

Education and Training of Medical Physics in Japan

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Japan has a board certification process already been in place. JRS (Japan Radiological Society) has a committee for certification of “Medical Physicist” by her own definition. Such “Medical Physicist” does not always mean clinical medical physicist. Paper examination by JRS is rather in high level with wide spectrum. Only two to seven years of clinical job experience depending on examinee’s original profession or academic history is required to take the board certification after the paper examination. Content, level and scope of the clinical experience are not required to be presented and examined, but verification by head of the clinical organization is mandatory. The board certified physicists need to be re-certified every 2 years by submitting proposition with their list of research works during those 2 years.

The number of “medical physicists” is now 383 as of 2007. Many of the recent new members are radiological technologists who have been actually taking charge of medical practices in hospitals.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology started a program of development of professionals involving medical physicists for cancer therapy in 2007. JRS has been trying to fix Medical Physics Education/Training Guideline in accordance with the Governmental approach above mentioned. AAPM Reports No.79, No.90 and CAMPEP methodology are the basis of this guideline.

On the other hand, IAEA.RCA project RAS6038 “Strengthening medical physics through education and training” which started 6 years ago is now really in intensive activity. If we could discuss the way of implementation of international board certification process, my unofficial opinion is that IAEA’s program for training medical physicists could be one of possible candidates, because the program is aiming at the global standard in addition to flexibility to cope with requirement from developing countries.