



ABA Update

SAAAPM 2025 Annual Meeting

AASPD

Robert Isaak, D.O., ABA Director

Jill Eckert, D.O., ABA Director



Our Mission

To advance the highest standards of the practice of anesthesiology



Our Vision

To transform certification to shape the future of anesthesiology



Our Director Values



Serve the Specialty



Listen and Engage



Lead the Way to Elevate Standards

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ALEX MACARIO, M.D., MBA

Thank You

Strategic Plan Updates



Focusing on Our Strategic Plan

- **Strategy 1:** Reimagine the Future of Assessments
- **Strategy 2:** Develop a Seamless Continuing Certification System
- **Strategy 3:** Evolve Certification Content to Emphasize a Durable (Formerly Holistic) Skill Set
- **Strategy 4:** Take the Lead in Envisioning the Future of the Specialty
- **Strategy 5:** Engage Residents and Programs Early
- **Strategy 6:** Invest in Research to Drive Innovation
- **Strategy 7:** Invest in Volunteer Development



**We encourage you
to view the entire
plan on our website
here:**



High Priority Topics Report

- Biennially, we develop and share a High Priority Topics Report (HPTR) that provides actionable insights about CME that board-certified anesthesiologists need most to develop and maintain their unique knowledge and skills
- Multi-page report is shared with CME providers based on MOCA Minute data by Content Outline Category
- We are generating subspecialty reports that will be published in late January 2026

Strategy 1: Reimagine the Future of Assessments

ABA

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ANESTHESIOLOGY

2025 Q1-Q2 MOCA Minute High-Priority Topics Report by Content Outline Category

Clinical Sciences: Anesthesia Procedures, Methods and Techniques

	Key Point	ABA Blueprint Code	Level 2 Blueprint Category	CME Activity Count
1	Oral carbohydrate loading prior to elective surgery may reduce hospital length of stay.	III.A.3 Standards and Guidelines	Patient Evaluation and Preoperative Preparation	22
2	Improved outcomes may be seen with smoking cessation at any time prior to surgery.	III.B.2 Respiratory System	Perioperative Management of Patients with Chronic Disease States	7

Organ-Based Basic and Clinical Sciences

	Key Point	ABA Blueprint Code	Level 2 Blueprint Category	CME Activity Count
3	Acetaminophen can be safely administered to patients with cirrhosis for treatment of acute postoperative pain.	IV.D.3 Pharmacology	Gastrointestinal/Hepatic Systems	0

1

You can find the current and previous reports on our website here:

A square QR code with a blue and white pixelated pattern, used for quick access to the report's website.

Addition to Content Outlines: Leadership, Management and Professionalism

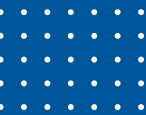
- Conducting Delphi study to support effort: We will be engaging you in this study
- Hosted 10 focus groups with 30 APPLIED examiners
- Generated 572 coded themes related to leadership, professionalism and management
- Decision-making, communication and being a role model were present across each domain

Strategy 3: Evolve Certification Content to Emphasize a Durable (Formerly “Holistic”) Skill Set

Strategy 5: Engage Residents and Programs Early

Introducing Resident Reach

- Resident Reach is a new formative assessment tool that will provide supplemental knowledge and offer insight and feedback on residents' medical knowledge throughout training
- It is meant to spark conversation and learning between residents and attendings, and is not a question bank
- Inspired by MOCA Minute, but distinctly different, offering different question types, questions volume, frequency and times to complete
- Piloted using Survey Monkey in late 2024 and planning a broader pilot including more programs in 2026



Strategy 5: Engage Residents and Programs Early

Resident Advisory Group



Anna Arakelyan, M.D.
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA



Alexandra Brady, M.D.
NEW YORK PRESBYTERIAN/
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



Alexis Cash, D.O.
PENN STATE HERSEY
MEDICAL CENTER



John Choi, D.O.
MOUNT SINAI
MORNINGSIDE



Lukas Hall, M.D.
UNIVERSITY OF
KANSAS WICHITA



Mercedes Alaina Harvey, D.O.
MCLAREN GREATER
LANSING HOSPITAL



Kian Lari, M.D.
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA



Abigail Schirmer, M.D.
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



Jasmine Tuteja, M.D.
NORTH SHORE UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL/LONG ISLAND
JEWISH MEDICAL CENTER



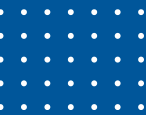
Parisa Ziarati, M.D., MPH
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA/LOS ANGELES
GENERAL MEDICAL CENTER

