worded? After all, the effectiveness and safety of chiropractic care depends, in part, on how well the tests measure each candidate's knowledge.

Questions, also called "items," are not created solely by the NBCE, however. They are proposed by chiropractic professors, subject matter experts and state regulatory board members, then narrowed down and refined by test committee members. The NBCE administers this process and provides the scientific expertise to create statistically valid exams.

1976

The first Delphi study of chiropractic college curricula is conducted to update NBCE test plans. Subsequent Delphi studies have been conducted every two to three years.

1976

NBCE President Dr. Gordon Holman leads efforts to relocate the organization from Cheyenne to Greeley to foster continued collaboration in examination development with experts at the University of Northern Colorado.

QUESTIONS BEYOND QUESTION

After test questions are selected, the NBCE's Written Examination Production Department reviews the test draft many times and in many ways for accuracy and clarity. A grammarian checks for errors in language.

From start to finish, each question is reviewed an estimated 20 times before it appears on the examination.

SAFEGUARDING THE EXAMS

For written exams, questions are printed in booklets that are then delivered to the test sites. For computerized exams, test questions are delivered via secured websites.

To ensure that test results are valid, fair and legally defensible, the questions must remain secret. As with other standardized exams you may have taken (such as the ACT), great care is taken to safeguard the exams' contents and prevent cheating.



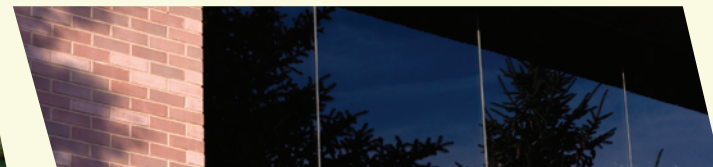
1976

Construction of an 8,600-square-foot Greeley headquarters begins at 1610 29th Avenue Place, with authorized construction funding of \$450,000.



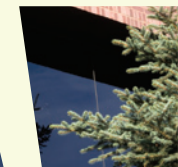
1977

The move from Cheyenne to Greeley is completed and the building is dedicated.



1978

The NBCE adopts a policy recognizing student applicants only from chiropractic colleges accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Office of Education.



1980

The board restricts the five percent reserve fund to permit expenditure only with full board approval. An additional three percent fund is established for potential legal actions.

STANDARDS RESPECTED ACROSS THE TESTING INDUSTRY

For all NBCE exams, answer sheets are statistically analyzed to ensure the test's reliability and validity. The NBCE follows accepted testing standards of the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

For example, the results for each question are measured to determine whether the performance on that question correlates with performance on the test as a whole.



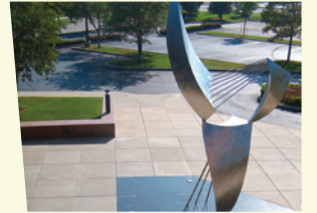
1981

Computerization of the NBCE's administrative processes begins.

WHY GREELEY, COLORADO?

The NBCE is located in Greeley, Colorado, because the founders of the NBCE, who were living and working in Wyoming, looked to respected psychometricians and statisticians teaching at the University of Northern Colorado for their exam expertise.

In 1976, NBCE President Dr. Gordon Holman led the efforts to relocate the organization from its temporary home in Cheyenne, Wyoming, (which is where he himself practiced), to Greeley. The first headquarters were located at 1610 29th Avenue Place.



1983

A newly adopted exam format requiring a minimum of 70 percent unexposed questions increases exam validity.

1985

NBCE exams are administered for the first time internationally.

THE ADDITION OF PART III...

Between the time the nascent NBCE came to Greeley in 1976 and today, the organization has continued to grow and adapt as a result of the chiropractic profession's increasing need for testing services.

In the mid 1980s, the state chiropractic boards, confident in the quality of testing that had been produced by the NBCE to date, asked the NBCE to develop an exam in addition to Parts I and II.



1986

The NBCE acquires its first IBM Optical Mark Reader for scanning of exam answer sheets.

