

AMERICAN BOARD OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE Emergency Behavioral Health Eligibility Criteria

Physicians seeking to take the focused practice designation examination in Emergency Behavioral Health (EBH) must:

1. Be certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) or certified in Psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) and considered to be in good standing by each Board
2. Complete and submit the application to ABEM
3. Actively participate in the ABEM continuing certification requirements (or those of the sponsoring Board) at the time of application and throughout the certification process
4. Fulfill the [Policy on Medical Licensure](#)

Additionally, the physician must fulfill the eligibility criteria for one of three application pathways:

1. Training Pathway
2. Training-Plus-Practice Pathway
3. Practice-Only Pathway

The EBH Training-Plus-Practice Pathway and Practice-only Pathway will remain open without time limits.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Training Pathway

The Training Pathway requires that physicians successfully complete an <ABEM-approved> EBH fellowship program, once established, that is a minimum of one year. For physicians who apply through the Training Pathway, ABEM will seek independent verification of the physician's successful completion of the EBH fellowship program from the fellowship program director. The physician must successfully complete the fellowship training program by the date of the examination in the year in which the application is submitted.

Training-Plus-Practice Pathway

To apply for the FPD through the Training-Plus-Practice Pathway, a physician must meet all of the following criteria:

- The physician must successfully complete an American Association of Emergency Psychiatry (AAEP)–approved fellowship of at least one year in EBH.
- Demonstrate that within the seven years (84 months) immediately preceding the

date on which they submit their EBH application, the physician must demonstrate that she or he holds or previously held a position for a minimum of 24 months that provides or provided direct care or supervision of the care of emergency behavioral health patients. Additionally, of those designated 24 months, a minimum of 0.25 FTE of the physician's time is/was devoted to the care of behavioral health patients.* The 24 months do not need to be contiguous.

Acceptable EBH Practice Experience and Responsibilities for the Training-Plus-Practice Pathway

The physician must demonstrate that she or he holds or previously held a position for a minimum of 24 months that provides or provided direct care or supervision of the care of emergency behavioral health patients. Additionally, of that total number of months, a minimum of 0.25 FTE of the physician's time is/was devoted to the care of emergency behavioral health patients through one or more of the following areas:

- **Direct Emergency Behavioral Health Patient Care**
 - Provision of direct emergency behavioral health care in the physician's practice of sufficient rigor (e.g., emergency department, psychiatry, community mental health, etc.). An additional narrative explanation of such care may be required.
- **Education**
 - Responsible for leading educational initiatives on emergency behavioral health to emergency physicians, psychiatrists, and residents/fellows and health systems (e.g., faculty, department or system liaison, or representative).
- **Talent management**
 - Oversight and management of emergency behavioral health physicians and other care providers (e.g., emergency physicians, nursing, social worker, behavioral health therapist, counselor) to include staff evaluations and indirect or direct supervision of care provided by behavioral health clinicians.
- **Fiscal management**
 - Oversight and management of billing and coding, reimbursement, and financing for behavioral health treatment.
 - Participates in major negotiations with payers and state and federal legislative bodies to increase funding for care.
- **Regulatory oversight**
 - Leading organizations through regulatory, accreditation, or certification processes, such as Joint Commission, SAMHSA, etc.
- **Care coordination**
 - Oversight and management of the care continuum between the acute care intervention and transition to ongoing long-term behavioral health treatment (e.g., outpatient, community mental health, etc.)
 - Leads initiatives to optimize care of behavioral health patients to minimize length of stay pending definitive treatment plan.

By way of examples and not limitation, administrative positions or clinical care roles that may be considered eligible provided that the position meets the functional responsibility noted

above, could include:

1. Emergency department director/liaison for behavioral health services
2. Medical director for behavioral health services
3. Director of Crisis Services
4. Director of Behavioral Health Clinical Decision Units (CDUs)
5. Director of Hospital-based (including emergency department) Behavioral Health Unit
6. Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist
7. Director of Crisis Services
8. Director of Psychiatric Emergency Services (PESs)
9. Director of Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs)
10. Director of Emergency Psychiatry Assessment, Treatment, and Healing (EmPATH) Units
11. Director of ACCESS line (e.g., 24-hour mental health line, #988, etc.)
12. Director of Mobile Mental Health Crisis Unit
13. Director of Regional Dedicated Behavioral Health or Psychiatric Emergency Department
14. Medical Director Community Mental Health Center
15. City/County/State Director of Behavioral Health Services
16. Government or Correctional Agency Director of Behavioral Health Services