Strategy 5: Engage Residents and Programs Early

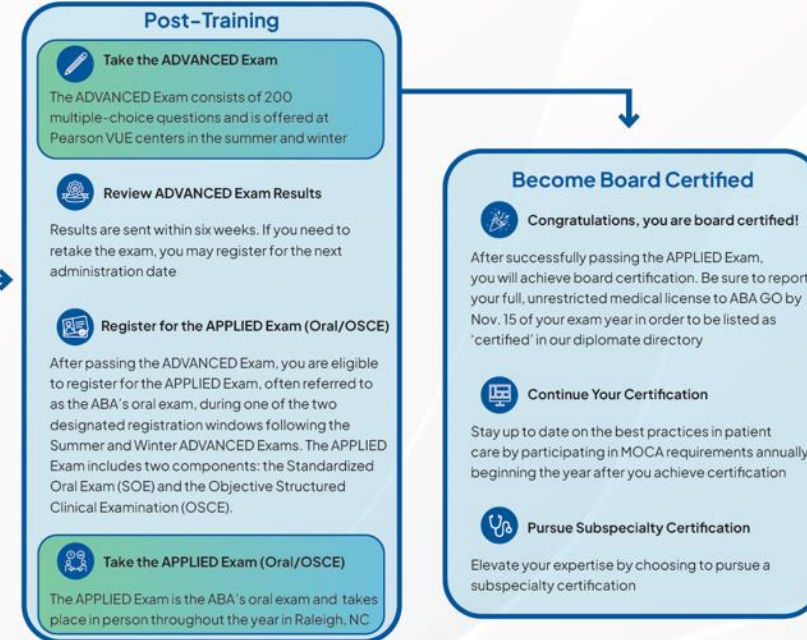
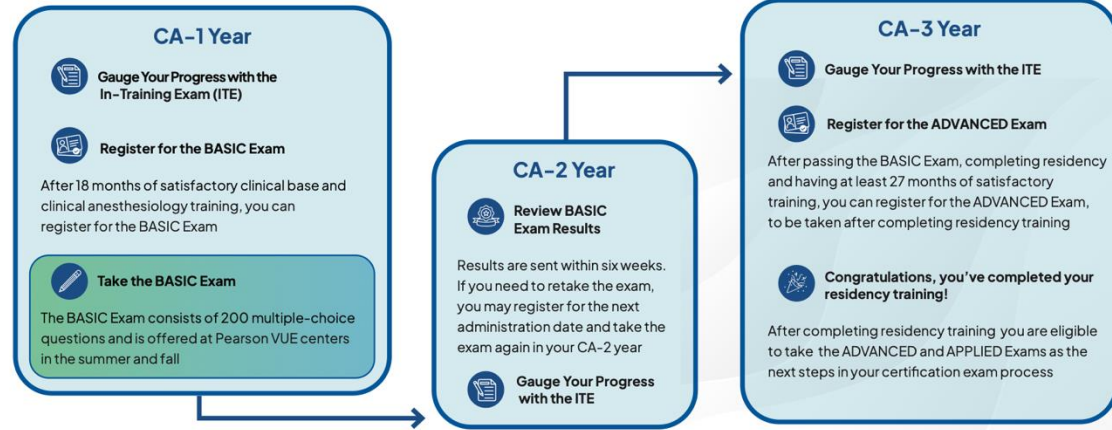
Resident Advisory Group

Initial meetings have provided invaluable feedback, including:

- Residents value board certification because patients trust board-certified anesthesiologists, and it promotes patient safety
- Programs share information about the certification process during CA–1 Year, but the timing and level of detail varies
- Residents are confused regarding the initial certification exam timing, registration, ordering and the name APPLIED Exam because most call it the Oral/OSCE Exam
- We've created a new timeline brochure and will provide Program toolkits in 2026 to help



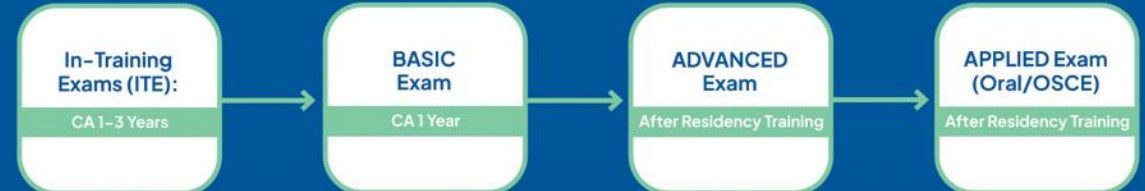
Your Journey with Board Certification



What sets apart board-certified anesthesiologists?



ABA Exam Timeline at a Glance



Program Coordinator Essentials Guide

- Developed new resource to support Program Coordinators documenting residents' and fellows' board certification journey
- Document provides:
 - Key information and timelines for ABA certification exams
 - Instructions for accessing and using the Record of Training Information Database (RTID)
 - Guidance on submitting training records and feedback
 - Details on how to contact the ABA

**Download the
Program
Coordinator
Essentials
Guide here:**



ABA Teams Supporting Program Directors

Credentialing & Continuing Certification

Specialist assigned to each program;
manages case reviews & MOCA

Research

Study efficacy of certification
programs, physician wellness
and other topics of interest

Assessments

Exam development, administration
& registration; on-call during
exams to support candidates at
testing centers; reviews
nonstandard exam cases

Events & Operations

Support APPLIED Exams, 30+
committee meetings/events

Development & Infrastructure

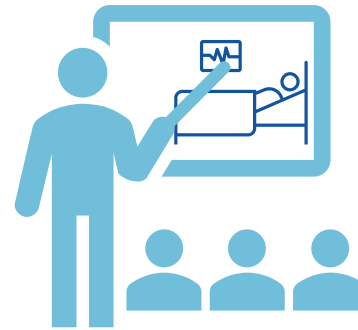
Support technical needs of ABA
GO, RTID and AIME Center

Communications & Marketing

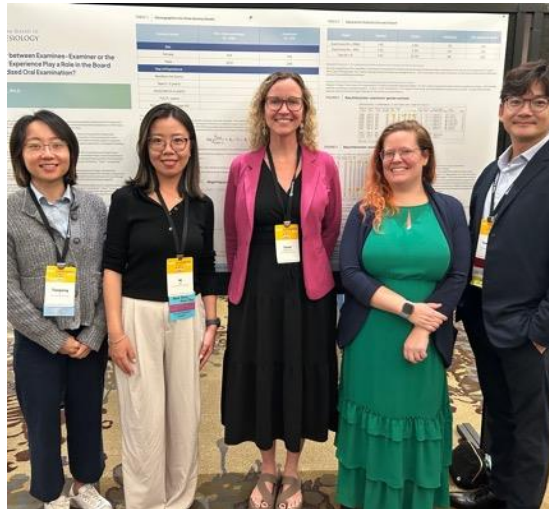
Generate progress reports,
Exam & MOCA information
for anesthesiologists,
newsletters for programs

Physician Engagement

Provide a human touch for physicians
who call/email the ABA

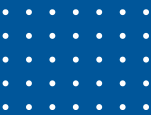


87 Positions Across 11 Teams



Mission Critical: Advancing the Highest Standards

- By the end of 2025, we will have:
 - Administered **12** written exams to **13,747** registered candidates
 - Administered **6** weeks of APPLIED Exams, including OSCE and SOE components to **2,752** registered candidates
 - Added more than **2,200** newly developed written questions to our item banks and...



