



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AACOM Contact: Paul DeMiglio
Phone: 202-306-9777
Email: pdemiglio@aacom.org

NBOME Contact: Melissa Turner, MS
Phone: 866-479-6828
Email: mturner@nbome.org

American Medical Association Officially Recognizes COMLEX-USA's Equality with USMLE

A Joint Statement Prepared by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

(Philadelphia, PA) – On Tuesday, November 13, 2018, the American Medical Association's (AMA) House of Delegates voted unanimously to approve Resolution 955, "[Equality for COMLEX and USMLE](#)." The resolution provides that the AMA "promote equal acceptance of the USMLE and COMLEX at all United States residency programs." Further, that the AMA will "work with appropriate stakeholders, including, but not limited to the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME), Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and American Osteopathic Association (AOA) to educate Residency Program Directors on how to interpret and use COMLEX scores." The new policy also calls for the AMA to work with residency program directors to promote higher utilization of COMLEX-USA for DO (osteopathic physician) applicants to ACGME residency programs in light of the new single accreditation system.

The NBOME's Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States (COMLEX-USA) series provides the pathway to licensure for osteopathic physicians in the United States, and is a graduation requirement for earning a DO degree from colleges of osteopathic medicine. The single accreditation system for graduate medical education, a joint agreement between the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), AOA, ACGME, allows graduates of DO-granting and MD-granting medical schools to train in ACGME-accredited residency and fellowship programs. By 2020, all residency programs in the U.S. will be accredited by the ACGME, which now has six DOs on its Board of Directors, including Vice Chair, **Karen J. Nichols, DO, MA, MACOI, CS.**

Currently, most ACGME residency and fellowship program directors, teaching hospitals, and all of the nation's state licensing boards accept, use, and/or require COMLEX-USA for DOs, and ACGME, AOA and the Federation of State Medical Boards, among others, have official policy recognizing COMLEX-USA and its validity. This endorsement by the AMA comes at a strategically critical time as the single accreditation system is fully implemented in 2020.

The AMA is the largest association of physicians, including both DOs and MDs, in the United States. The AMA's position that COMLEX-USA is equal to the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) represents a major moment for patients and the practice of osteopathic medicine and stands to impact the entire medical community for years to come. NBOME President and CEO, **John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd**, stated that "MD and DO medical students stood together in solidarity for osteopathic distinctiveness, DO students and residents, and their unique, valid and distinctive credentials."

AACOM and NBOME endorse the resolution and applaud the AMA and the Medical Student Section that introduced it. Speaking on behalf of the colleges of osteopathic medicine and DO students, **Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH**, AACOM CEO and President, said, "This resolution represents a critical and historic milestone in medical education—one that fully embraces the importance and value of the two distinct pathways to becoming a physician in the United States."

About AACOM

The [American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine](#) (AACOM) represents the 34 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 54 teaching locations in 32 states. In the current academic year, these colleges are educating more than 30,000 future physicians—25 percent of all U.S. medical students. Six of the colleges are public and 28 are private institutions.

AACOM was founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education. AACOM's mission is to promote excellence in osteopathic medical education, in research and in service, and to foster innovation and quality among osteopathic medical colleges to improve the health of the American public.

About NBOME

[NBOME](#) is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit assessment organization committed to protecting the public by providing the means to assess competencies for osteopathic medicine and related health care professions. NBOME's COMLEX-USA examination series is a requirement for graduation from colleges of osteopathic medicine and provides the pathway to licensure for osteopathic physicians in the United States and numerous international jurisdictions.

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