



## THE SPECIALTY BOARD OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

### THE CERTIFYING EXAMINATION FOR DIPLOMATE IN INTERNAL MEDICINE

#### **\*\*\* CODE OF PROCEDURES \*\*\***

Effective Fiscal Year 2016-2017

(Revised September 21, 2016)

#### I. IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Date of examination is set on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of March.
2. Documents shall be submitted ON-LINE on or before January 16 (Philippine Time).
3. Incomplete documents will **NOT** be processed.
4. Only those candidates who have submitted the complete requirements and have been approved by the PSBIM will be allowed to take the examination.
5. Venue will be known by January 31.

#### II. QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE CERTIFYING EXAMINATIONS:

##### A. Residency Training:

1. To qualify for the PSBIM examination, a candidate must have completed an approved residency training program in Internal Medicine in a PCP-accredited training hospital. The minimum number of years of residency training in Internal Medicine is three (3) years.
  - 1.1. Foreign Medical Graduates, must have completed an approved residency training program in Internal Medicine in the country of origin.
2. For a candidate who graduated earlier than October 1 of the year prior to the examination, the requirement as proof of completion of residency training is a certified true copy of the **Diploma**. The minimum authorized signatories of the diploma are: Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director of the hospital. The certified true copy must come from the authorized office and signed by the designated officer of the training center. .
3. For a candidate whose graduation is between October 1 of the year prior to the examination and January 31 of the same year of the examination and intending to take the PSBIM examination of that year, but whose Diploma may not be available by January 31 (deadline for submission of complete documents), a letter certifying to the Completion of Residency Training in Internal Medicine duly signed by the Chair and Training Officer of the Department of Medicine and another signature representing the Administration (Medical Director or Chief of Clinics or Chair of the Department of Education and Training) will be accepted. The diploma must however, be submitted when applying for the oath taking for Diplomates in the same year.
4. Transfer of Training Institution:

A resident-in-training maybe allowed to transfer from one PCP-accredited program to another provided the following provisions are met:

  - 4.1. Institution A (where the resident came from) issues a letter of certification that the resident has satisfactorily completed either Year Level I and/or Year Level II residency training program. It must be addressed to institution B (the accepting Institution). The signatories of the letter of certification must include the Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director. The inclusive dates of completion of training must be clearly indicated. Such letter of certification must be submitted to institution B before the actual start of training to the next year level of the resident.
  - 4.2. The resident who is transferring to institution B is responsible for initiating the processing of such letter of certification.

- 4.3. The 'certified true copies' of the above certificate/s (completion of Year Level/s I/II) and the Diploma (final completion of residency training) are requirements for candidates (who trained in 2-3 different institutions) applying for the PSBIM examination.
- 4.4. Foreign medical graduates trained in accredited foreign Internal Medicine training programs must submit:
  - 4.4.1. Certification of Completion of Internal Medicine duly signed by the Program Director of the Training Institution
  - 4.4.2. Certificate of good moral character from the Training Institution of origin
  - 4.4.3. Diploma of the degree Doctor of Medicine or equivalent degree recognized by his/her country of origin.
  - 4.4.4. Original and certified true copies of Citizenship, National ID number and travel documents as applicable
5. The candidates and designated officials of the institution (Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director) will be held responsible for informing the PSBIM of any changes in the candidates' qualifications that would affect his/her eligibility to take the written examination. In such cases, the candidate must make the proper withdrawal from the examination in accordance with the policies concerning examination fees.

The PCP and PSBIM reserves the right to disqualify from or nullify the examination results of any candidate who is found to be deficient in his/her qualifications OR who submitted fraudulent document.

#### **B. Certification of Clinical Competence**

1. Since 2005, the oral examinations given by the PSBIM have been discontinued. (As amended by the PSBIM on 30 August 2003).
2. In lieu of the oral examinations, the training institutions are given the responsibility of evaluating the clinical competence of the residents by various methodologies, particularly that of the oral examinations (panel or OSCE) as specified in the Manual of Residency Training Program and Accreditation Process in Internal Medicine in the Philippines.
  - 2.1. Graduates before 2005 whose training institutions have closed and who need to undergo evaluation of clinical competence will be referred to another institution by the PSBIM.
  - 2.2. Graduates of foreign accredited IM residency training programs must pass the evaluation for clinical competence to be administered by an accredited training institution to be assigned by PSBIM. These candidates shall notify and write a letter of application to the chair of the PSBIM on or before June 30 of the year prior the examination.
  - 2.3. Exceptions to the above policies will be deliberated and decided upon by the PSBIM.

#### **C. Examination Fees:**

1. The written certifying examination fee is Php 5,000 and may be changed subject to the approval of the PCP Board of Regents.

