

ABMS Neurocritical Care Multidisciplinary Subspecialty FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. **Question:** How did this certification come about?

Answer: The NCS first reached out to the ABPN in late 2016 about the possibility of starting an ABMS Member Board subspecialty in Neurocritical Care. Due to their aligned goals, the NCS worked closely with the AAN to submit a preliminary application to the ABPN in May 2017 and the final application in November 2017. The ABMS Board of Directors approved the application at their June 2018 board meeting.

2. **Question:** What is the value of this subspecialty certification?

Answer: It standardizes training programs in addition to certifying individuals with expertise and competency in bodies of knowledge of not only general critical care medicine but the unique population of those critically ill with neurological illness. Most specifically, it should ensure uniformity in the training and skill sets of neurointensivists through the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited fellowship training.

3. **Question:** Now that the NCC subspecialty application was approved by the ABMS, what are the next steps and how will the examination be created?

Answer: The sponsoring Boards (APBN, ABNS, ABA and ABEM) will develop an agreement of how the Boards will work together. Thereafter, they will appoint a multispecialty examination committee to develop a Content Outline and write questions. Additionally, the ACGME will be asked to develop training guidelines and requirements for the NCC subspecialty fellowship programs. Eventually, the ACGME will review applications for training programs seeking accreditation.

4. **Question:** What is the connection between the ACGME and the ABMS?

Answer: The ACGME is responsible for setting criteria for residency and fellowship training programs and for accrediting training programs. There is no direct connection between the ABMS boards and the ACGME, but individual Boards (ie, the ABPN) do pay some attention to what the ACGME Residency Review Committees publish as requirements. Therefore, the ACGME will determine what is required for NCC fellowships training programs to be accredited..

5. **Question:** I am due to renew my UCNS certification later this year. Due to the ABMS subspecialty approval, should I hold off on taking the UCNS exam this year?

Answer: Since the process of writing the NCC examination through collaboration of the ABPN and other sponsoring Boards (ABNS, ABEM and ABA) will take time, if you are UNCS or CAST certified, you should continue to maintain your current certification. The ABMS practice track will allow you to take the certifying examination if your UCNS or CAST certification is current.

6. **Question:** I am not a diplomate of one of the sponsoring Boards for NCC, (i.e., ABPN, ABNS, ABEM, and ABA); will I be eligible for the ABMS NCC certification?

Answer: No, you will not. When NCC was proposed as an ABMS subspecialty, the ABMS process is to ask all the member boards if they are willing to sponsor the new subspecialty. NCC leadership was aware that the ABIM, ABS and ABP have diplomates that are UCNS-certified in NCC. The leadership of the non-sponsoring Boards were approached and chose not to sign on at this time. The process also allows them to sign on later. If you are a diplomate of one of these Boards, we would recommend that you petition your ABMS member board to sign on as a sponsoring Board.

7. **Question:** When will the first board certification exam be offered that meets ABMS criteria?

Answer: It is anticipated that the first board certification exam that is recognized through the ABMS process will be offered in 2020 or 2021.

8. **Question:** Who will the administer subspecialty board certificate?

Answer: It will be administered by the ABPN and will be offered to eligible diplomates of the ABPN, American Board of Anesthesiology, American Board of Emergency Medicine and American Board of Neurological Surgery.

9. **Question:** What is the subspecialty's practice pathway?

Answer: There will be a six year practice pathway for neurologists, neurosurgeons, anesthesiologists, and emergency medicine physicians who are certified in Neurocritical Care by the UCNS or CAST, have completed a "fellowship" in Neurocritical Care (UCNS, CAST, or other non-accredited fellowship), or who document required practice experiences.

Please [click here](#) for access to the FAQs on UNCS Certification/Accreditation for Neurocritical Care.

10. **Question:** When will the practice pathway begin?

Answer: The practice pathway will start when the first exam is offered.