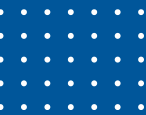
Mission Critical: Advancing the Highest Standards

- ...we couldn't do it without our **700+** volunteers who serve as examiners and/or support our **20** committees that develop questions and exams



Investing in the Future

- Investing in modernizing infrastructure to enhance ABA GO for seamless user experience (e.g., APPLIED Exam registration)
- Managing APPLIED Exam capacity to ensure all eligible candidates have an exam opportunity
- Experimenting with Artificial Intelligence to enhance efficiencies and close diplomate feedback loops
- Generating programming for network of more than 700 volunteers who develop and deliver ABA assessments
- Investing in research and people needed to advance innovation



Subspecialty Exam Eligibility

- New policy provides fellows an opportunity to take both the APPLIED and subspecialty exam within the same year regardless of the date of their APPLIED Exam
- Previously the ABA would prioritize fellows during the APPLIED Exam registration to ensure they are certified before taking their subspecialty exam
- Beginning with fellows enrolled in an ACGME program as of July 1, 2024, fellows will be able to:
 - Register for the APPLIED Exam
 - Register for their subspecialty exam
 - If their subspecialty exam takes place before their APPLIED Exam date they can bank their subspecialty scores until they pass the APPLIED Exam or until the candidate's duration expires

New Policy!
Now Effective

In-Training Examination (ITE) Key Dates

2026 In-Training Exam Dates			
Exam Name	Code	Exam Dates	Registration Window
ITE-Pediatric Anesthesiology	ITE-Peds	Feb. 19-21, 2026	Dec. 1-19, 2025
ITE-Critical Care Medicine	ITE-CCM	March 12-14, 2026	Jan. 19-Feb 19, 2026
ITE-Pain Medicine	ITE-PM	March 19-21, 2026	Jan. 19-Feb 19, 2026
2027 In-Training Exam Dates			
Exam Name	Code	Exam Dates	Registration Window
ITE-Pediatric Anesthesiology	ITE-Peds	Feb. 18-20, 2027	TBD
ITE-Critical Care Medicine	ITE-CCM	March 11-13, 2027	TBD
ITE-Pain Medicine	ITE-PM	March 18-20, 2027	TBD
2028 In-Training Exam Dates			
Exam Name	Code	Exam Dates	Registration Window
ITE-Pediatric Anesthesiology	ITE-Peds	Feb. 17-19, 2028	TBD
ITE-Critical Care Medicine	ITE-CCM	March 9-11, 2028	TBD
ITE-Pain Medicine	ITE-PM	March 16-18, 2028	TBD

**ITE dates are now
available through
2028 on our
website**

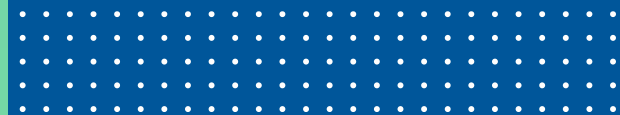
Subspecialty Assessment Updates

2024 ACA Exam Results

- Standard 2024: 73.0% (Scale Score = 167)
- Key validation eliminated ten items
- Reliability: 0.77

495
candidates
examined

92.9%
of candidates
passed

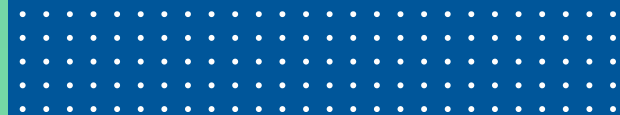


2024 CCM Exam Results

- Standard 2020: 66.0% (Scale Score = 187)
- Key validation eliminated six items
- Reliability: 0.87