***ABEM will require verification of EBH experience, including time spent providing direct emergency behavioral health care, by an individual who served as a direct supervisor to the position/role during the same time as the experience occurred (e.g., Department Chair/Chief, Chief Medical Officer, Vice-President Medical Affairs). ABEM reserves the right to request a copy of a job description, organizational chart, and/or CV/resume to provide clarifying information for any application.*

Practice-Only Pathway

To apply for certification through the Practice-Only Pathway, a physician must meet all the following criteria:

- Demonstrate that within the seven years (84 months) immediately preceding the date on which they submit their EBH application, the physician must demonstrate that she or he holds or previously held a position for a minimum of 36 months that provides or provided direct care or supervision of the care of emergency behavioral health patients. Additionally, of that designated 36 months, a minimum of 0.25 FTE of the physician's time is/was devoted to the care of emergency behavioral health patients.* The 36 months do not need to be contiguous.

****Acceptable EBH Practice Experience and Responsibilities for the Practice-Only Pathway***

The physician must demonstrate that she or he holds or previously held a position for a minimum of 36 months that provides or provided direct care or supervision of the care of emergency behavioral health patients. Additionally, of that total number of months, a minimum of 0.25 FTE of the physician's time is/was devoted to the care of behavioral health

patients through one or more of the following areas:

- **Direct emergency behavioral health patient care**
 - Provision of direct emergency behavioral health care in the physician's practice of sufficient rigor (e.g., emergency department, psychiatry, community mental health, etc.). An additional narrative explanation of such care may be required.
- **Education**
 - Responsible for leading educational initiatives on emergency behavioral health to emergency physicians, psychiatrists, and residents/fellows and health systems (e.g., faculty, department or system liaison or representative).
- **Talent management**
 - Oversight and management of emergency behavioral health physicians and other care providers (e.g., emergency physicians, nursing, social worker, behavioral health therapist, counselor) to include staff evaluations and indirect or direct supervision of care provided by behavioral health clinicians.
- **Fiscal management**
 - Oversight and management of billing and coding, reimbursement, and financing for behavioral health treatment.
 - Participates in major negotiations with payers and state and federal legislative bodies to increase funding for care.
- **Regulatory oversight**
 - Leading organizations through regulatory, accreditation, or certification processes, such as Joint Commission, SAMHSA, etc.
- **Care coordination**
 - Oversight and management of the care continuum between the acute care intervention and transition to ongoing long-term behavioral health treatment (e.g., outpatient, community mental health, etc.)
 - Leads initiatives to optimize care of behavioral health patients to minimize length of stay pending definitive treatment plan.

By way of examples and not limitation, administrative positions or clinical care roles that may be considered eligible provided that the position meets the functional responsibility noted above could include:

1. Emergency department director/liaison for behavioral health services
2. Medical director for behavioral health services
3. Director of Crisis Services
4. Director of Behavioral Health Clinical Decision Units (CDUs)
5. Director of Hospital-based (including emergency department) Behavioral Health Unit
6. Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist
7. Director of Crisis Services
8. Director of Psychiatric Emergency Services (PESs)
9. Director of Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs)
10. Director of Emergency Psychiatry Assessment, Treatment, and Healing (EmPATH) Units
11. Director of ACCESS line (e.g., 24-hour mental health line, #988, etc.)
12. Director of Mobile Mental Health Crisis Unit
13. Director of Regional Dedicated Behavioral Health or Psychiatric Emergency

Department

14. Medical Director Community Mental Health Center
15. City/County/State Director of Behavioral Health Services
16. Government or Correctional Agency Director of Behavioral Health Services

***ABEM will require verification of EBH experience, including time spent providing direct emergency behavioral health care, by an individual who served as a direct supervisor to the position/role during the same time as the experience occurred (e.g., Department Chair/Chief, Chief Medical Officer, Vice-President Medical Affairs). ABEM reserves the right to request a copy of a job description, organizational chart, and/or CV/resume to provide clarifying information for any application.*