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The EBAss European certification

Pathways to Certification for EBAss Accreditation Scheme

1. Introduction

Until now, initial and continuous education and training of hyperbaric centre personnel has not been defined on a pan European level. As this is one of the main objectives of EBAss (European Association of Baromedical Nurses and Operators), special Committees devoted to Education and Accreditation of Personnel have been created, composed of members belonging to each category of hyperbaric personnel.

2. Method

Following study of existing training and education programs in Europe and across the World, a global and appropriate training system has been prepared. This system has been accepted by the ECHM who integrated this resource manual as an ECHM document.

3. Discussion

Before the accreditation system can be launched there needs to be some clarification of how an individual can go through the training and accreditation. Following research of other systems it is felt that the following would be a sensible procedure:

3.1 Eligibility

Certification is available at several levels as agreed by EBAss/ECB/ECHM.

3.2 Process

Training to the EBAss framework must be completed prior to being accepted as eligible for accreditation, successful completion will be proven by letter from the Training Centre; Training establishments wishing to conduct theoretical training should apply to EBAss/ECB for approval to conduct theoretical training. In addition candidates will need to produce suitable reports of practical training provided by an approved training facility as required by ECB (Hyperbaric facilities who wish to conduct training should apply to EBAss/ECB for approval to conduct practical training). The only exception to requirement for training will be for applicants who can show that they have worked at a Hyperbaric facility as hyperbaric chamber attendant or hyperbaric nurse for a period of at least 2 years and can supply documentation proving this experience together with a letter

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signed by the facility's Medical Director confirming their suitability; this evidence will be assessed by the EBAss Board of Directors. Once this letter and evidence has been approved the candidate will be permitted to attempt the on-line examination for the appropriate grade without being required to go through the EBAss approved training scheme. This experience route will be available for two years from January 2010; after January 2012 all personnel will be required to show evidence of completion of an EBAss approved training scheme.

4. Examination

4.1 Practical assessments or examinations will be conducted by the participating facility who will be working to the approved syllabus for training as published by EBAss. A letter confirming successful completion from the present employer or Medical Director of a registered hyperbaric facility will be required as proof of the candidate's competence. This letter will be sent to the EBAss accreditation committee in support of the candidate's application.

4.2 All theoretical examinations will be conducted on-line via the EBAss website. Identity of the candidate will be the responsibility of the medical director of the facility. Access to the appropriate level of examination will only be granted following acceptance of all of the above evidence of training and acceptance of payment (to be done electronically on-line). Applications shall be made to the EBAss accreditation committee who will authorise the candidate for examination and will issue the appropriate access codes; candidates shall allow 30 days from submission of application to reception of access codes.

4.3 The examination timing will be evident before the candidate commences the theoretical examination (total time for the examination will be equivalent to 1.5 minutes per question). Prior to the examination being started the applicant will be provided with explanation of the mechanism of how to complete the examination such that there will be no doubt about what is required of the candidate. As soon as the candidate has accepted that they have read and understood the instructions the examination time will start; if the candidate has not completed all of the questions before the allowed time has elapsed the examination will be terminated and the completed questions will be marked.

4.4 The examination will be marked automatically and results will be transferred to the accreditation administrator who will respond to the candidate with the result. If the candidate has passed the examination, certification will be processed and sent to the candidate at the email address supplied. In the event of failure, the topic(s) in which the candidate needs to show improvement will be supplied to the candidate; individual questions will not be discussed with the candidate or any other individual. The candidate will be invited to re-sit the examination not less than one month following the original failure. During this month it is recommended that the candidate seek some additional training to clarify any points of misunderstanding; when the month has elapsed the candidate can apply for a re-sit access code which will be provided once the re-sit fee has been accepted.

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Candidates who fail the second attempt will be allowed one further attempt one month later but if they are not successful then, the candidate will not be allowed to attempt the examination for a further twelve months.

4.5 What will the candidate be required to have access to while performing the exam?

Computer with Internet connection.

Calculator.

Any required additional information will be provided electronically when required.

The examination is an "open book" examination therefore the candidate can have access to any additional written information required but this does not extend to additional personnel input.

4.6 Pass Mark

All examinations have a pass mark of 70% personnel who achieve a pass of more than 90% will be awarded "Pass with Distinction".

5. Duration of Certification & Renewal

5.1 Each certificate will be valid for 2 years from the date of qualification and reminders will be automatically generated and sent to the candidate's supplied email address 6 months prior to expiry. For a candidate to be eligible for renewal they will be required to provide evidence that they have conducted at least 200 hours work at a hyperbaric facility verified by letter indicating the suitability of the candidate from the Medical Director of the facility. In addition the candidate shall provide evidence of 12 hours continuing professional development during the previous 2 years. For instance this could be achieved by attendance at the bi-annual EBAss meetings or attendance at relevant congresses.

5.2 Lapsed Certification: If individuals allow their certification to lapse they will be listed as having lost their certification. If an individual's certification is allowed to lapse but the individual applies for renewal of their certification within 12 months of the date of lapse then a penalty renewal fee of €200.00 will be payable; if the individual is an existing EBAss member the penalty fee will be €100.00. In this case the new certification will be backdated to commence on the original renewal date. If the individual does not renew their certification within 12 months of the date of the original renewal then they would be required to start from scratch which will require them to re-sit the appropriate EBAss examination for their level again paying the full fee in addition to satisfying all requirements under the EBAss guidance on regaining lost certification.

6. Fees

Initial Certification (ECHCO or ECHRN): €200.00

For existing EBAss members: €100.00

For both certificates: 30% discount

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Existing members who successfully qualify under the scheme would qualify for two years free membership.

Non members who successfully qualify under the scheme would be entitled to one year free membership.

With regards the Grandfather scheme, successful applicants would qualify for one year free membership.

Re-sit of examination following failure: €50.00

Renewal (ECHCO or ECHRN): €150.00

For existing EBAss members: €50.00

For both certificates: 30% discount

7. Grandfather Clause

7.1 Only existing members of EBAss will be eligible for grandfathering their qualifications to the new system. Persons wishing to apply for certification under the Grandfathering scheme must submit an up to date Curriculum Vitae together with all necessary supporting documentation to the EBAss Board of Directors where a decision will be made as to whether the individual will be accepted. The decision of the EBAss Board of Directors is final.

7.2 EBAss/ECB recognises that a number of individuals will have existing qualification(s) for instance those that have achieved qualification under the National Board of Diving & Hyperbaric Medical Technology (NBDHMT) system. Individuals who can provide evidence of an in-date certification for Certified Hyperbaric Technologist (CHT) will be issued with the European Certified Hyperbaric Chamber Operator (ECHCO) or Certified Hyperbaric Registered Nurse (CHRN) will be issued with the European Certified Registered Hyperbaric Nurse (ECRHN).

Other qualifications will be assessed as appropriate by application to the EBAss Board of Directors.

7.3 Evidence of in-date certification must be provided showing the name of the individual, date of certification and expiry authenticity will be checked with NBDHMT register before cross over will be accepted. Another route would be for individuals who can prove that they have worked in HBO facilities for at least 10 years, or have a position of safety director (or equivalent) for at least a period of 5 years.

7.4 The costs for Grandfathering across to the EBAss/ECB qualification €50.00 per person. Once an individual has crossed over to EBAss/ECB they will be subject to review & renewal as detailed above.

7.5 Duration of Grandfathering Scheme:

The Grandfathering scheme will run from January 2010 for a period of 2 years (January 2012) following this, the only route for an individual to gain EBAss certification will be via completion of examination as detailed in this document.

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