INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

Canada

Improvements to Canadian Qualifying Examination Start in 2019

The Medical Council of Canada (MCC) has announced that a variety of updates and improvements to the MCC Qualifying Examination (MCCQE) Part I will be implemented during the 2019 calendar year. The updated exam will be offered in Canada and internationally starting in April/May 2019, and candidates whose applications have been accepted will be able to schedule their exam appointments online as of mid-January 2019.

The updates to the exam were made following recommendations from the MCC’s Assessment Review Task Force (ARTF), including offering the MCCQE Part I more frequently. The lengthy process of updating the exam is coming to completion and the MCC has confirmed that the exam will be offered four times in 2019 and five times as of 2020.

In addition to the flexibility linked to the frequency of the administrations, the MCC has also sought to make it more accessible to Canadian and international medical students and graduates. To facilitate this, the MCCQE Part I has been moved to a vendor-delivered exam. Prometric was selected to administer the new MCCQE Part I in Canada and in more than 80 countries worldwide.

According to the MCC, increased flexibility can also be found in the MCCQE application process. Starting in January 2019, candidates will be able to schedule their exam through Prometric and select their desired location from the many sites available around the world as soon as their application has been processed and accepted.

The MCC has also created information sheets to help Canadian and international medical students and graduates navigate through the MCCQE Part I information. The documents cover a range of topics, including eligibility, scheduling and preparatory resources.

Source: Medical Council of Canada Echo Newsletter, December 2018

IAMRA

Canadian Physician Organization Joins IAMRA

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Prince Edward Island (Canada) has joined the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA). IAMRA currently has 116 members from 48 countries. To learn more about IAMRA, visit www.iamra.com.

Source: IAMRA website announcement

United Kingdom

UK-Wide Workforce Planning Needed to Avert NHS Staffing Crisis, Says GMC

New research from the UK’s General Medical Council (GMC) has highlighted a future workforce crisis that could impact patient care.

Commissioned by the GMC for its 2018 “The State of Medical Education and Practice in the UK” report, the research paints a stark picture of pressure on the delivery of UK health services—including steps physicians are taking to cope with growing workloads.

Among those measures are making referrals to other physicians that are not strictly necessary but happen due to limited time to address patient concerns, ordering blood tests when they may not always be needed, and bypassing clinical checklists in order to get through workload.

The GMC research indicates many physicians are considering career changes to step away from heavy workloads. Around a third of 2,600 physicians surveyed are considering reducing their hours in the next three years. A fifth are planning to move to part-time status and another fifth plan to leave the UK to work abroad. Of particular concern, according to the GMC, is that 21% of physicians 45–54 years of age and two-thirds of those 55–64 years of age intend to take early retirement by 2021.

Source: GMC news release, December 5, 2018