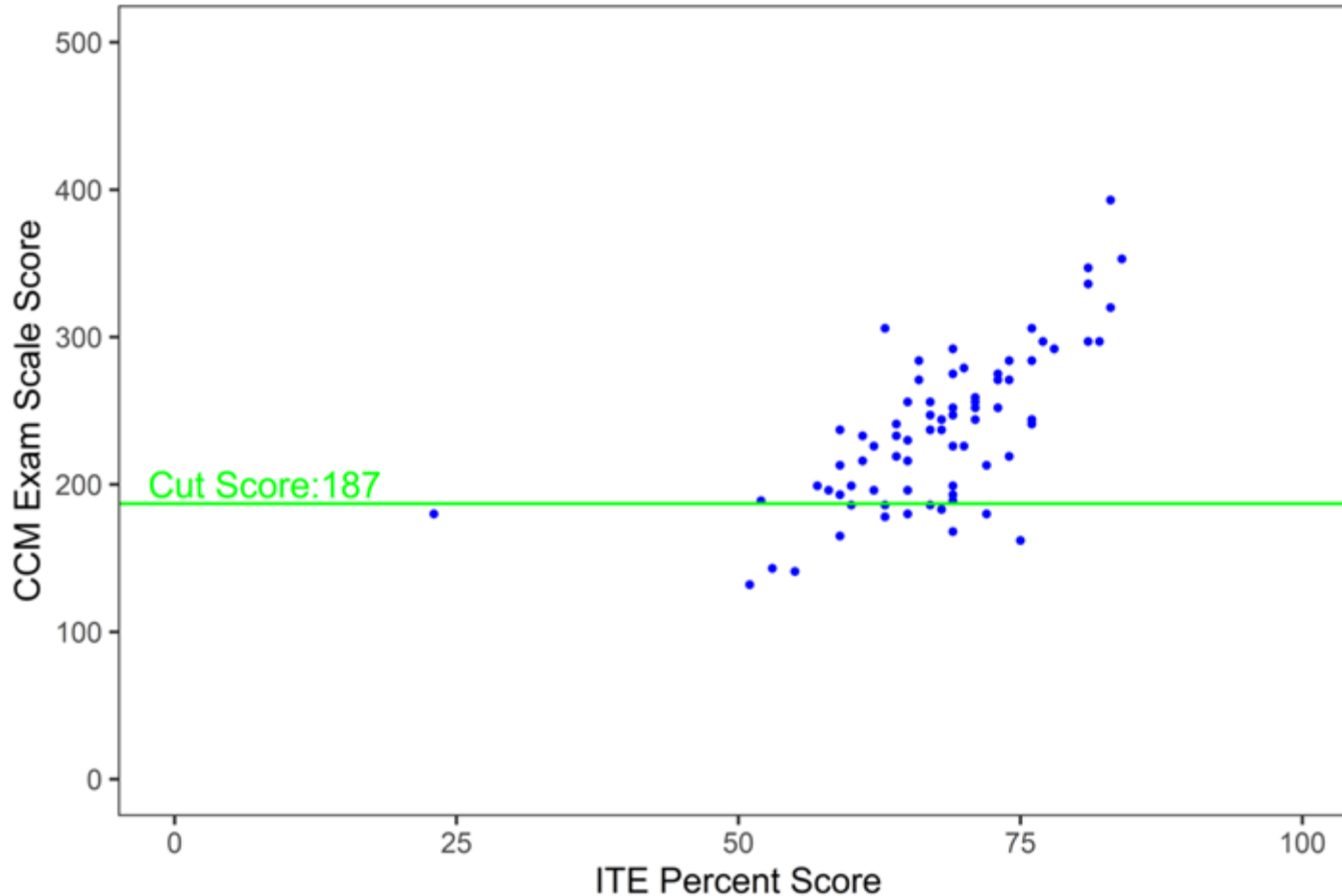
178
candidates
examined

72.0%
of candidates
passed



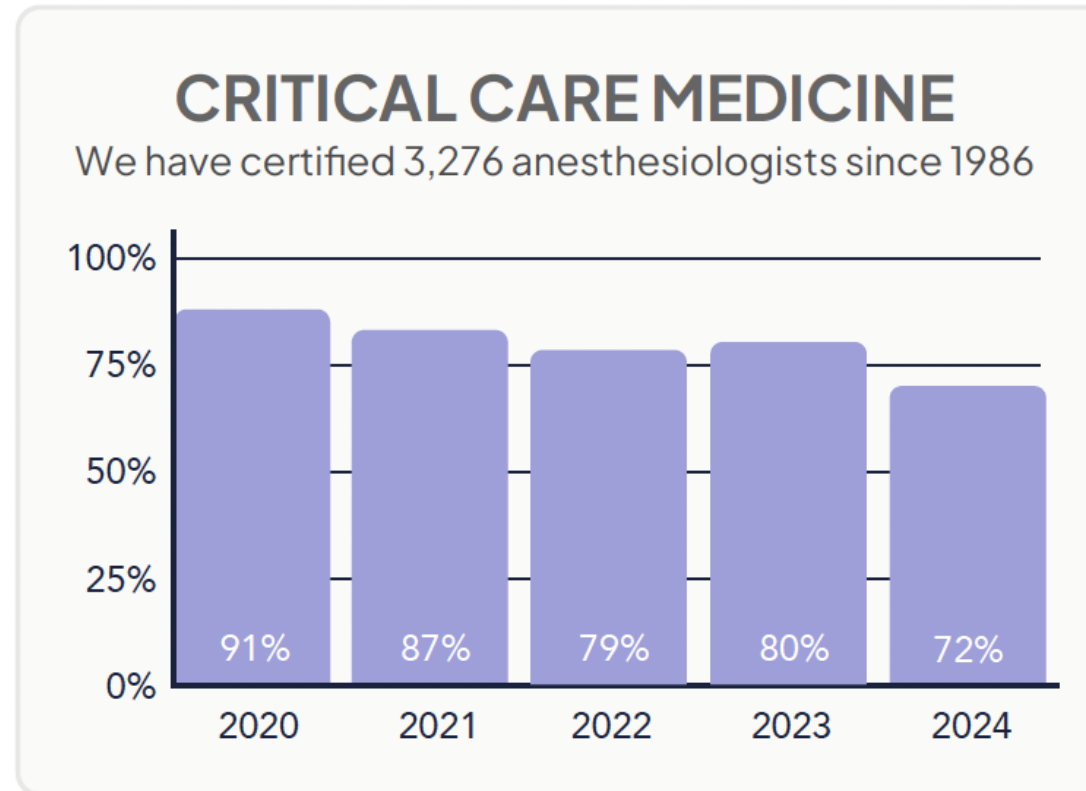
Relation of Scores

2024 ITE Through CCM Exam



The correlation between 2024 ITE-CCM scaled scores and 2024 CCM Exam scaled Scores is 0.68 (n=81, $p < 0.001$)

CCM Success Rates



Success rates for all candidates (first-time takers and re-takers)

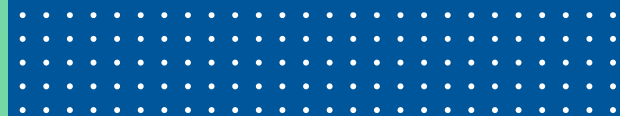
2024 Pediatric Anesthesiology (PA) Exam Results

- All 3-options items since 2020
- New Standard since 2020: Scale Score = 186
- Key validation eliminated 6 items from the form
- Reliability: 0.70

*: based on recent graduates only.

