



**American Board of
Emergency Medicine**

**Emergency Medicine
Continuous Certification
(EMCC)**

Policies and Procedures

2011

**The mission of the American Board of Emergency Medicine is to
protect the public by promoting and sustaining the integrity,
quality, and standards of training in and practice of
Emergency Medicine.**

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ABEM, at its discretion, reserves the right to add to, eliminate, or modify its credential requirements, categories of application, and fees. Appropriate notice of such alterations will be published as necessary.

This book is revised annually and supersedes all previous publications of the American Board of Emergency Medicine regarding policies and procedures.

Introduction

This book is published by the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) to outline the policies and procedures of the Emergency Medicine Continuous Certification (EMCC) program.

Background

ABEM is a national medical specialty board that provides a certification process for physicians who successfully complete accredited training in Emergency Medicine. ABEM is a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

The ABEM Mission

The mission of the American Board of Emergency Medicine is to protect the public by promoting and sustaining the integrity, quality, and standards of training in and practice of Emergency Medicine.

The Board pursues that mission by being part of a process that provides the public with well-trained, high-quality emergency physicians. The Board believes that well-trained, high-quality emergency physicians will always be best for the American public.

ABEM Policy on Bias

It is the policy of ABEM that each applicant or candidate for certification, recertification, or ABMS Maintenance of Certification[®] (MOC) is entitled to, and will receive, an unbiased evaluation of his or her application and performance. All ABEM volunteers and staff are expected to maintain a standard of ethics that prohibits any misuse of position, protects the validity of the credentialing, examination, and MOC processes, and assures that each candidate will be evaluated solely on the merits of his or her application and performance. All such volunteers and staff are expected to refrain from comments or actions that could reasonably be perceived as discriminating against any applicant or candidate based on his or her age, race, gender, sexual preference, country of origin, or other status unrelated to the merits of his or her application and performance.

Overview and Background of EMCC

EMCC is an ABMS Maintenance of Certification[®] (MOC) program. It represents a shift from evaluation of Emergency Medicine knowledge every ten years, to annual certification activity and evaluation every ten

years. EMCC also represents a shift from paper-and-pencil to Internet- and computer-delivered certification activities.

The Four Components of EMCC

There are four components of the EMCC program. Each must be maintained in order for physicians to maintain certification beyond the year their certification expires. A brief description of each component appears below. A more detailed description appears later in this book.

Component 1: Professional Standing – Physicians must continuously maintain medical licensure in compliance with ABEM's [Policy on Medical Licensure](#).

Component 2: Lifelong Learning Self Assessment (LLSA) – Physicians should read designated readings and must pass a specific number of LLSA tests based on those readings within identified time periods and before their current certification expires.

Beginning in 2012, some physicians will have a CME requirement. Each physician must report completion of an average of 25 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year. Eight of the credits each year must be from self-assessment activities. This new requirement will be phased in based on your certification expiration date. You can view your specific requirements by [clicking here](#).

Component 3: Assessment of Cognitive Expertise – Physicians are required to pass a comprehensive, secure, proctored examination called the Continuous Certification (ConCert) examination.

Component 4: Assessment of Practice Performance (APP) – This component is designed for diplomates who are clinically active and focuses on their involvement in a national, regional, or local practice improvement plan that meets ABEM's APP requirements. Clinically inactive diplomates are not required to participate in APP.

Opportunity to Regain Certification through EMCC – Overview

Former diplomates have the option to regain certification.

Beginning in 2011, former diplomates whose certificates expired five or fewer years ago and who missed four or fewer LLSA tests while certified have an opportunity to regain certification by making up the number of LLSA tests missed during certification and passing the ConCert examination. Former diplomates regaining certification under this option must complete these activities by the end of the fifth year after their certification expired.

If former diplomates do not fulfill the requirements of this opportunity, the only way they can regain certification is by reapplying to regain certification and then passing the ConCert examination and then the oral certification examination.

Beginning in 2011, former diplomates whose certificates expired more than five years ago or who missed more than four required LLSA tests while certified must pass the ConCert examination, then the oral certification examination, to regain certification.

Former diplomates regaining certification under this option must submit an application, with application fee, by the deadline specified in the year they wish to begin regaining certification. While attempting to regain certification via this option, former diplomates will be governed by the [Policy on Maintaining Open and Active Applications to Regain Certification](#), which includes an exam activity requirement at least once every three years to keep the application to regain certification open.

The section, ***Regaining Certification After Certification Has Expired***, describes these opportunities in detail. The [Policy on Regaining Certification](#) may be found on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen. A link to it is also in the ***EMCC-Related Policies*** section of this book.

Scope of this Book

The information, policies, and procedures described in this book apply to the four components of EMCC: Professional Standing, Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment (LLSA), Assessment of Cognitive Expertise (ConCert examination), and Assessment of Practice Performance (APP).

Organization of the Board

The Board of Directors of the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) is comprised of emergency physicians. Officers are chosen from among the Board members. The Board includes members who were elected from individuals nominated by each of the sponsoring organizations, other Emergency Medicine organizations, and ABEM diplomates. ABEM is a non-profit corporation, and the fees from physicians are used solely for defraying actual expenses incurred in conducting examinations and carrying out the business of the Board. The directors of the Board serve without compensation.

The following is a list of the Board directors and officers as seated at the close of the winter 2011 Board of Directors meeting, and ABEM executive staff.

Executive Finance Committee

Mark T. Steele, M.D., President
Richard N. Nelson, M.D., President-Elect
Debra G. Perina, M.D., Immediate-Past-President
John C. Moorhead, M.D., Secretary Treasurer
James H. Jones, M.D., Member-at-Large
J. Mark Meredith, M.D., Senior Member-at-Large

Directors

| | |
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| Michael L. Carius, M.D. | David A. Kramer, M.D. |
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Executive Director

Earl J. Reisdorff, M.D.