1987

NBCE introduces Part III, a written clinical competency examination, to replace the written portion of states' licensing exams. The first Part III is administered to more than 1,700 candidates.

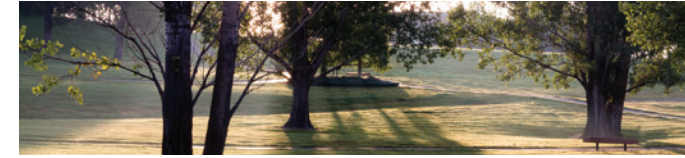
1988

Growing demand for NBCE services prompts the board to consider headquarters expansion. After reviewing options, the board approves the purchase of land for a new facility in west Greeley at a cost of \$294,000.

1988

The NBCE International Affairs Department is created to accommodate the increasing needs of the international community.

This new exam, called the Written Clinical Competency Examination, or Part III, would be a written exam testing the applicant's understanding of: case history, physical examination, neuromusculoskeletal examination, diagnostic imaging, clinical laboratory and special studies, diagnosis or clinical impression, chiropractic techniques, supportive interventions and case management. Questions for the Part III Exam, which was introduced in 1987, come from Delphi studies of chiropractic college course content combined with input from state chiropractic licensing board members.



...AND THEN PART IV

Then in 1989, the state chiropractic licensing boards came to the NBCE again – this time requesting a single national practical examination that would replace the varied state practical exams.

A practical examination tests hands-on skills. When a patient walks into the exam room, how does the chiropractor-to-be take the patient's history and conduct the physical exam? Depending on symptoms, which tests should be ordered? Can the examinee properly read CT scans and other imaging? Can he or she demonstrate proper adjustment techniques?

Creating this exam meant developing case scenarios, training groups of patient actors and creating reproducible scoring methods. The NBCE's first practical exam, also called Part IV, was administered in 1996.



1990

The NBCE headquarters staff moves into its new 25,000-square-foot, \$3 million facility.

1991

NBCE headquarters' open house is attended by 150, including 11 former board members.

1993

The first job analysis summarizing the practice of chiropractic within the United States is published. Subsequent editions have been published in 2000, 2005 and 2010.

1993

The first post-licensure Special Purposes Examination for Chiropractic is administered.

A NEW HEADQUARTERS

The new tests meant additional staff and the need for more space.

In 1988 the NBCE Board of Directors voted to design and build a new headquarters. The 10-acre campus opened in 1991. In addition to the NBCE, the buildings also housed the staff of the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards.



THE CREATION OF THE PRACTICE ANALYSIS OF CHIROPRACTIC

The exams created and administered by the NBCE are now required or accepted by all 50 states as a final step to licensure.

The NBCE relies on chiropractic college faculty to submit exam questions for Parts I and II that align with what today's students are being taught. The questions change because our medical understanding changes and advances each year.

But what about keeping NBCE exams Parts III and IV up-to-date? These tests measure chiropractic students' ability to apply their learning to actual patient scenarios. Yet in the real world, the actual practice of chiropractic among licensed chiropractors is also ever-evolving.

In 1993, the NBCE released its first *Job Analysis of Chiropractic*. The report was based on the results of a survey of nearly 5,000 randomly selected, full-time chiropractic practitioners in the U.S.

The survey has been renamed a practice analysis, and is updated every five years. It reviews new research literature, discusses new regulations affecting the industry and presents trends in patient conditions and treatment techniques.

This publication informs state licensing boards, associations, educators and even insurance companies about the state-of-the-art in chiropractic care. It also ensures that the practical portions of the NBCE exams – Parts III and IV – are continually updated to reflect the discipline's latest advances.

1995

NBCE purchases an additional six-acre parcel of adjacent land to provide for possible headquarters expansion at a cost of \$699,000.

1996

NBCE introduces the Part IV Practical Examination to replace the practical portion of states' licensing exams. Chiropractic becomes the first healthcare occupation to require demonstration of clinical competency.

1996

Additional staff is added to develop an exam question pool and process applications.