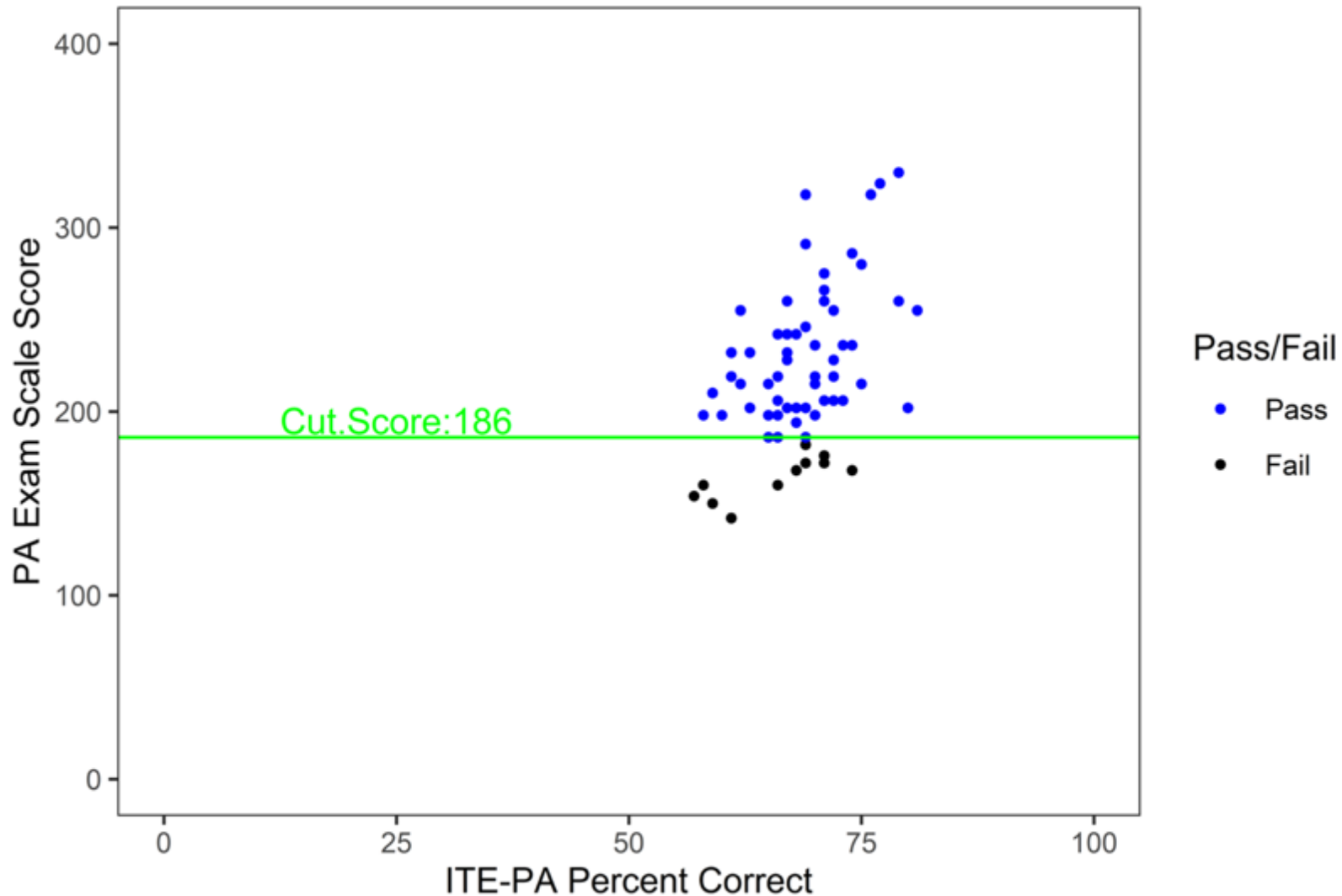
201
candidates*
examined

79.1%
of candidates*
passed



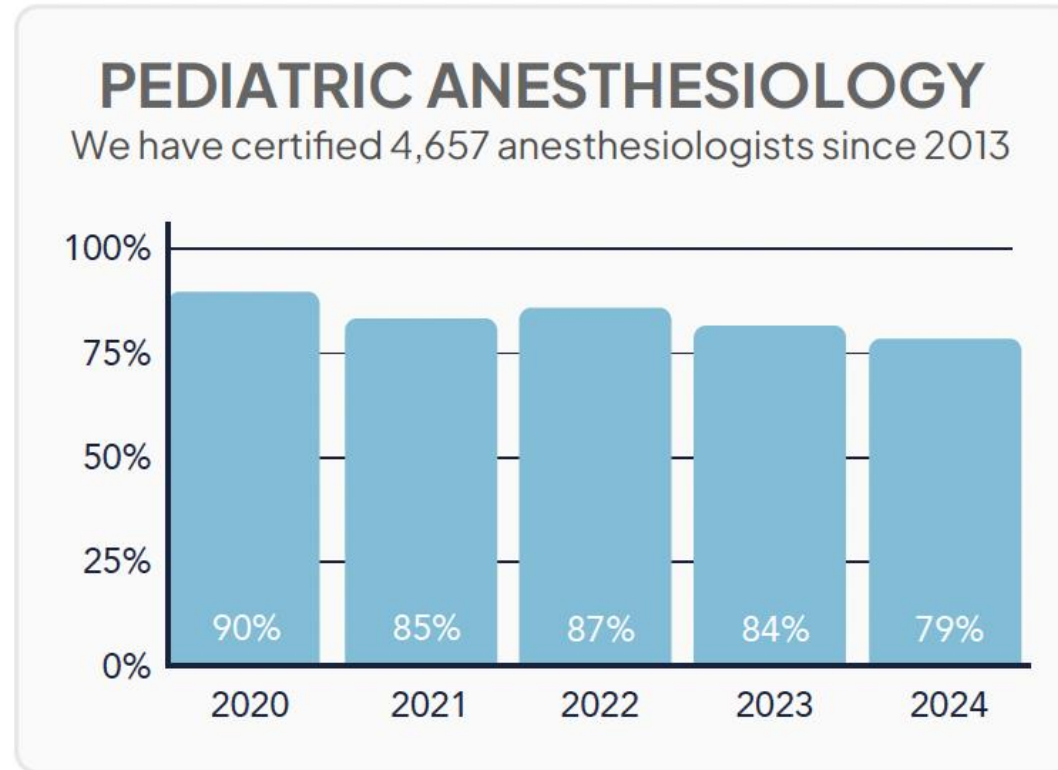
Relation of Scores

2024 ITE-PA vs 2024 PA Exam



The correlation between 2024 ITE-PA percent correct and 2024 PA Exam Scale Scores is 0.50, $p < 0.001$. (N = 70)

PA Success Rates



Success rates for all candidates (first-time takers and re-takers)

2024 Pain Medicine (PM) Exam Results

- All 3-options items since 2022
- New Standard since 2022: 69.5% (Scale Score = 193)
- Key validation eliminated 9 items from the form
- Reliability: 0.74

*: based on recent graduates only.

