Preparing for ABR Part 3

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Outline

• Introduction to Part 3
  — Logistics, Format, Topics
• Test-taking advice
• General Strategies
• Specific Strategies and Material Sources

Intro to Part 3 – Logistics

• May-ish (2019 dates = 4/28-5/1)
• Louisville, KY (2019 location “TBD”??)
• Airport hotel – Crowne Plaza
Intro to Part 3 – Format

- Five examiners
- Five questions each (25 total questions)
  - One question from each category per examiner
- 30 minutes per examiner
- Question (often with picture/diagram) displayed on laptop screen
  - 3-5 questions written out underneath
- Questions = starting point for broader discussion

Intro to Part 3 – Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection, patient safety, professionalism &amp; ethics</td>
<td>Shielding (external and brachy), radiation biology, error prevention, RCA, training, professionalism &amp; ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient-related measurements</td>
<td>Clinical plans, target volumes and OARs, plan evaluation,QA procedures, recommendations, and requirements, acceptance testing &amp; commissioning, equipment, treatment unit components and functions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imaging</td>
<td>Simulation, planning, &amp; delivery, reconstruction &amp; visualization, models, treatment planning systems, image fusion &amp; registration, equipment, treatment unit components and functions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calibration, QC, and QA</td>
<td>Calibration procedures, QA procedures, recommendations, and requirements, acceptance testing &amp; commissioning, equipment, treatment unit components and functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Calibration protocols, measurement equipment, treatment unit components and functions, equipment, treatment unit components and functions</td>
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</tbody>
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Intro to Part 3 – Topics

- Professionalism & Ethics
  - New (after 2015)
  - Ethical principles, dilemmas, values, relationships, conflicts, public responsibility, etc
  - “Very similar to the material in”:
    - TG 159
    - TG 249
    - ABR/RSNA/AAPM online modules on ethics
      - Check ABR website for link
Intro to Part 3 – Topics

• Shielding and protection
  – Lots of numbers (flash cards?)
  – Know some rules of thumb
    • Typical door thicknesses, wall thickness, etc

• Imaging
  – Generally going to tie back to therapy somehow
  – You are not sitting for the imaging exam (or are you?)

Test-taking Advice

• Examiners may not give any verbal or visual feedback
• Relax, perfectly OK to take a second to collect your thoughts
• Be confident. Lead with things you are confident about.
• Follow-up questions can mean anything
• Don’t say too much
  – If you reveal something about your experience, be prepared to back it up

Test-taking Advice

• Try not to get rattled if you don’t know the answer
  – Give them something!! (TG report, QUANTEC, etc)
  – Explain your thought process
  – “I’m not sure” doesn’t give them anything to work with
• Don’t argue with the examiner
• Don’t say something unsafe
General Strategies

• Make a schedule and try to stick with it
• Slow and steady
  – Be careful of burnout though. You don’t need to study for a year
• THINK about what you do and why you do it
• Focus your studying wisely
  – You need to be an expert on TG-51
  – You do not need to be an expert on PET imaging

Study group/buddy

• Regular schedule
• Quiz each other
• Helpful with things you didn’t think of

Talk to yourself

• Car, shower, etc

Specific Strategies

• Reading
  – Task group reports: 3 categories
    • Know them front-to-back (51, 43, 142, etc)
    • Know what they say (76, 106, etc)
    • Know that they exist (ok, maybe a little more than that)
  – Textbooks
    • Khan, NCRP151
    • Honestly not my favorite source
  – Presentations are good!
    • AAPM website – Virtual Library
  – Regulations – state and federal
Specific Strategies

• Question of the Day
  – 1 per day, don’t even have to answer!
  – Write down answer and source
  – Weekly series?
  – Can start early, generate huge question bank for later
  – Helpful to do along with study partner(s)

• In-person Prep Courses
  – Two days
  – 4” binder full of material
  – Good instructor, extra resources
  – Very fast
  – Very expensive

• WePassed, ABRPhysicsHelp, etc
  – Did not use them myself
  – Good reviews from colleagues
  – Large bank of practice questions
    • Good starting point for studying
  – Good for quick reference
    • ABRPhysicsHelp – TG summaries
Specific Strategies

• Mock Exams
  – Great practice: not just questions, but setting, timing, etc
  – Feedback on your “performance”
  – Don’t have to be formal mocks!
    • (Although try to do a formal one, too)
  – Can help with confidence
  – Regional AAPM meetings
  – Test-Prep services?
Thanks for listening!