

NBCE Successfully Pilots Innovative Part IV Examination

Greeley, CO. (September 3, 2024) — The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) is excited to announce the successful completion of a pilot exam for the redesigned Part IV examination, held on July 27th at the University of North Texas Health Sciences Center. This pilot marks a key milestone in the NBCE's ongoing Advancement and Development project.

The pilot exam featured seven patient encounter stations designed to simulate real-world clinical scenarios, along with a chiropractic technique station. Participants were evaluated across five key competency domains: Patient Evaluation, Patient Examination, Clinical Decision-Making and Case Management, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, and Documentation. This format allows examinees to demonstrate their ability to manage patient care from start to finish, reflecting the challenges they will face in practice.

To ensure thorough and accurate assessment, each patient encounter station was recorded with two cameras from different angles, allowing for remote review and evaluation. This recording process supports future quality control of patient interactions and grading practices, while also streamlining the training of both examiners and patient actors to enhance consistency and effectiveness in exam evaluations.

Before each encounter, participants reviewed patient information on a laptop, simulating the workflow of modern clinical practice. They then had 14 minutes to assess the simulated patient, perform relevant examinations, and provide a brief report of findings. Following the patient encounter, participants returned to their laptops to complete a SOAP note. A SOAP note is a structured format used by healthcare professionals to document patient encounters, ensuring comprehensive documentation of their clinical decisions.

Participants praised the exam's realistic approach, with many noting that the format closely mirrors the responsibilities of practicing chiropractors, better preparing them for real-world practice. Additionally, the "intuitive" nature of the exam, as described by some students, is expected to reduce the preparation time needed for Part IV. The NBCE gathered valuable insights from examinees, which will inform further refinements to the exam format.

Dr. Mark Bronson, President of the Texas Board of Chiropractic Examiners and Chief Examiner for the NBCE's Part IV exam at Parker University, shared his thoughts on the pilot: "As an evaluator reviewing the videos and scoring the recent pilot exam, I am impressed with this new format. The updated patient encounter stations challenge examinees' critical thinking skills in ways not possible with the current format. By allowing examinees to perform a case history and use the gathered information to determine the appropriate next steps, we can more effectively assess their competency in a real-world chiropractic setting. The quality of the videos and the ability to view the room from either side enables thorough station reviews, ensuring results that are both accurate and indisputable. Having been actively involved in the Part IV exam for many years, I am greatly impressed with how the integration of advanced technology with the progressive station format elevates the examinee experience, making this new format a significant advancement in our testing process. As a regulator, I believe this format represents a

significant leap forward in evaluating the competency of chiropractors, ultimately enhancing the health and safety of the public we serve."

This pilot exam is a crucial step in the NBCE's Advancement and Development project. The goal is to produce a more efficient exam that better mimics real-world patient encounters while maintaining fairness, reliability, and validity. The project also aims to provide year-round testing opportunities, making the path to licensure more flexible and accommodating to students' schedules.

Dr. Norman Ouzts, Chief Executive Officer of the NBCE, commented on the pilot's success: "This pilot is a significant milestone in our efforts to advance the chiropractic profession. By developing an exam that more accurately reflects clinical practice, we are ensuring that future chiropractors are well-prepared to meet the needs of their patients. We sincerely thank the participants who invested their personal time to be part of this pilot exam. Your contributions played a pivotal role in shaping the future of the Part IV examination, helping us create a more effective and relevant assessment for the next generation of chiropractors."

Group 1 Examinees (L to R): Dr. Norman Ouzts (NBCE CEO), Christian Corona, Norelvis Fulton, Nicole Vuong, Alexander Scherneck, Candice Kingsman, Taras Woodson, Ariana Sirgew, Arden Leblanc, Dr. Karlos Boghosian (NBCE President), Dr. Marty Freihaut (NBCE Treasurer). Not pictured- Dr. LeRoy Otto (NBCE District II Director).

Group 2 Examinees (L to R): Lauren Kettenhofen, Miranda Schultz, Ryan Evans, Rick Murphy, Hong Fei Wei, Elizabeth Ellis, Rafael Torres.

The first NBCE Part IV exam was administered in 1996. The Part IV Advancement and Development Project was initiated in 2021 to identify current and future trends in practical testing. The NBCE is dedicated to keeping stakeholders updated on the progress towards implementing the new Part IV exam format, which is set to launch in 2026. For ongoing updates, please visit the News section at nbce.org.