317

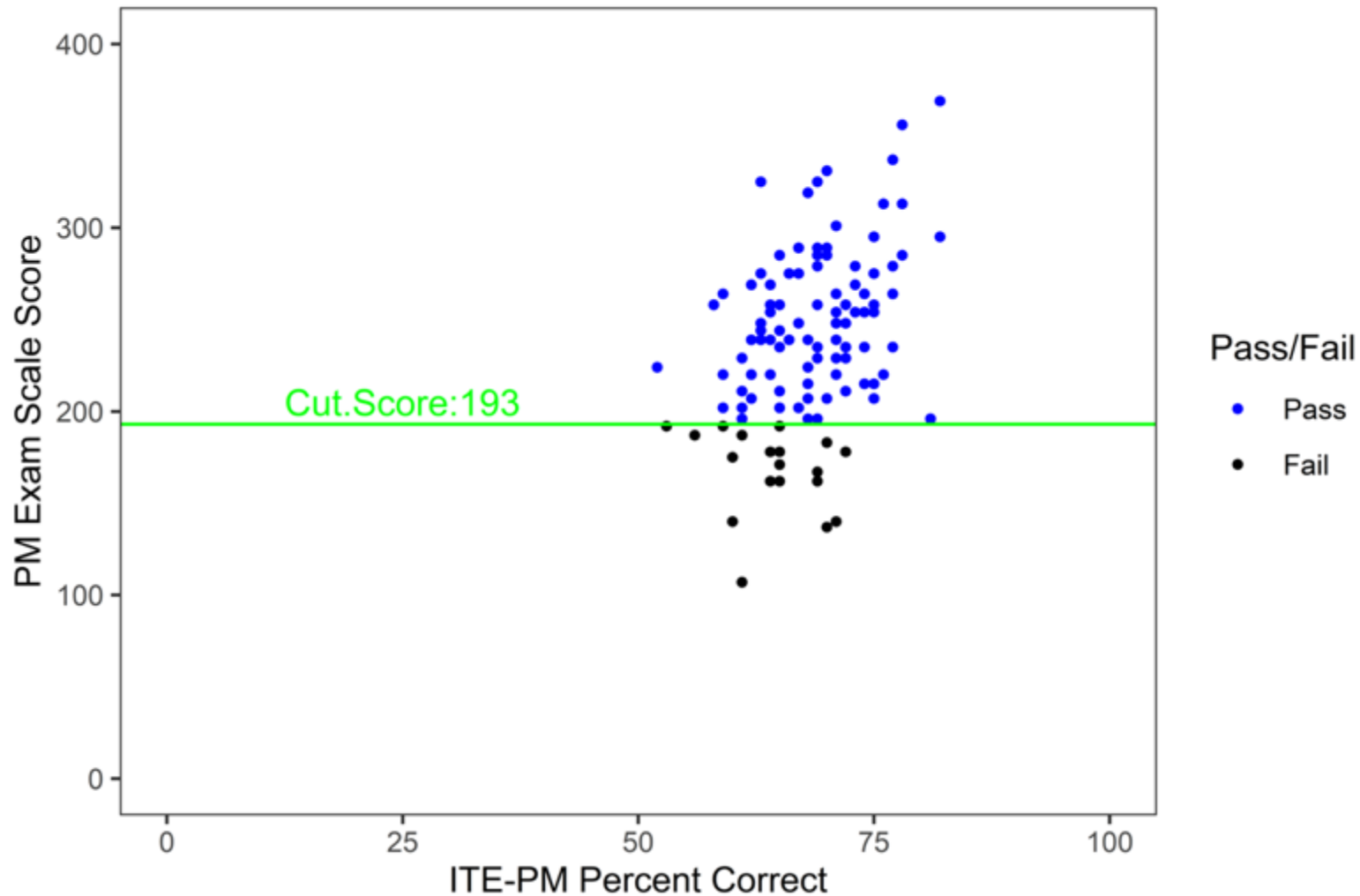
candidates*
examined

80.4%

of candidates*
passed

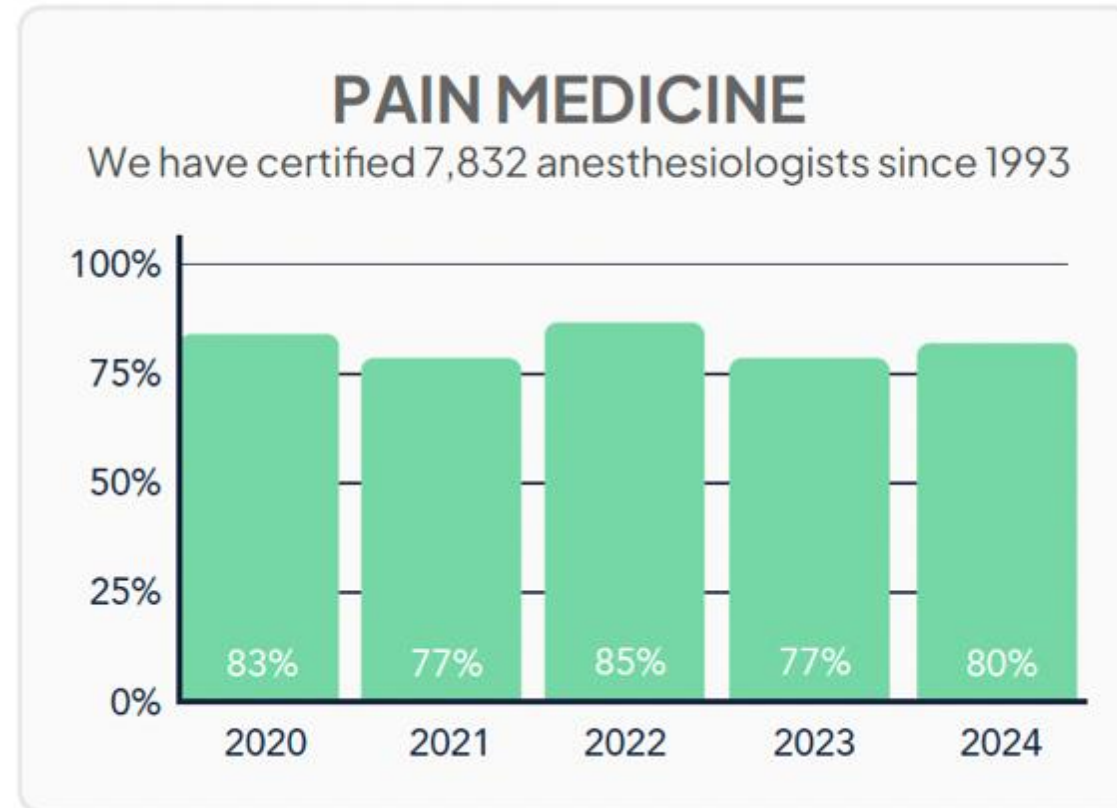
Relation of Scores

2024 ITE-PM vs 2024 PM Exam



The correlation between 2024 ITE-PM percent correct and 2024 PM Exam Scale Scores is 0.44, $p < 0.001$. (N = 129)

