

Use of the NBME Website, Self-Assessment Services, and Suggestions from Students

(880 medical students responded to a Web survey distributed to OSR Reps via the OSR listserv)

Usage data:

- ☞ Accessing the NBME Website
 - 52% of students surveyed use the NBME Website only to register for the Step 1 and 2 exams
 - 37% of students access the website only 1-2 times a year
 - 1% checked weekly, 10% monthly, 1% never use the website at all
- ☞ Most commonly sought information/ links:
 - Registration for USMLE Step exams (97.4%)
 - Checking for updates/news regarding the USMLE Step Exams (46.3%)
 - FAQ section (39.9%)
 - Checking for updates/news from the NBME (17.8%)
- ☞ Ease of navigation through the site:
 - 43% were neutral
 - 30% found it easy to find what they needed
 - 24% found it somewhat difficult to find what they needed
 - 70% of students were neutral, found it difficult to obtain information, or extremely difficult to find information

Self-Assessment Services

- ✎ Overall use of self-assessments offered by the NBME:
 - 80.6% of respondents had *not* used the CBSSA, CCSSA
 - Of the 22.4% who had, 18.9% used the CBSSA
 - 76% of those students who had used the self-assessments felt that they were helpful preparation
- ✎ Reasons students had *not* used self-assessment services
 - 56.8% were using another source of study questions
 - 44.8% did not know these services were offered
 - 34.6% felt the \$45 fee was too expensive
 - 9.3% did not feel the self-assessments would be helpful study tools

Comments about the NBME website

In general, students would like increased navigability and a more user-friendly interface that allows them to quickly find the information that they need.

- ➔ Redesign the layout so that links that are important to students are easy to find and prominently displayed.
- ➔ Many students would like to have a section with links to registration for Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3, as well as basic information about each of the exams, what to expect on exam day, etc.
- ➔ Try to consolidate information and avoid redundancy, especially overlap between the NBME and USMLE pages, which is confusing for students.
- ➔ Make instructions clear, navigational links straightforward.
- ➔ Update the FAQ section.
- ➔ Phone numbers easy to find if student need to speak with NBME employee.

Consider creation of an “NBME for Medical Students” section with a prominent link on the main page:

- ➔ Direct link to registration for the Step exams
- ➔ Basic, summary information about each exam
- ➔ Detailed information about each exam, including a breakdown of the subjects covered
- ➔ “What you will need for exam day” relevant to each exam, what to expect
- ➔ Costs of exams
- ➔ Links to schedules, calendars, and deadlines
- ➔ A place to display relevant updates