**Written Examination Fee - P5, 000**

**Foreign Medical Graduates/ Graduates of foreign accredited IM training programs**

**Clinical Competence Exam fee-US\$ 200.00**

**Written examination – US\$ 250.00**

2. Policies concerning examination fees
  - 2.1. As a general rule, no refunds are allowed.
  - 2.2. If for justifiable reasons, a candidate is unable to take the written examination, he must state in writing (addressed to PSBIM chair) the reason/s for the withdrawal and must be submitted not later than three (3) weeks before the scheduled date of the examination. The examination fee shall then be credited to future examinations, but shall be valid only

for a period of two years. Failure to formally withdraw from an examination will automatically cause the forfeiture of the corresponding payment. In the event an increase in the examination fee is implemented, the prevailing fee at the time the candidate applied to take the exams shall be the reference amount and payment of the difference is required.

- 2.3. Candidates who fail to show up on the examination date without prior written notice will automatically forfeit the payment of the exam fee.

**D. Submission of Application to take the Diplomate Certifying Exam:**

1. PSBIM shall write ALL training institutions by November 2 to submit the names of all eligible graduating IM residents and graduates of the IM Training Program for the last three (3) years who are eligible to take the PSBIM examination the following year. The list must be received by PCP both by email and courier on or before December 1. The Training Officer, Department Chair, and the Medical Director of the Training Institution must certify that the list of candidates is correct. This is to double check whether candidates are truly eligible for the examination.
2. Qualified candidates who graduated December 2014 or earlier who will take the PSBIM exam for the first time must secure endorsement from the Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director where training was obtained.
3. Application for the PSBIM Examination must be submitted ON-LINE ONLY on or before midnight of January 15. No applications will be accepted at the PCP office.
4. Application Form can be downloaded from the PCP Website, notarized and re-filed ON-LINE. All documentary requirements as stated in Section II of the PSBIM Code of Procedures must be attached to the submitted application form including proof of payment of examination fees and all other monetary back dues due to PCP (if applicable).
5. The Secretariat shall ascertain the completeness of the application forms and all other attached documentary requirements.
6. The candidate shall be informed by e-mail by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of February regarding the approval or disapproval of his/her application. The candidate must acknowledge receipt of such communication by e-mail as well.

ALL CANDIDATES ARE ADVISED TO APPLY EARLY AND NOT WAIT FOR THE DEADLINE

**III. Time Limitations/Retakes for the Examination:**

1. All candidates must submit the complete requirements regardless of the number of times he/she had taken the examination.
2. Graduates of accredited training institutions before 2005 with no certification in clinical competence, and are in any of the following situations:
  - a. Has the intention to take the exam for the 1<sup>st</sup> time or re-take it
  - b. In active practice in Internal Medicine in the Philippines for at least 5 years

Can ask for an endorsement letter from the chair of a training institution or PCP chapter president in the area where he/she is practicing. The endorsement letter must confirm the competent practice of the candidate. The endorsement letter will take the place of the clinical competence evaluation.

3. There is no limit as to the number of times a candidate may take the examination.

#### IV. SCHEMA OF THE WRITTEN CERTIFYING EXAMINATION:

##### A. Nature of the Examination

The Written Examination is the final step to certification as Diplomate in Internal Medicine. The Written Examination tests for understanding of clinically relevant concepts in Internal Medicine. This requires recall of updated medical information necessary to understand the concepts. Principles derived from such concepts are also tested in application to patient-problems for diagnosis and treatment.

##### B. Scope of the written examination

1. Subjects in Internal Medicine shall be categorized into:
  - 1.1. Category I (40%)
    - 1.1.1. Cardiology
    - 1.1.2. Infectious Diseases
    - 1.1.3. Pulmonary Medicine
  - 1.2. Category II (30%)
    - 1.2.1. Gastroenterology
    - 1.2.2. Nephrology
    - 1.2.3. Endocrinology
  - 1.3. Category III (20%)
    - 1.3.1. Hematology
    - 1.3.2. Neurology
    - 1.3.3. Medical Oncology
  - 1.4. Category IV (10%)
    - 1.4.1. Dermatology
    - 1.4.2. Rheumatology
    - 1.4.3. Clinical Allergology and Immunology
2. There shall be a total of 360 QUESTIONS allocated thus:
  - 2.1. Category I - a total of 144 questions shall be allotted to this category or 48 questions for each of the 3 sub-specialties.
  - 2.2. Category II - a total of 108 questions shall be allotted to this category or 36 questions for each of the 3 sub-specialties.  
Category III - a total of 72 questions shall be allotted to this category or 24 questions for each of the 3 sub-specialties.
  - 2.3. Category IV - a total of 36 questions shall be allotted to this category or 12 questions each for Clinical Allergy and Immunology, Dermatology and Rheumatology. (Note: Re-distribution of questions as approved by PSBIM on June 22, 2002 will take effect in January 2004.

##### C. References

- 1.1. **The official textbook reference of the Written Certifying Examinations is the latest edition of Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine.**
- 1.2. **Additional references include current published Clinical Practice Guidelines and recommendations from the PCP Subspecialty Societies and similar Institution – WHO, Center for Disease Control (CDC)**
- 1.3. **These references shall have been uploaded in the PCP website at least 6 months prior to the PSBIM examinations.**

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