



Board Policies Related to Rural Centers Adopted September 25, 2012

Background: A subset of centers with difficulty in meeting NAEC's Guidelines are some level 3 epilepsy centers in rural areas. Two requirements are difficult for certain rural centers: the requirements for 2 epileptologists and at least 50 cases of video EEG per year. In recent years, several level 3 centers did not meet one of these criteria. The first was addressed when the NAEC Guidelines were revised in 2010: centers with one epileptologist can meet the level 3 standard if they are located in an "isolated geographic area." The recently approved board policies define the term "isolated geographic area" and call for Level 3 centers in isolated geographic areas that do not meet the 50-case threshold to submit additional data, which will serve as proxies to ensure that all level 3 centers provide high quality epilepsy care.

Policy - Definition of "isolated geographic areas" for the purposes of the exemption from the two epileptologist requirement: NAEC will use the federal definitions of Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas and Medically Underserved Areas to define "isolated geographic area." To be inclusive, any center whose county is designated as a mental health HPSA or an MUA would qualify as being located in an "isolated geographic area."

Policy - Additional data elements required from Level 3 Centers in "isolated geographic areas" that report fewer than 50 cases of video EEG: NAEC Guidelines set a standard of a minimum of 50 cases of video EEG annually for all Level 3 centers. However, level 3 centers that do not meet the criterion and are located in isolated geographic areas can provide other data as additional proxies for providing high-quality epilepsy care to be designated as level 3 centers. This data includes:

- The presence of regular multidisciplinary conferences to reflect a comprehensive approach to patient management
- Number of patients discussed in multidisciplinary conferences
- Presence of an agreement with a level 4 epilepsy center and participation in conferences with them