Associate Executive Directors

Susan K. Adsit - Academic and Board Relations
John H. Diephouse, SPHR - Operations
Anne L. Harvey, Ph.D. - Evaluation and Research

2011- 2012 EMCC Schedule

| Dates | Events/Actions | Fees |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| LLSA Reading Lists | | |
| October 2009 | 2011 LLSA reading list posted online | No fee to view lists; publishers may charge fees for copies of articles |
| October 2010 | 2012 LLSA reading list posted online | |
| October 2011 | 2013 LLSA reading list posted online | |
| LLSA Tests | | |
| April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2012 | 2009 LLSA test available on EMCC Online | \$100 per registration, which covers up to three scored attempts at the test |
| April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2013 | 2010 LLSA test available on EMCC Online | |
| April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2014 | 2011 LLSA test available on EMCC Online | |
| April 1, 2012 – March 31, 2015 | 2012 LLSA test available on EMCC Online | |
| 2011 ConCert Examination | | |
| March 21 – September 22, 2011 | ConCert examination registration is available via EMCC Online | \$1,735 examination fee |
| September 23 – 29, 2011 | ConCert examination registration is available with a late fee | \$2,705 total fee |
| March 21 – October 7, 2011 | Physicians who have registered schedule with Pearson VUE | No additional fee |
| October 3 – 8, 2011 | ABEM administers the ConCert examination in Pearson VUE testing centers | |
| By Early January 2012 | ABEM anticipates mailing ConCert examination results | |
| 2012 ConCert Examination | | |
| March 1 – August 30, 2012 | ConCert examination registration is available via EMCC Online | Examination fee TBD |
| August 31 – September 6, 2012 | ConCert examination registration is available with a late fee | Total fee TBD |
| March 1 – September 14, 2012 | Physicians who have registered schedule with Pearson VUE | No additional fee |

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------|
| September 10 – 15, 2012 | ABEM administers the ConCert examination in Pearson VUE testing centers | |
| By Mid-December 2012 | ABEM anticipates mailing ConCert examination results | |
| ABEM Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience | | |
| March 1 – September 13, 2012 | ABEM Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience registration via EMCC Online | \$125 |
| March 1 – September 14, 2012 | Physicians who have registered schedule with Pearson VUE | No additional fee |
| May 1 – September 14, 2012 | ABEM administers the Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience in Pearson VUE testing centers | |

Introduction to EMCC Online

EMCC Online is the Internet-based vehicle diplomates and former diplomates use to perform tasks related to the EMCC program.

What You Can Do in EMCC Online

- Learn your specific EMCC requirements and current status
- Provide your medical licensure information to fulfill the continuous professional standing requirement of EMCC
- Review the lists of annual LLSA readings
- Register for and take your required LLSA tests
- Earn CME credit for preparing for and completing LLSA tests, beginning with the 2011 LLSA test
- Review your completed activities and LLSA test results
- Register for the ConCert examination
- Register for the ABEM Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience in testing centers
- Attest to completion of APP activities

What You Need to Access EMCC Online

- A computer with access to the Internet via Internet Explorer, Netscape, or Firefox. **Mac users should use Firefox as their browser – EMCC Online is not compatible with Safari.**
- Knowledge of how to get on the Internet and access a website
- Basic computer skills such as how to use a mouse and how to move through a website
- Your personal ABEM User ID and password
- A printer connected to your computer to print LLSA scores and other information (optional)

Personal User ID and Password

An ABEM User ID and password is required to access EMCC Online. Each User ID and password is unique to the individual to whom it was assigned. Only activities physicians perform using their own User IDs and passwords count toward fulfillment of their EMCC requirements. Physicians should keep their User IDs and passwords confidential to maintain the security of the personal and sensitive information displayed on EMCC Online.

Instructions for Using EMCC Online

1. Gain access to the Internet using the instructions from your Internet service provider.
2. Type www.abem.org in the address line near the top of your screen.
3. Obtain your User ID and password by clicking on the link, "Need User ID or Password?" located near the sign-in area in the upper right corner of your screen. You will be prompted to provide personal information. If it matches information in the ABEM database, you will be asked for your email address. Your User ID will then be displayed on the screen, and your password will be sent to the email address you provided.
4. Type in your ABEM User ID and password in the sign-in area at the upper right of your screen on the ABEM home page.
5. Use your mouse to click on "Sign-in". Your Personal Access Page will appear.
6. Click on the "EMCC Online" button to reach your EMCC Personal Page.
7. In the 'Requirements and Status' section, click the "View Your EMCC Requirements and Status" button.
8. On the EMCC Requirements and Status page, view the status of your EMCC requirements or click a button in the Actions section of any requirement grid that corresponds to the task you want to perform:
 - **Register or Take a Test:** If you have not registered for an LLSA test or ConCert examination, go to the grid for the appropriate requirement/test and click the button under Actions. This will give you an option to start your registration for that test. You can also click the "LLSA Activities", then "Register or Take LLSA Test" button or the "Register for ConCert" button on the left side of the screen.
 - **Assessment of Practice Performance:** View your current APP requirements and attest to completion of APP activities in "Your APP Patient Care Practice Improvement (PI) Requirements grid or in Your APP Communication/ Professionalism (CP) Requirements grid. You can also click the "Attest/View APP Activity" button on the left side of the screen.
 - **View/Print Receipts:** You can see your online payment confirmations and print receipts by clicking the button in the Actions section of Your LLSA Requirements grid or Your ConCert Examination Requirements grid. You may also view your online payment confirmations by clicking the "View Payment History" button on the left side of the screen.

