



**Association of  
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## **AAMC response to temporary suspension of USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) testing**

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USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) testing is temporarily suspended beginning Monday, March 16, 2020. Additional details and updates are available at <https://www.usmle.org/>.

On March 13, the NBME announced that Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) testing will be temporarily suspended beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, to further public health efforts to curb the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). NBME hopes to resume operations of all centers on Monday, April 13, 2020. We know this announcement is likely to produce relief for many, as this policy is consistent with the move toward social distancing and limiting travel. We also know this may cause concern for those students impacted.

NBME has communicated that 107 U.S. MD seniors were registered to take USMLE Step 2 CS during this time period. The suspension will prevent them from having a score prior to graduation and likely prior to beginning residency programs. Given the potential implications of the suspension and impact on their future goals and obligations, **the AAMC recommends that schools consider the following actions:**

- Schools that require passage of Step 2CS for graduation are encouraged to consider temporarily waiving this requirement. Consider your school's underlying goals of requiring Step 2CS passage and develop alternatives.
  - If Step 2CS is utilized as a measure of student clinical skills competence, consider using an internal summative assessment of student clinical skills that documents the attainment of those required objectives and/or competencies.
  - If Step 2CS is utilized as part of your program evaluation, missing data on a small number of students for one year will not impact your overall ability to assess program effectiveness.

The LCME does not require schools to have a Step 2CS passing requirement for graduation and, therefore, would support a school waiving its own Step 2CS graduation requirement given the COVID-19 pandemic.

With Match Day rapidly approaching, we recommend that student affairs and medical education deans work together as quickly as possible to address this issue to minimize student concern.

Earlier today, AAMC subject matter experts had a conference call with the Group on Resident Affairs, and discussed the above recommendation noting that a percentage of their interns will need time to take Step 2CS during their residency. Initial feedback was positive, and we are optimistic that programs will be flexible given the current unprecedented circumstances. The NBME and FSMB are working on issues related to licensure.

We are learning daily about COVID-19 and how it is impacting patient care, medical education, and biomedical research. The AAMC remains committed to supporting all students and those who guide, counsel, support, and advocate for them during this difficult time.