

up to date through continuing medical education, examination preparation would take too much time, and tests do not measure what physicians do in practice. My suspicion is that fear of failure may be a factor in the resistance to an examination. I experienced that fear when I recently wrote the American Board of Internal Medicine's recertification examination. However, as with all examinations, it provided the impetus for me to undertake a comprehensive study program to update my knowledge. The preparation for the examination was an excellent learning experience.

An examination is a reasonable mechanism by which to assess knowledge with an external standard. Studies indicate that physicians are poor at judging their own competence¹ and that they are unlikely to be able to accurately assess their knowledge in the absence of such an external standard.

I continue to believe that a comprehensive system of revalidation needs to incorporate methods to assess both knowledge and performance in practice.² For example, practice assessments can review how I manage essential hypertension, but they cannot capture whether I will recognize that a patient has a pheochromocytoma as the underlying cause of their symptoms: an examination serves this purpose better than a practice assessment. Specialty-specific examinations have been used effectively in the United States for the last 2 decades to measure knowledge. In Canada, we must hold ourselves to a high standard to ensure that we provide the best possible care to our patients.

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REFERENCES

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Correction

In a recent article,¹ a parenthetical sentence in the fourth paragraph of the Interpretation section contained a misplaced percentage and reference

citation. It should have read "To obtain this factor, we multiplied Ferrando's estimate by the proportion of induced abortions in Latin America experienced by women aged 15–29 years (i.e., 70%^{4,21}) and divided it by the proportion of the Peruvian female population of 15–49 years old that is aged 15–29 years (i.e., 60%²²)."

REFERENCE

1. Bernabé-Ortiz A, White PJ, Carcamo CP, et al. Clandestine induced abortion: prevalence, incidence and risk factors among women in a Latin American country. *CMAJ* 2009;180:298-304.

DOI:10.1503/cmaj.090188

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