- **Update Medical License Information:** Click the 'View/Update Licensure' button in the Actions section of Your Professional Standing Requirement grid to go directly to the screens where you can update and verify your license information. You may also update your license information by clicking the "Update Medical Licensure" button on the left side of the screen.
- **View LLSA Test History:** Click the button in the Actions section of Your LLSA Requirements grid to see LLSA tests you have taken in the past. You can also click the "LLSA Activities", then "View LLSA Test History" buttons on the left side of the screen.
- **Update Personal Information:** You can update your contact information and change your password by clicking the "Update Personal Information" button on the left side of the screen.

EMCC Component 1: Professional Standing

Overview

An overview of the Professional Standing component of EMCC follows:

- Participants in the EMCC process must continuously hold a current, active, valid, full, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada and in each jurisdiction in which they practice.
- Physicians may hold additional licenses to practice medicine, each of which must be valid, full, unrestricted, and unqualified, or voluntarily inactive.
- Participants in the EMCC program must report to the Board all licenses they currently hold, and any licenses previously held that do not meet the ABEM [Policy on Medical Licensure](#).
- ABEM continuously receives medical license information from a third-party verification agency for all ABEM diplomates and all former diplomates attempting to regain certification.

Procedures

Diplomates and former diplomates may update their medical licensure information through their EMCC Personal Page or their EMCC Requirements and Status page on the ABEM website, www.abem.org.

During the registration process for an LLSA test or ConCert examination, physicians will be asked to confirm medical license information. If physicians confirm their license(s) complies with ABEM policy, they can move to the next step of registration.

Physicians who have reported issues with their medical license(s), or for whom ABEM has received information from a third-party verification agency regarding actions against a license, will be blocked from registering for an LLSA test or the ConCert examination. ABEM will investigate the issues and notify physicians concerning their registration status.

The complete [Policy on Medical Licensure](#) can be found on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen. A link to it is also in the **EMCC-Related Policies** section of this book.

EMCC Component 2: Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment

Overview

The Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment (LLSA) component is designed to promote continuous learning. ABEM facilitates this learning by identifying an annual set of LLSA readings to guide participants in self study of recent Emergency Medicine literature. The readings are based on *The Model of the Clinical Practice of Emergency Medicine* ([EM Model](#)). The readings are designed as study tools and should be read critically. They are not intended to be all-inclusive and are not meant to define the standard of care for the clinical practice of Emergency Medicine.

Each year ABEM will offer an open-book, unproctored LLSA test intended to help physicians reinforce what they learn from the annual set of readings.

Key Features of LLSA

- For the 2010 and later LLSA reading lists, each list consists of 10 to 15 readings. Each LLSA reading list dated 2009 and before consisted of 16 to 20 readings based on the EM Model.
- The reading list for any LLSA test is posted approximately 16 months prior to the associated LLSA test becoming available.
- Each year the readings will focus on different aspects of the EM Model. Other areas of the EM Model will be included in each year's LLSA readings, as well.
- A new LLSA test will be posted on the ABEM website each year. Each LLSA test will remain online from April 1 of that year through March 31, three years later.
- Each LLSA test dated 2009 and later consists of 20 to 30 questions. For LLSA tests dated 2008 and before, the tests consisted of 32 to 40 test questions based on the annual readings.
- A passing score is achieved by answering 85% for the 2008 and later LLSA tests, and 90% of the test questions correctly for the 2007 and earlier LLSA tests.
- Each LLSA test must be taken online, using any computer with Internet access via Internet Explorer, Netscape, or Firefox. **Mac users should use Firefox as their browser, which can be downloaded for free from www.mozilla.com. The Safari browser is not compatible with the ABEM website at this time.**

- A physician has up to three opportunities per registration to pass an LLSA test. An opportunity to pass is defined as each time the physician submits the LLSA test for scoring. An incomplete test can be saved and resumed an unlimited number of times before it is submitted for scoring, as long as the test is still available to the physician online.
- A physician may register for an LLSA test as many times as necessary to pass it, as long as the test is available to the physician online.
- Beginning with the 2011 LLSA test, diplomates and former diplomates have the opportunity to earn *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* for completing the CME Activity related to an LLSA test. CME Activity includes reading the articles, passing the test, and completing the post-test evaluation.

Eligibility Requirement for Taking an LLSA Test

Only diplomates and former diplomates regaining certification by making up missed EMCC requirements may take an LLSA test. Each LLSA test is available for three years after it is posted online. Former diplomates who are regaining certification by either passing the qualifying and oral certification examinations or by passing the ConCert examination and oral certification examination do not have an LLSA requirement. The [Policy on Regaining Certification](#), which can be found in the **EMCC-Related Policies** section of this book and on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen, describes LLSA requirements for former diplomates.

LLSA Test Availability and Registration

Each LLSA test is available online for three years. A physician may register for an LLSA test any time the test is available to that physician online. Once a physician has registered for an LLSA test, the registration remains in effect for up to three scored attempts within five years or until the physician passes the test, whichever comes first.

An LLSA test is not available to a physician if:

- the three years the test is available online have passed. Each test is retired on March 31 at 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, three years after the year in which it was posted online. Exception: As mentioned above, if a physician has completed registration for an LLSA test before the LLSA test retires and has not exhausted the three attempts under that registration, the physician will have access to that LLSA test until five years after the date of the test registration.

- the physician has failed the test three times under one registration. Although the physician may re-register for the test if it has not been retired or if it has been made available to that physician in order to make up missed EMCC requirements.
- the physician does not have an EMCC requirement.

Physicians register for the LLSA test online through the ABEM webpage, www.abem.org. After signing in, click the “EMCC Online” button to get to your Personal Page. From there, click the “LLSA Activities” button on the left side of the screen, then the “Register or Take LLSA Test” button, and follow the instructions to complete registration. Once registered for an LLSA test, a physician has the option to take the test, perform another task using EMCC Online, or leave EMCC Online and return later to take the LLSA test. The test need not be completed in one sitting.