1997

Part IV exam development requires additional staff. The board begins serious consideration of remodeling and construction options.

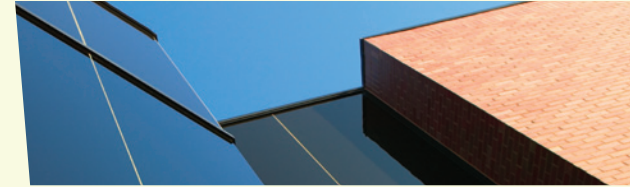
ADDITIONAL EXAM OFFERINGS

The Special Purposes Examination for Chiropractic (SPEC) was administered in 1993. Available only at the request of state or foreign licensing agencies considering cases of reciprocity/endorsement, reinstatement following licensure lapse, disciplinary action, suspension, or revocation, SPEC assesses the clinical competency of licensed or previously licensed practitioners.

In the last three decades, especially, chiropractors increasingly began to use acupuncture as one treatment technique in their toolkit. Because of this trend, the NBCE was called upon to craft a new test assessing competency in acupuncture care.

In 2003 the NBCE debuted its Acupuncture Examination, which is an optional test for chiropractors who wish to demonstrate their competency in this age-old technique.

The NBCE also added an Ethics and Boundaries Examination to its repertoire in 2003. This optional test assesses examinees' knowledge of ethics and boundaries issues, including ethical misconduct and sexual harassment. It is meant for use by state licensing boards in special circumstances.



1998

Continued refinement of the examination development and administration processes places additional demands on office and meeting space.

2000

After two years of office space utilization study, the board recommends moving forward with additions to the main facility at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million.

2000

NBCE introduces the Chiropractic College Assessment Test.

2001

A decline in the number of examinees causes the board to postpone building expansion and reconsider alternative options.

2002

NBCE offers SPEC as its first computerized exam.

THE INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS

The NBCE creates and upholds national testing standards for chiropractic care readiness in the United States. But what about the rest of the world?

In 2001 the NBCE convened an international panel of chiropractors to advise the organization about the feasibility of an International Board of Chiropractic Examiners, or IBCE.



2003

NBCE introduces an optional Acupuncture Examination.

2004

The Ethics and Boundaries Examination is introduced for use by state regulatory boards in cases of suspension, revocation, or licensure lapse.

2004

NBCE expands its campus with the purchase of the 5401 building at a cost of \$2.1 million. First-floor space is remodeled to accommodate the growing needs of the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards. The size of the NBCE campus grows to 18 acres.



2007

The board authorizes \$30,000 to explore options for increasing office and storage space.

THE FUTURE OF THE NBCE

The future of chiropractic is bright indeed. The NBCE stands ready to safeguard that future.

In the decades to come, the NBCE, through its relationship with the IBCE, envisions providing standardized testing in additional countries across the globe.

Most NBCE tests, now done on paper booklets, will become computerized when cost and security challenges can be overcome.

The NBCE will also respond swiftly and professionally to the need for additional adjunct and post-licensure exams, such as a test for chiropractic assistants.

Watch for these and many other NBCE innovations to unfold in the future.



2009

Construction begins at 909 54th Avenue on a 15,000-square-foot conference center with state-of-the-art video conferencing technology, meeting space, storage facilities and room for future office space expansion.

2009

The board establishes and incorporates the International Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

2010

The board unanimously votes to rename the 909 building the Horace C. Elliott Center. The completed cost of \$4 million is funded through NBCE reserves.

2013

50th anniversary of the NBCE.

NBCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

50 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

Dr. George W. Arvidson
1987-1991

Dr. Jerome E. Auerbach
1979-1987

Dr. James J. Badge *
1987-2005

Dr. Devere E. Biser
1962-1966

Dr. Jerry D. Blanchard
1995-2007

Dr. David E. Brown
1997-2001

Dr. M. E. Calhoun
1980-1981

Dr. Richard E. Carnival
1982-1994

Dr. Richard L. Cole
2001-2005, 2007-2011

Dr. Roger E. Combs
1989-1995

Dr. Steven R. Conway
2012-Present

Dr. Donna L. Craft
2003-Present

Dr. Major B. DeJarnette
1962-1965

Dr. L. Howard Fenton
1965-1968

Dr. Peter D. Ferguson *
1999-2006

Dr. Jacob Fischman
1962-1966

Dr. Lawrence M. Gerstein
1995-2003

Dr. Arnold M. Goldschmidt
1983-1989

Dr. Vincent E. Greco
1994-2000

Dr. C. Robert Hastings *
1967-1981

Dr. Frank G. Hideg, Jr. *
1978-2007

Dr. Gordon L. Holman *
1962-1981

Dr. H.W. Hulteen
2015-2017

Dr. William W. Kalas *
1966-1982

Dr. Salvatore D. LaRusso
2008-2009, 2010-2019

Dr. Louis P. Latimer *
1988-1999

Dr. Martin I. Lawrence
1977-1978

Dr. Robin R. Lecy
2007-Present

Dr. Gary G. LeDoux
1979-1983

Dr. Frank S. Lizzio
2005-2007

Dr. Kenneth L. Luetke
1980-1981

Dr. Charles C. Lynch *
1962-1972

Dr. Victor L. Marty
1968-1974

Dr. Julia R. S. McDaniel
2002-2003

Dr. Don L. McKelvey
1982-1987

Dr. James A. Mertz
1975-1976

Dr. Paul N. Morin
2009-2018

Dr. Rick C. Murphree
2000-2006

Dr. Lawrence O'Connor
2009-Present

Dr. S. N. Olson
1968-1970

Dr. Leroy F. Otto
2011-Present

Dr. Norman E. Ouzts, Jr. *
2007-Present

Dr. D. Brent Owens
1989-1997, 2000-2002

Dr. Kenneth W. Padgett
2001-2006

Dr. Jay H. Perreten
1982-1993

Dr. James C. Ploch
1971-1973

Dr. Titus Plomaritus *
1982-2001

Dr. Mary-Ellen Rada
2006-2009

Dr. Joe N. Riggs *
1971-1980

Dr. Donald D. Ross
1982-1994

Dr. Robert I. Runnells, Sr.
1963-1966

Dr. Daniel Saint-Germain
2007-Present

Dr. Edward M. Saunders *
1962-1982

Dr. Theodore J. Scott *
2005-2011

Dr. S. H. Shick
1977-1980

Dr. Oliver R. Smith, Jr.
2005-Present

Dr. Lewis S. Tawney
1971-1976

Dr. Vernon R. Temple *
2000-2010

Dr. John T. Tierney
1994-2000

Dr. Ronald B. Tripp, Jr.
2011-Present

Dr. Paul M. Tullio *
1981-2000

Dr. Robert M. Vaughn
1993-1999

Dr. Richard E. Vincent *
1973-1982

Dr. Paul Vogel
1973-1975

Dr. N. Edwin Weathersby *
2003-2012

Dr. Vern R. Webster *
1976-1979, 1981-1987

Dr. Henry G. West, Sr. *
1965-1976

Dr. Earl L. Wiley
2006-2008

Dr. Steven M. Willen
2006-2007

Dr. Carroll H. Winkler
1991-1995

Dr. Wayne C. Wolfson
1999-2005

Dr. Tom L. Workman
1980-1989

Dr. Rex A. Wright *
1965-1971

*Served as president

The purpose of the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners is to establish

and maintain uniform high standards of excellence in the chiropractic profession and chiropractic education, primarily but not exclusively by preparing and administering to qualified applicants examinations of superior quality, whereby those legal agencies which govern the practice of chiropractic within each state and other countries may accept, at their discretion, those individuals who have successfully completed any part of the examinations of the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, and by providing test and measurement services to the chiropractic profession in all areas of demonstrated need, and to advance the chiropractic profession when in the best interests of the corporation and chiropractic testing.



901 54th Avenue
Greeley, Colorado 80634
970.356.9100 · nbce.org