PM Success Rates

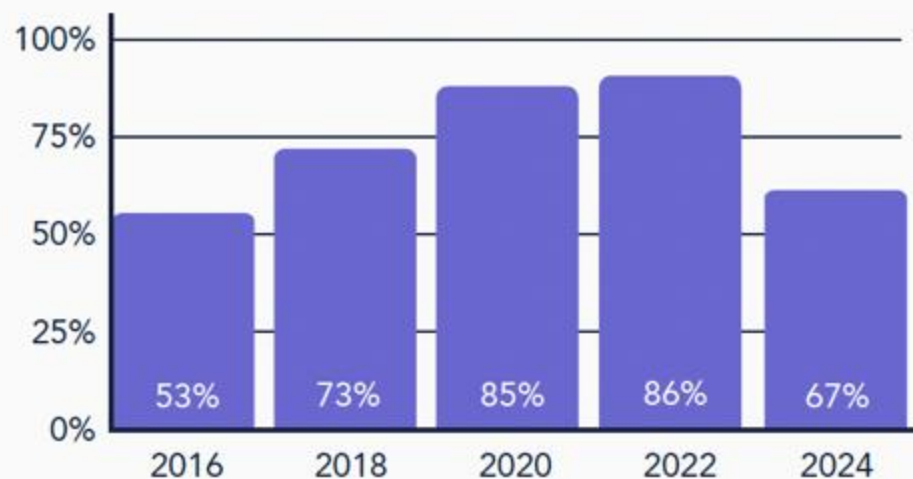


Success rates for all candidates (first-time takers and re-takers)

Success Rates for Exams Administered by The American Board of Internal Medicine

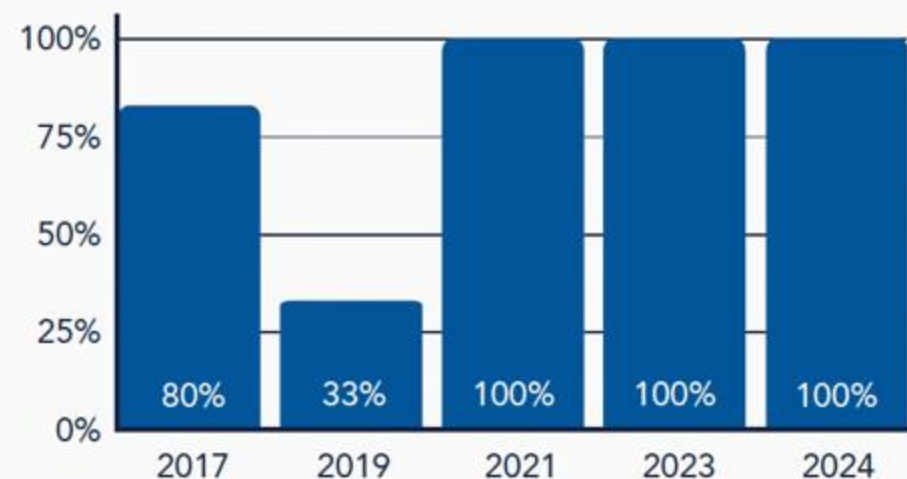
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE MEDICINE