Physicians may also register for the CME for the 2011 LLSA activity online. Physicians may register for the CME activity before or after registering for the 2011 LLSA test. However, **registration for the CME activity must be completed before starting to take the LLSA test.** Click the “LLSA Activities” button on the left side of the Personal Page, then the “Register of Take LLSA Test” button to start registration for the CME activity.

Physicians may print a receipt for a completed LLSA test or CME activity from the Personal Page, by clicking the “View Payment History” button on the left side of the screen.

Scoring an LLSA Test

EMCC Online will score the LLSA test only when the physician submits it for scoring. The score will be available online immediately. If the physician also registered for the accompanying CME activity, the LLSA score will only be available after completion of the post-test evaluation.

If the physician has not passed the test, information about the number of attempts remaining within the current registration will also appear. The physician may take the LLSA test again immediately or at a later date, if the test is still available online.

A physician who passes an LLSA test has the option of printing out a certificate of test completion and emailing the certificate to one or more email addresses. If the physician also registered for the accompanying CME activity and completed it, he or she may also print a CME certificate of completion.

Disclosure of Information about LLSA Participation or Performance

ABEM does not disclose information about LLSA participation or performance. The physician may view this information through EMCC Online and has the option of disclosing this information if he or she chooses.

LLSA Content: Schedule of the EM Model for LLSA

The components from the [EM Model](#) on which LLSA readings and tests focus will repeat every nine years.

| Calendar Year | Components on Which LLSA Readings and Test Will Focus |
|---------------|--|
| 2009 | Cardiovascular Disorders Hematologic Disorders |
| 2010 | Abdominal and Gastrointestinal Disorders Other Components of the Practice of EM |
| 2011 | Head, Ear, Eye, Nose, and Throat Disorders Endocrine, Metabolic & Nutritional Disorders Renal & Urogenital Disorders |
| 2012 | Systemic Infectious Disorders Obstetrics and Gynecology |
| 2013 | Thoracic-Respiratory Disorders Immune System Disorders Musculoskeletal Disorders |
| 2014 | Nervous System Disorders Toxicologic Disorders |
| 2015 | Traumatic Disorders Cutaneous Disorders |
| 2016 | Signs, Symptoms, and Presentations Psychobehavioral Disorders |
| 2017 | Procedures and Skills Integral to the Practice of Emergency Medicine Environmental Disorders |
| 2018 | Cardiovascular Disorders Hematologic Disorders |

EMCC Component 3: Assessment of Cognitive Expertise

Overview

One of the EMCC program requirements necessary for physicians to maintain certification beyond their current ten-year period is to pass an examination that assesses cognitive expertise. The examination is referred to as the Continuous Certification or ConCert examination.

Key Features of the ConCert Examination

- The ConCert examination is a comprehensive, multiple-choice question examination that takes approximately five and one-quarter hours to complete.
- The ConCert examination is comprised of questions focused on what the practicing emergency physician needs to know when treating patients.
- The questions are derived from [*The Model of the Clinical Practice of Emergency Medicine \(EM Model\)*](#).
- The ConCert examination is a secure, proctored examination administered at over 200 computer-based Pearson VUE testing centers around the United States and Canada.
- Physicians register for the ConCert examination through EMCC Online, then schedule a specific appointment with Pearson VUE to take the examination.
- Diplomates will typically take the ConCert examination in the last two years of their current certifications to ensure their certificates do not lapse, although physicians may take the ConCert examination during any year if they meet the requirements for that year's examination.
- Each year's ConCert examination carries a set of eligibility requirements physicians must meet in order to take the examination. Requirements cover physicians' status with ABEM and medical licensure.

Eligibility Requirements for Taking a ConCert Examination

Physicians may check their current EMCC requirements and status at any time through EMCC Online. After logging into the EMCC Online Personal Page, in the 'Requirements and Status' section, click the large "View Your EMCC Requirements and Status" button.

Status with ABEM Only diplomates and former diplomates may register to take a ConCert examination. See the section, **Regaining**

Certification After Certification Has Expired, for details of the time-limited opportunities for former diplomates to regain certification.

Medical Licensure Requirements Participants in the EMCC process must continuously hold a current, active, valid, full, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada and in each jurisdiction in which they practice. Physicians may hold additional licenses to practice medicine, each of which must be valid, unrestricted, and unqualified, or voluntarily inactive.

The complete [Policy on Medical Licensure](#) is on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen. A link to it can also be found in the **EMCC-Related Policies** section of this book.

If physicians’ medical licenses are found not to comply with ABEM’s [Policy on Medical Licensure](#), ABEM will investigate the details related to the licenses in question. During this investigation, until the Board renders a final decision, physicians may take the ConCert examination.

Diplomate LLSA Test Requirements To take the 2011 or 2012 ConCert examination, diplomates must complete a specific number of LLSA tests.

Diplomates who wish to take the 2011 ConCert examination must successfully complete six LLSA tests before they can register for the examination. Diplomates who wish to take the 2012 ConCert examination must successfully complete seven LLSA tests before they can register for the examination. This table illustrates LLSA requirements for taking the 2011 and 2012 ConCert examination.

| Year Physician Wishes to Take the ConCert Examination | |
|---|------|
| 2011 | 2012 |
| Number of LLSA Tests Required* to Take ConCert that Year | |
| 6 | 7 |

*Through 2009, a ConCert examination that a diplomate took and failed counted as one LLSA test activity if the physician did not also pass an LLSA test the same year.

Diplomates who wish to maintain certification after 2012 are required to complete eight LLSA tests, four in the first five years of certification and four in the second five years. The tests do not need to be taken before the ConCert examination. Diplomates may check their specific requirements and options on EMCC Online.

