Feedback from Biofeedback Certification Institute of America (BCIA) certificants and noncertificants has resulted in the expansion of our certification programs and simplification of our lapsed certification policy. This article discusses our new Academic and Technician-Level Certifications, how professionals who have allowed their credential to lapse may be reinstated, and how these innovative policies help to achieve BCIA’s mission.

Since Biofeedback Certification Institute of America’s (BCIA’s) inception, our certification programs have set professional education and training standards for licensed clinicians and the unlicensed professionals they supervise. We have traditionally offered three types of certification: General Biofeedback, Neurofeedback, and Pelvic Muscle Dysfunction Biofeedback. When earned through the traditional route, these three certifications establish that an individual has met entry-level requirements for the clinical practice of biofeedback or neurofeedback through didactic training, personal self-regulation training, case conferencing, clinical patient/client hours, mentoring, and successfully passing an exam. Our certificants demonstrate advancement beyond entry level by earning a minimum of 55 hours of continuing education (CE) with each 4-year recertification cycle. Those certified in Pelvic Muscle Dysfunction Biofeedback must earn 36 hours of CE within each 3-year period.

In 2007, we began a new program of Certification by Prior Experience (CPE). CPE is designed for licensed clinicians who have advanced far beyond the entry level in biofeedback/neurofeedback skills and experience. Requirements for achieving CPE certification include completion of 100 hours of CE and a minimum of 3,000 direct patient/
process every 4 years as traditional certificants, including 55 earned CE hours.

**Technician-Level Certification**

Technician-Level Certification is intended for individuals who treat medical/psychological disorders under a supervisor’s license and lack a clinical degree. As with traditional and Academic Certifications, they must have earned 48 hours of accredited didactic education for General Biofeedback or 36 hours for Neurofeedback. They must document 10 contact hours with a BCIA-approved mentor that cover instrumentation, sensor placements, and personal self-regulation and complete 20 supervised patient sessions. In addition, they must demonstrate study in human anatomy/physiology. Finally, they must pass the written certification exam. Four-year recertification requirements for Technician-Level certificants include 40 CE hours. Although individuals with Technician-Level Certification may attach sensors and treat medical/psychological disorders under supervision as allowed by state law, it is understood that their supervisor is ultimately responsible for diagnoses, treatment planning, and patient care.

**Rationale**

It is our hope that these two new certifications will help improve the recognition of competence for those qualified individuals who currently do not fit into the mold of traditional biofeedback and neurofeedback certification. We believe that these two new certifications promote our mission: “BCIA certifies individuals who meet education and training standards in biofeedback and progressively recertifies those who advance their knowledge through continuing education.”

By certifying the Technician-Level individual, we hope that nondegree persons who treat medical/psychological disorders under supervision will gain increased credibility by demonstrating that they have met minimum educational and training criteria. By certifying the nonclinical Academic certificant, we hope to encourage more rigorous education and training for the faculty who teach biofeedback and neurofeedback courses at universities and to help university researchers compete for grant and research funding by recognizing their expertise in our field.

**Lapsed Certification Policy**

Although BCIA has a high rate of recertification, a small number of our professionals allow their credential to lapse due to reasons such as career changes. The BCIA Board has made it easier for our colleagues to reinstate their certification when they return to biofeedback/neurofeedback practice, while still ensuring that they maintain up-to-date knowledge of biofeedback and neurofeedback protocols and practice standards.

For those professionals whose certification has lapsed for 5 years or less, reinstatement will require 55 biofeedback/neurofeedback-specific accredited CE hours or the successful completion of the written certification exam. Accredited refers to coursework from a regionally-accredited academic institution or a national professional organization such as the American Medical Association, American Physical Therapy Association, American Nurses Association, or BCIA.

For those professionals whose certification has lapsed for between 5 and 10 years, reinstatement will require the same 55 biofeedback/neurofeedback-specific accredited CE hours plus documentation of one of the following: an active clinical practice of at least 300 direct patient/client contact hours within the last 5 years, an additional 20 hours of biofeedback-specific accredited CE, 20 hours of biofeedback-specific research publication or teaching, 5 hours of professional mentoring, or repetition of an entry-level didactic course, covering all blueprint areas, within the 55 hours of CE.

For those professionals whose certification has lapsed for more than 10 years, reinstatement will require 55 biofeedback/neurofeedback-specific accredited CE hours. An entry-level didactic course covering all blueprint areas must be part of the 55 CE hours. As with traditional certification, this didactic course will involve 48 hours for general biofeedback or 36 hours for neurofeedback. The didactic course must have been completed within the past 10 years. In addition, these professionals may take the written certification exam or document one of the following: an active clinical practice of at least 1,000 direct patient/client contact hours within the past 10 years, an additional 45 hours of biofeedback-specific continuing education, 45 hours of accredited biofeedback-specific research publication or teaching, or 10 hours of professional mentoring.

**Rationale**

Previously, fees for renewing a lapsed certification could exceed $400. The new lapsed certification policy dramatically reduces the financial burden of reinstatement. The fee for reinstating a lapsed certification is $300, which is only $75 more than the price of a traditional 4-year recertification and covers the additional BCIA staff time required to evaluate and process the lapsed certification.
application. We hope that this policy will encourage biofeedback and neurofeedback professionals who have let their certification lapse to reinstate their BCIA credential.

**Conclusion**

In an increasingly competitive public health environment, BCIA’s goal to promote excellence in biofeedback and neurofeedback education and training is more important than ever. The new Academic and Technician-Level Certifications and lapsed certification policy are innovative efforts to ensure that biofeedback/neurofeedback professionals are “more than qualified, BCIA Board certified!”

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