We have certified 163 anesthesiologists since 2008*



SLEEP MEDICINE

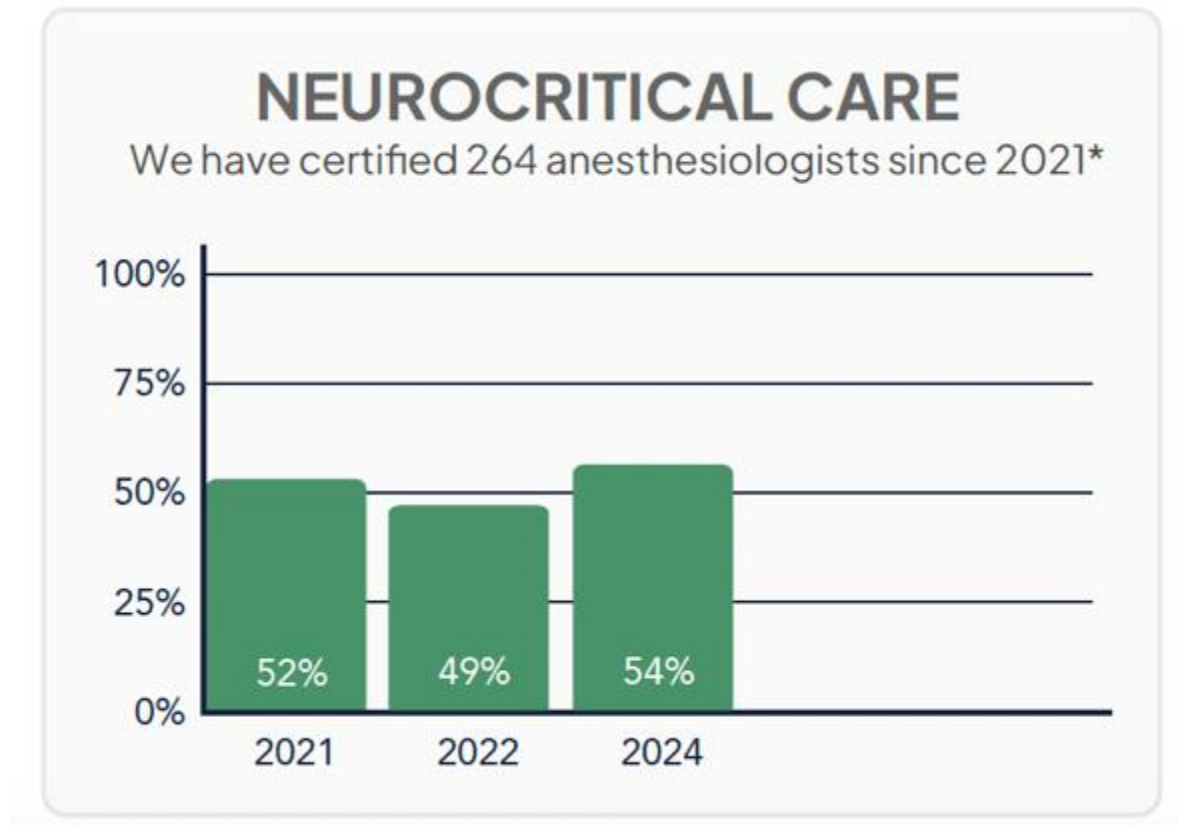
We have certified 24 anesthesiologists since 2011



Success rates for all candidates (first-time takers and re-takers)

*The HPM and NCC Examinations are administered every other year

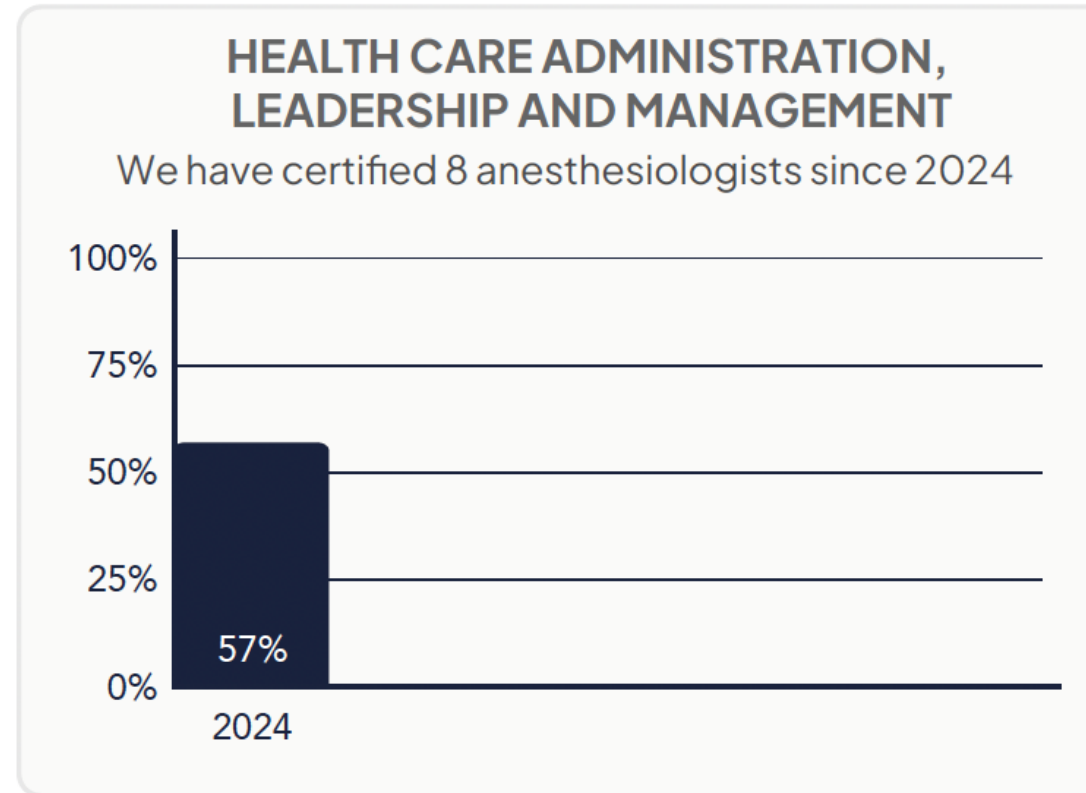
Success Rates for Exams Administered by The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology



Success rates for all candidates (first-time takers and re-takers)

*The HPM and NCC Examinations are administered every other year

Success Rates for Exams Administered by The American Board of Emergency Medicine



We Are Here To Help.



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Questions?