Diplomates and former diplomates may pass an LLSA test in the same year they take a ConCert examination. Diplomates can use the LLSA test toward their requirement for that year's ConCert examination as long as the LLSA test is passed prior to registering for the ConCert examination.

Failure to Meet LLSA Test Participation Requirements In 2011 and 2012, if diplomates do not complete the number of LLSA tests required for a specific ConCert examination, they may not register for the examination.

If diplomates fail to meet their LLSA test requirements by the time their certificate expires, they will become former diplomates and will no longer be certified. Former diplomates may regain certification. See the section, ***Regaining Certification After Certification Has Expired***, for details.

Certification cannot be extended for any reason, including inability to take a ConCert examination.

ConCert Registration and Scheduling Procedures

Physicians who meet their requirements may register for the 2011 ConCert examination starting March 21, 2011, using EMCC Online. They may register for the 2012 ConCert examination starting March 1, 2012.

Physicians register for the ConCert examination online by logging into EMCC Online through the ABEM webpage, www.abem.org. From the Personal Page, select the "Register for ConCert" button on the left side of the screen, and follow the instructions to complete registration.

When ConCert examination registration is complete, EMCC Online will display the necessary information for scheduling an appointment with Pearson VUE testing centers to take the examination.

Pearson VUE will only schedule physicians who have registered with ABEM and whom ABEM has authorized to schedule with Pearson VUE. Pearson VUE cannot guarantee appointments in the location and during the day and time of the physician's choice. Registering and scheduling early can improve the physician's chance of receiving an appointment in the location and during the day and time they prefer.

ABEM suggests physicians not schedule activities that cannot be rescheduled during the week of the ConCert examination. In the event ABEM or Pearson VUE must cancel a physician's appointment due to an

emergency, the physician may wish to be available for a rescheduled appointment.

After scheduling an appointment, Pearson VUE will send the physician an email confirming the appointment and including appointment details.

Approximately four weeks prior to the first day of the ConCert examination administration, physicians who have registered for the examination will receive an email with a link to the “Information for ConCert Examination Candidates” book from ABEM.

Examination Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities

ABEM will consider requests for reasonable accommodations in its examination procedures for physicians with documented disabilities. All accommodations for the 2011 ConCert examination must be requested in writing with appropriate documentation of the disability and the accommodation requested, and must be approved by ABEM.

Physicians who want to request accommodations should notify ABEM immediately, but no later than August 8, 2011. While the notification can be sent to ABEM at the same time as registering, it is best to notify ABEM prior to registering for the examination. ABEM will assist the physician to register for and schedule an appointment to take the examination.

ABEM will also consider reasonable requests for “courtesy” accommodations from physicians whose disabilities are not permanent or do not meet the legal definition of a disability.

The procedures for requesting accommodations or courtesy accommodations are described in the [Policy on Americans with Disabilities Act](#) in the **EMCC-Related Policies** section of this book and on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen.

Rescheduling, Cancelling, and Withdrawing

Physicians may attempt to reschedule a ConCert examination appointment at any time providing appointments are available. Each time physicians reschedule less than 24 hours prior to an existing appointment, ABEM may charge a rescheduling fee. If the physician attempts to reschedule an appointment and the desired appointment time and location are not available, the physician may keep the original

appointment, accept the new appointment offered, or cancel the original appointment.

A physician may cancel an examination appointment at any time by calling Pearson VUE and asking to cancel. Physicians who cancel an appointment with Pearson VUE at least 24 hours prior to the appointment also have the option to withdraw from the examination and receive a partial refund of the examination fee. Physicians who wish to receive a refund of the examination fee, less 10%, must send ABEM a written request to withdraw, postmarked or faxed no later than one business day prior to the appointment date. If the physician registered for the examination, but did not schedule an appointment, the request to withdraw must be postmarked no later than October 7, 2011.

Physicians are expected to appear for their ConCert examination appointments 30 minutes prior to the start of the appointment. Pearson VUE can typically accommodate candidates who arrive up to 30 minutes after their appointment time. After that, Pearson VUE will seat physicians only if seats are available. Physicians may attempt to reschedule to another day within the examination administration. If physicians are able to reschedule, ABEM may charge them a rescheduling fee.

The [Policy on Fees](#) describes in more detail rescheduling fees and physicians' options for receiving a refund of ConCert examination fees. The [Policy on Examination Administration in Testing Centers](#) addresses late arrivals, missed appointments, interrupted or cancelled examinations, and scoring and rescheduling options. These policies can be found on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under "Policy Index" on the left side of the screen, and links to them can also be found in the ***EMCC-Related Policies*** section of this book.

Taking the ConCert Examination

The ConCert examination is a five and one-quarter hour, secure, proctored examination administered on computers in Pearson VUE professional testing centers.

To protect examination validity and ensure a consistent, fair examination administration across all its testing centers, Pearson VUE maintains strict security measures, including tight restrictions on what personal items may be taken into the testing room. These security procedures also include multiple checks to confirm each examinee's identity, such as taking a digital signature, photograph, and an infrared palm vein image. Note that this information is used solely for the purpose of confirming

identity, is held in the strictest confidence by Pearson VUE, and is not released to any third-parties.

ABEM Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience

Candidates who are unfamiliar with computer-delivered testing may review an online tutorial that simulates a Pearson VUE examination. The tutorial is available at www.vue.com/sponsors/tutorial. A 20-minute tutorial on how to use the computer to take the examination is also provided at the start of the ConCert examination administration.

