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A pioneer in menopause research, Dr. Utian founded the world's first menopause clinic in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1966 and established the Cleveland Menopause Clinic in 1983.

Recipient of many research grants and awards, he is the author of more than 150 scientific publications and five books. He is the Honorary Past-President of the International Menopause Society and Honorary Founding President and Executive Director of The North American Menopause Society. He is also Chairman of the Council of Affiliated Menopause Societies (CAMS) of the International Menopause Society.

# NAMS Menopause Clinician and Educator Competency Examinations Explained

September 6, 2000, represented another milestone in the evolution of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS), as the first groups sat for the NAMS/NCC competency examinations for Menopause Clinicians and for Menopause Educators. After very careful consideration, the concept of implementing such examinations had been approved earlier by the NAMS Board of Trustees, and is in compliance with two key points in the NAMS Mission/Vision Statement:

- Promote teaching and continuing medical education for healthcare providers regarding biomedical science and clinical care related to menopause.
- Improve quality of life for peri- and postmenopausal women.

In essence, the purpose of these competency examinations is to raise the bar of expectation of knowledge and quality of care around menopause.

As the leading nonprofit scientific organization dedicated to the understanding of menopause, NAMS has been asked by thousands of consumers to recommend physicians and other healthcare professionals who have expertise in the field of menopause. To this end, NAMS has provided names of Society members over the past few years. With this new mechanism NAMS will also be able to distribute the names of those who have earned a certificate of added competency.

The two examinations offered are for the "Menopause Clinician," those living in the United States or Canada who are licensed to diagnose and prescribe, such as physicians and nurse practitioners, and the "Menopause Educator," those licensed in the United States or Canada to provide counseling regarding menopause, such as nurses, pharmacists and psychologists.

The division of responsibility in providing these examinations is clearly delineated by NAMS and its partner in this effort, the National Certification Corporation for the Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing Specialties (NCC). The focus of the collaboration has been on sharing of content expertise; NAMS provided members for the content team that developed the examinations, as well as reviewers and other content experts who took part in the test development process. NAMS was involved in the decision making regarding eligibility criteria for taking the examinations. NCC has sole responsibility for coordinating test development activities, for administering the examinations and for conducting their psychometric review.

A point of particular importance is that a certification of added qualification provides proof of achievement of the level of competency; it carries no regulatory authority for licensure, nor does it represent subspecialty board certification. Neither NAMS nor the NCC establishes practice or educational standards. Although such standards are incorporated into the testing process, the responsibility for the development of practice standards rests with the professional specialty organizations and the educational community. NAMS believes that a prime objective of enhanced quality of care for

