



## **HEADACHE MEDICINE**

### **Eligibility Criteria for Subspecialty Certification**

Rev 1/9/07

The following are eligibility criteria for certification in the subspecialty of Headache Medicine (HM). There are general requirements that must be fulfilled as well as requirements for specific pathways of application.

#### **A. GENERAL**

General eligibility criteria:

1. Applicants must be a Diplomate in good standing of a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties or equivalent certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC).\*

2. Applicants must hold a current, active, valid, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada, and in each jurisdiction in which they practice.

#### 3. Current Licenses

A license to practice medicine is not “current, active, valid, unrestricted and unqualified” if, in any manner to any extent whatsoever, one or more of the following applies. The license is:

- a. under probation;
- b. conditioned, e.g., the physician is required to practice under supervision or with modification, or to obtain continuing education;
- c. limited, e.g., to specific practice settings;
- d. institutional, temporary, or educational;
- e. inactive as a result of an action taken by or a request made by a medical licensing board.

#### Policy on Medical Licensure

If any license currently held by an applicant participating in the application process is restricted or qualified in any way, full details must be provided to the UCNS. The UCNS may, at its sole discretion, determine whether to investigate the license and the information provided. The UCNS reserves the right to determine if the license fulfills this policy.

Licenses that have been revoked, suspended, surrendered, or not renewed in order to terminate or settle disciplinary proceedings do not qualify as meeting the requirements for medical licensure, and all such licenses must be reported for review and consideration. The UCNS will determine if the situation is cause to deny an applicant’s certification application, deny a candidate access to an examination, or revoke a diplomate’s certificate.

Diplomates must continuously fulfill the Policy on Medical Licensure. Failure to do so will result in loss of certification.

\*The UCNS will allow applicants who are Diplomates in good standing of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) who are Doctors of Osteopathy (DOs) and completed osteopathic neurology specialty training via the AOA.

## **B. PATHWAYS**

Applicants must have completed **one of two** eligibility pathways. The pathways are:

1. Fellowship
2. Practice Track

### **1. Fellowship**

An applicant must have successfully completed a fellowship in HM that is **accredited by the UCNS**. The fellowship must be 12 or more months in length. The applicant must satisfactorily complete the fellowship training by the date of application. The applicant must apply within 36 months of completing the fellowship.

Verification by the appropriate fellowship program director must be provided.

### **2. Practice Track**

The practice track is a process that allows physicians who initiated the subspecialty prior to the availability of accredited training programs to qualify for the examination by meeting a defined series of criteria.

The applicant must submit the following documentation for **one of the three** following areas in HM:

a. Satisfactory completion of 12 months of formal training (non-accredited) in HM that has taken place after the completion of formal Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)- or RCPSC-approved residency training. Training or exposure to HM given to residents as part of their residency curriculum will not count toward the 12 months of training. The applicant must provide documentation from the appropriate program director at each institution where the training occurred.

**OR**

b. At least 50 hours of Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)- approved category 1 CME specifically related to HM over the 60 months prior to application. Specification of programs attended and relevance to the field of HM must be provided.

**OR**

c. A letter from the applicant's current department chair that states he/she has an active, full-time academic appointment in which his/her teaching responsibilities include instructing one or more of the following in HM: medical students, residents, or fellows.

**AND (in addition to one of a, b, or c above)**

d. Documentation of a 36-month\* period of time in which the applicant has spent a minimum of 25% of his/her time in the practice of HM. The practice must:

- i. Include the direct diagnosis and management of HM cases.
- ii. Have occurred in the United States, its territories, or in Canada.
- iii. Have occurred in the 60-month interval immediately preceding application for certification but need not be continuous.

The application must contain letters from two physicians familiar with the applicant's practice pattern during the practice time submitted in the application. If the applicant is in an academic or hospital setting, then a letter from the appropriate department chair or chief of staff will be required as one of the two letters. The letters must together address the entire 36-month period of time submitted.

\*If the applicant has completed unaccredited training, this may count towards the 36-month period of time. For example, if the applicant completed 12 months of unaccredited training in HM, the UCNS will count these 12 months towards the 36-month period of time. Documentation of an additional 24-month period of time would then be required.

This practice track pathway of application will close on the last day of the application cycle for the 2011 HM examination. To apply via this pathway, physicians must have fulfilled the requirements of the pathway on or before that date. Extensions for acceptance to this pathway must be submitted in writing before the close on the last day of the application cycle for the 2011 HM examination.

Certification obtained under the practice track pathway will have the same time-limitation as certification obtained via an accredited fellowship pathway.

Approved by the UCNS Board of Directors: January 2006, Policy Amendment October 2006