ABEM also offers an optional, short, computer-delivered testing experience in Pearson VUE testing centers. This offering is designed for candidates who have not previously taken an examination in a testing center and would like to become more familiar with the process before taking an actual ABEM examination. Physicians will take the testing experience at a Pearson VUE testing center and will have an opportunity to see how an actual ABEM examination is formatted on the computer, practice navigating a computer-delivered demonstration examination, and experience the same security procedures and opening and closing activities of an actual ABEM examination.

To allow candidates to practice navigating a computer-delivered examination, the Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience provides a 20-25 question demonstration test. The demonstration test is not designed to assist candidates in preparing for the content of an actual ABEM examination. The demonstration test will not be scored, and the questions do not represent the examination content, subject matter, or level of difficulty of an actual ABEM examination.

Candidates may register for the Optional Computer-Delivered Testing Experience through EMCC Online. Once registered, physicians schedule an appointment to take the optional testing experience with Pearson VUE testing centers.

ConCert Examination Content and Format

The ConCert examination contains approximately 205 single-best-answer, positively-worded, multiple-choice questions, and is focused on what the practicing emergency physician needs to know when treating patients.

The ConCert examination has a passing standard of 75.

ABEM reserves the right to conduct and report research studies of its examinations and its examination data to benefit the specialty and for

purposes of quality control and examination development. Individual candidate confidentiality will not be violated or compromised.

ABEM also reserves the right to include in any examination certain questions or cases for the purposes of research and validation. These items will not enter into the scoring for the purpose of maintaining certification.

Elimination of Designated LLSA Content from the ConCert Examination

In developing the EMCC program, ABEM originally created a strong link between the LLSA component and the ConCert examination, basing up to 40% of the examination content on prior years' LLSA readings. ABEM's intent was to increase the value of EMCC to its diplomates. However, since the inception of EMCC, the Board has reassessed the relationship between LLSA and the ConCert examination, exploring whether appropriate changes could be made to better meet the Board's goals and the needs of its diplomates. As a result, in 2007, the link between previous LLSA readings and development of the ConCert examinations was removed, and questions based on designated LLSA readings will no longer appear on the ConCert examination.

ConCert Examination Content Specifications

The [EM Model](#) forms the basis of the ABEM in-training, qualifying, and ConCert examinations. The lists that follow on the next page describe the relative weight given to different elements of the EM Model in constructing these examinations. The complete [EM Model](#) is published in *Annals of Emergency Medicine* [Ann Emerg Med. 2011 Mar; 57(3): e1-e15]. It is also available on the ABEM website, www.abem.org.

| <i>Listing of Conditions & Components</i> | | |
|--|--|------|
| 1.0 | Signs, Symptoms and Presentations | 9% |
| 2.0 | Abdominal and Gastrointestinal Disorders | 9% |
| 3.0 | Cardiovascular Disorders | 10% |
| 4.0 | Cutaneous Disorders | 2% |
| 5.0 | Endocrine, Metabolic & Nutritional Disorders | 3% |
| 6.0 | Environmental Disorders | 3% |
| 7.0 | Head, Ear, Eye, Nose & Throat Disorders | 5% |
| 8.0 | Hematologic Disorders | 2% |
| 9.0 | Immune System Disorders | 2% |
| 10.0 | Systemic Infectious Disorders | 5% |
| 11.0 | Musculoskeletal Disorders (Non-traumatic) | 3% |
| 12.0 | Nervous System Disorders | 5% |
| 13.0 | Obstetrics and Gynecology | 4% |
| 14.0 | Psychobehavioral Disorders | 3% |
| 15.0 | Renal and Urogenital Disorders | 3% |
| 16.0 | Thoracic-Respiratory Disorders | 8% |
| 17.0 | Toxicologic Disorders | 4% |
| 18.0 | Traumatic Disorders | 11% |
| | Appendix I: Procedures and Skills | 6% |
| | Appendix II: Other Components | 3% |
| | Total | 100% |

| <u>Acuity Frames</u> | <u>Target (±5%)</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Critical | 27% |
| Emergent | 37% |
| Lower Acuity | 27% |
| None | 9% |

Physician Tasks

For this dimension, the Board has assigned the following specific percentage weights to the Modifying Factor of age:

Pediatrics: 8% minimum

Geriatrics: 4% minimum

Notification of ConCert Examination Results

ABEM scores all examinations and conducts analyses to ensure the examination is scored correctly and fairly. Physicians who take the ConCert examination will be notified in writing of examination results within 90 days of the last day of the examination administration. ABEM will post on its website home page, www.abem.org, the date on which results are mailed. It is also on the website under "News, Notices, Exam Dates, & Fees", "Other News & Announcements", "Examination Results".

To ensure they receive their results, physicians must maintain up-to-date contact information using EMCC Online.

To ensure the confidentiality of examination results, detailed results information will be sent to candidates in written form - *not* via telephone, fax, or email. For the first time, in 2011, basic results information will also be provided under each physician's secure EMCC Personal Page. A physician may access this by logging into the EMCC Online Personal Page and clicking the "View Examination Score History" button on the left side of the screen. This information will only be available after the examination results are mailed, within 90 days of the last day of the examination administration.

EMCC Component 4: Assessment of Practice Performance

Overview

Assessment of Practice Performance (APP) is a requirement of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Maintenance of Certification® (MOC) program. One of the ABMS's primary goals for this component is to support diplomates' continued growth of specialty-based skills. The focus of this EMCC component is on practice-based learning and improvement, particularly in the competencies of patient care, interpersonal and communication skills, and professionalism.

The EMCC APP requirements began in 2010, so are being phased in over time, meaning diplomates have different requirements based on the year their certificate expires. Most current diplomates who are clinically active are required to attest to ABEM twice during a ten-year certification period that they have participated in an acceptable patient care practice improvement (PI) program at a national, regional, or local level. Many current diplomates are also required to attest twice during the ten years that they have participated in a communication/professionalism (CP) feedback program. In order for physicians to view their specific EMCC APP requirements, they can log into EMCC Online, click the large "View Your EMCC Requirements and Status" button, then view the grids for Practice Improvement and Communication/Professionalism.

