

ABO invites questions for Phase II examination

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On July 1, 2004, all accredited orthodontic residency educators were sent information about the AAO Educators Conference and the establishment of a new Web site, http://www.americanboardortho.com/q_submit, where they can submit questions for the ABO Phase II written examination. Although the ABO seeks continuous question submission, each educator was asked to submit 10 questions to the Web site by November 1, 2004. This will give the ABO a significant question bank to increase the relevance and validity of future examinations. Over 300 candidates took the 2004 Phase II written examination on April 30, 2004.

Drs Richard Diemer, Thomas Cangialosi, and Michael Riolo of the ABO met with orthodontic educators at their annual program sponsored by the AAO's Council on Orthodontic Education. Topics presented included the evolution of the examination, its structure and content, activities of the ABO Phase II Examination Committee, item analysis of questions, and plans for computerization. A significant outcome of the meeting was enhanced collaboration between the ABO and the educators for better examination feedback, as well as the ABO's request for regular submission of potential questions. The results of the meeting were universally encouraging. The ABO understands that additional feedback to orthodontic educators can improve resident outcomes assessment and assist with curriculum modification. The educators understand that

the ABO relies on their input of questions to increase the relevance and validity of the Phase II examination. The success of this meeting underscored the benefit to both groups of future, regular meetings, and all agreed that a special Web site for directly submitting questions to the ABO will enhance the dialogue.

The Web site includes a sample question and step-by-step instructions for submission. A text space of unlimited size is available for each question with areas for various stem choices (A-E). The author will then check a dot to the right of the stem indicating the correct choice. An explanation or rationale box and an area for references are available. Question classification is requested via a drop-down menu that lists all sections and subsections of the Phase II written examination; authors are also asked to estimate the difficulty of the question and provide a glossary topic. A drop-down menu is available to enter the question's cognitive type. The author can submit the question with a click and then return to enter a new question.

At next year's Educators Conference, the ABO will report on how the site has been used, along with results of the Phase II examination for each graduate orthodontic residency program.

The board believes that increased communication between the ABO and orthodontic educators will result in an improved Phase II examination. The quality of graduate orthodontic education will be enhanced through the assessment of each program's examination performance, thereby facilitating curriculum modification as necessary.

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