

Symposium - "Training of Surgeons"

Certifying and in-training examinations for general surgery residents in the Philippines

Antonio A. Limson, M.D., F.P.C.S., F.A.C.S.

Professor of Surgery, University of the Philippines

College of Medicine & Philippine General Hospital

Metro Manila, Philippines

The Philippine Board of Surgery, Inc., registered with the Security and Exchange Commission in March 1969 is the examining arm of the Philippine College of Surgeons, organized in 1936. The Philippine College of Surgeons through its Accreditation Committee, following a set of policy standards accredits general surgery training programs all over the Philippines. Presently, there are sixty-one (61) approved programs in the country. Only graduates of these programs (4 or 5 years) are qualified to take the certifying examinations given by the Philippine Board of Surgery. The PBS has eleven (11) directors (elected from a group of 21 board of governors) who elect from among themselves a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and the Secretary of the Board.

The certifying examinations are given in two parts, part one being the written portion, and an oral examination for the second part. The written examination is a multiple choice addressing all aspects of general surgery as defined by the Board. The oral examination is of the structured type using case modules and given by selected examiners coming from the academy. The candidate usually goes through several panels of examiners. All oral examiners pass through seminars and participate in workshops on how to conduct a good oral examination. On the average, about 50% of the candidates pass through the written examination and about 30% pass the oral examinations. Details will be presented during the forum.

A candidate who has passed both examinations and has complied with other requirements will be awarded a certificate which attests that he is a specialist in General Surgery and may be called a Diplomate in General Surgery.

Residency In-Training examinations are also given once a year in Metro Manila, Cebu, and Davao City to evaluate the knowledge of residents at a given stage of his or her training. The other objective is to assist training officers in assessing the assets and weaknesses of their residents by providing the trainers the standard scores and percentile rank of their residents who took the exam compared to the other examinees. Reciprocity to certain surgeons certified by other foreign boards may be granted at the discretion of the PBS.