Diplomates who are clinically inactive will be able to maintain ABEM certification without participating in APP. ABEM records will indicate the diplomate is clinically inactive, and this information will be reported and available to the public.

Key Features of Assessment of Practice Performance

- APP is designed for clinically active diplomates. Clinically inactive diplomates do not have APP requirements, but must declare themselves clinically inactive on EMCC Online.
- Diplomates who are clinically active are required to begin, complete, and attest to patient care practice improvement (PI) and communication/professionalism (CP) activities during their certification. Diplomates can check their specific requirements and deadlines on EMCC Online.
- APP activities must follow specific steps.
- Diplomates can participate in group APP activities provided their own patients are included.

- Diplomates attest to completion of APP activities through EMCC Online.
- Diplomates must name an individual who can verify they have completed APP activities meeting ABEM requirements. ABEM will follow-up with verifiers for 10% of attestations.
- There is no fee for attestation of APP.

APP Requirements

Diplomates may check their APP requirements through EMCC Online. From the EMCC Personal Page, in the 'Requirements and Status' section, click the large "View Your EMCC Requirements and Status" button.

Status with ABEM Only diplomates who are clinically active have APP requirements. Former diplomates and clinically inactive diplomates do not have APP requirements.

Medical Licensure Requirements Participants in the EMCC process must continuously hold a current, active, valid, full, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine in at least one jurisdiction in the United States, its territories, or Canada and in each jurisdiction in which they practice. Physicians may hold additional licenses to practice medicine, each of which must be valid, unrestricted, and unqualified, or voluntarily inactive.

Diplomates must verify the status of their medical licensure when they attest to completion of APP activities. If their medical licensure is found not to comply with ABEM's [Policy on Medical Licensure](#), ABEM will investigate the details related to the licenses in question. During this investigation and until the Board renders a final decision, clinically active diplomates may participate in APP and fulfill APP requirements.

Patient Care Practice Improvement (PI) Requirements Clinically active diplomates must complete two PI activities in each ten year certification; one in years one through five of certification and one in years six through ten. During the phase-in period, from 2010 through 2018, the requirement may be fewer. Diplomates may view their individual requirements through EMCC Online.

A PI activity must include the following four steps:

1. Diplomates must review patient clinical care data related to a single presentation, disease, or clinical care process that is part of *The Model of the Clinical Practice of Emergency Medicine (EM Model)*, for example, clinical care processes, feedback from patients that

relates to the clinical care given, outcomes of clinical care, or access to care such as time for through-put, left without being seen, etc.

Group data and data collected through a national, regional, or local practice improvement program in which diplomates participate is acceptable. The PI activity should include ten of the diplomate's own patients. Inclusion of fewer patients is acceptable for activities involving important clinical issues of lower prevalence and higher acuity (e.g., sepsis, AMI door-to-balloon times).

2. Compare the data to evidence-based guidelines. Evidence-based guidelines are based on published research subject to peer-review. If such guidelines are not available, diplomates may use guidelines set by expert consensus or comparable peer data. Guidelines set by expert consensus are published, accepted, national standards, and guidelines set by peer data are set by individuals who practice in like or similar circumstances.
3. Develop and implement a plan to improve the practice issue measured in Step 1. Diplomates may plan for an individual or group improvement effort.
4. After implementing the improvement plan, review patient clinical care data that includes at least ten of the diplomate's additional patients with the same presentation, disease, or clinical process as the first patient data review. Fewer than ten of the diplomate's patients may be included if the activity involves an important clinical issue of lower prevalence and higher acuity. Use this data to evaluate whether clinical performance has been improved or maintained.

[ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program](#) Completion of the ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program meets the requirements for an APP patient care practice improvement (PI) activity if diplomates use their own patients' data. These activities have been approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*.

The [Patient Safety Improvement Program](#) is a web-based program that covers key areas of patient safety, includes quality improvement tools and techniques, and provides practical opportunities to improve patient care in any practice environment. The program is available to individual diplomates in three formats, including two independent modules and a third format that combines the two. ABEM collects no fee for completion of these activities. Any fees go directly to the vendor.

- The first module, Patient Safety Foundations (PSF), is a self-directed tutorial that covers patient safety issues in five areas. It does not meet ABEM APP requirements.
- The second module is the ABMS Quality Improvement in Practice (QIP), and may be used to meet ABEM APP PI requirements. The

program has two parts - a tutorial and Performance Improvement Activities. The Performance Improvement Activities can be used to enter data and complete performance improvement activities. The price of the QIP is \$30.

- The third format, the Patient Safety Improvement Program, consists of the above two modules and can be ordered for \$55. This program would also meet ABEM APP PI requirements.

Diplomates must attest to completion of the ABMS Patient Safety Improvement Program through EMCC Online. ABEM receives independent verification for diplomates who complete the program.

Communication/Professionalism (CP) Requirements Clinically active diplomates must participate in two CP activities during their ten-year certification; one in years one through five of certification and one in years six through ten. During the phase-in period, from 2010 through 2018, the requirement may be fewer. Diplomates may view their individual requirements through EMCC Online.

