Preparing for ABR Part 3

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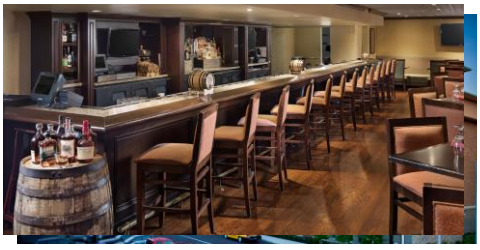
Making Cancer History®

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

Topic	Description
Protection, patient safety, professionalism & ethics	• Shielding (external and brachy) • Radiation biology • Error prevention, RCA, training • [illegible] patient release • Professionalism and ethics
Patient-related measurements	• Clinical plans, target volumes and OARs, plan evaluation • Calculation algorithms, beam characteristics & modeling • Brachy plans, sources, calculations • Special procedures (SRS, TBI, etc)
Imaging relation to therapy	• Simulation, planning, & delivery • Recon techniques, acquisition parameters, reference images • Image fusion and registration • Organ segmentation • Data communication • Equipment
Calibration, QC, and QA	• Calibration protocols • QA procedures, recommendations, and requirements • Acceptance testing & commissioning • Brachy
Equipment	• Treatment unit components and functions • Measurement equipment (ion chambers, TLD, diodes, film, etc) • Phantoms, electrometers, scanning systems, etc (use, commissioning, and QA) • Proton therapy

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

General Strategies

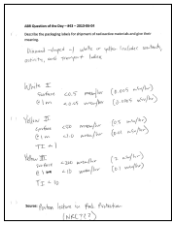
- Study group/buddy
  - Regular schedule
  - Quiz each other
  - Helpful with things you didn't think of
- Talk to yourself
  - Car, shower, etc

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)



Specific Strategies

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

Specific Strategies

- 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

Specific Strategies

•Mock Exams

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!