Diplomates may use any formal method of assessing communication skills including patient surveys, interviews, or focus groups, administered at the institutional, departmental, or individual level. At least ten of the diplomate's own patients must be included. A minimum of one physician behavior must be measured from each of the following three categories:

1. Communications/listening, *for example, communicate clearly with patients and other medical staff by listening carefully and couching language at the appropriate level for the listener*
2. Providing information, *for example, explain the clinical impression and anticipated management course to the patient and the patient's family, provide information about tests and procedures, or give the patient options*
3. Showing concern for the patient, *for example, show respect to the patient and other medical staff, make the patient feel comfortable by asking if they have any questions or concerns and act to address their concerns, or ask the patient about adequate pain relief.*

Attesting to Completion of APP Activities

Diplomates who have a current APP requirement can sign in to EMCC Online and complete an on-line form describing the activity they completed by clicking the large "View Your EMCC Requirements and Status" button in the 'Requirements and Status' section of the EMCC Personal Page, then locating the appropriate APP requirement grid and clicking the button in the Action section of that grid. Forms do not need

to be completed in a single internet session, but must contain all required information before they can be submitted as complete.

ABEM will randomly select 10% of attestations for independent verification. Diplomates must provide the name and contact information for an individual who can independently affirm they performed the APP activity according to ABEM requirements. The verifier must be someone with oversight or knowledge of practice performance and would likely be a hospital board chair or other member of the board, a department chair, the Chief of Staff, a Medical Director, or a practice administrator in a non-hospital setting.

Regaining Certification After Certification Has Expired

ABEM provides options for former diplomates to regain certification. These options have changed in 2011 and are described in the [Policy on Regaining Certification](#), which can be found on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen. A link to it can also be found in the **EMCC-Related Policies** section of this book.

All former diplomates attempting to regain certification must maintain medical licensure in compliance with ABEM’s [Policy on Medical Licensure](#).

Former Diplomates Whose Certificates Expired Five Years Ago or Less and Who Missed Four or Fewer Required LLSA Tests While Certified

These former diplomates have five years from their certification expiration date to regain certification by making up requirements they missed during certification. This entails passing the number of LLSA tests missed and the ConCert examination. If they do not complete this activity, the only way they can regain certification is by passing the ConCert examination and then the oral certification examination. Physicians whose certificates expired on or after December 31, 2006, are eligible to regain certification through this option in 2011.

Examination Registration

Former diplomates who are eligible to regain certification by making up requirements they missed during certification may register for and take any LLSA test that is available to them through EMCC Online. If they wish to take the 2011 ConCert examination, they may register and schedule an appointment to take the examination as described in the **ConCert Registration and Scheduling Procedures** section of this book.

Former Diplomates Whose Certificates Expired More Than Five Years Ago or Who Missed More than Four Required LLSA Tests While Certified

These former diplomates must pass the ConCert examination and then the oral certification examination to regain certification.

Former diplomates under this option to regain certification must request an application form from the ABEM office. Completed application forms and fees must be returned to ABEM postmarked no later than September 1, 2011.

While attempting to regain certification under this option, former diplomates will be governed by the [Policy on Maintaining Open and Active Applications to Regain Certification](#), which includes an exam activity requirement at least once every three years.

Certificate and Diplomate Information

Certificate

ABEM certificates are issued for a ten-year period. All diplomates who pass the ConCert examination in 2011 or 2012, and former diplomates who complete all requirements of their process to regain certification, renew their certificates for ten years, provided their medical licensure complies with ABEM's [Policy on Medical Licensure](#) throughout the certification.

For diplomates, the certificate will be dated from the date of the ConCert examination results letter or December 31 of the examination year, whichever date is first, and will expire December 31 ten years from then. Certificates earned by former diplomates will start on the date they completed their last required activity under their option to regain certification, and will expire December 31 ten years from then.

All certificates remain the property of the American Board of Emergency Medicine. The certificate will display the physician's name and medical degree only, as recorded in ABEM's file as of the date of the examination result letter.

Revocation of Certificate

Each certificate issued by ABEM is subject to revocation at any time according to the current Board policies, procedures, and requirements.

Disclosure of Diplomate Information

In compliance with the bylaws of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), ABEM provides ABMS a list of new diplomates and diplomates who have renewed their certification that includes names, addresses, and other information as required by ABMS. ABMS provides diplomate information on its website, for publication in a directory, and to other licensees according to defined protocols and guidelines. ABEM provides lists of diplomates to its sponsor organizations upon request, and ABEM responds to individual inquiries to confirm a physician's diplomate status.

Verification of Diplomate Status with ABEM

When ABEM receives an inquiry about a physician's status with the Board, ABEM states whether or not the physician is an ABEM diplomate and provides the certificate number and dates of certification. A fee is required for written status verifications that are mailed to a third party. Please call the ABEM office for current fees.

For additional information on certificates, see the ABEM [Policy on Certificates](#) on the ABEM website, www.abem.org, under “Policy Index” on the left side of the screen. A link to it can also be found in the **EMCC-Related Policies** section of this book.

EMCC-Related Policies

[Policy on Acceptable Use of Lifelong Learning Self-Assessment Test Materials](#)

[Policy on Access to EMCC Lifelong Learning Self-Assessment Tests](#)

[Policy on Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

[Policy on Candidate Illness](#)

[Policy on Candidate Requests for Investigation of a Certification or Maintenance of Certification Examination](#)

[Policy on Candidate Requests for Investigation of Lifelong Learning Self-Assessment Tests](#)

[Policy on Certificates](#)

[Policy on Content Specifications of Lifelong Learning Self-Assessment Tests for Emergency Medicine](#)

[Policy on Disruptive Behavior](#)

[Policy on Examination Administration in Testing Centers](#)

[Policy on Examination Irregularities](#)

[Policy on Fees](#)

[Policy on Loss of Examination Data](#)

[Policy on Medical Licensure](#)

[Policy on Regaining Certification](#)

[Policy on Required EMCC Activity](#)

[Policy on Scoring Candidate Examinations](#)

[Policy on Solicitation and Criteria for Selection of Readings for Lifelong Learning Self-Assessment Tests for Emergency Medicine](#)

[Privacy Statement](#)