



## **Policy on Required ABEM Maintenance of Certification Program Activity**

### **BACKGROUND**

The American Board of Emergency Medicine Maintenance of Certification (ABEM MOC) Program is an ABMS Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program. ABEM wishes to state its policy regarding the required activity for diplomates to maintain certification.

### **POLICY**

Diplomates of ABEM can maintain certification by participating in and meeting the following requirements of the ABEM MOC Program.

#### **Professionalism and Professional Standing**

Diplomates' medical licensure must continually comply with the ABEM Policy on Medical Licensure.

#### **Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment**

The LLS component consists of two activities: required ABEM LLSA tests and a continuing medical education (CME) requirement.

Diplomates must pass eight LLSA tests within each ten-year certification period.

Diplomates must pass four of their required eight LLSA tests by the end of their fifth full year of certification. They must complete the second four tests in years six through ten of certification. Diplomates cannot count LLSA tests they complete during one five-year period toward their next five-year requirement.

Diplomates must complete and report to ABEM an average of 25 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*<sup>™</sup> per year or acceptable equivalent. An average of eight of the CME credits each year must be self-assessment credits, which are automatically earned by preparing for and passing LLSA tests. All CME credits earned must be related to the diplomate's practice.

Board eligible physicians who achieve certification can count their CME and LLSA tests completed during the calendar year in which they became certified toward their MOC requirements that start that year. The Policy on Board Eligibility defines board eligible physicians.

ABEM is phasing in these requirements. See the section, "Phase-in of Policy" for details of the CME phase-in schedule.

#### **Assessment of Knowledge, Judgement, and Skills**

Diplomates must take and pass the ABEM Assessment of Knowledge, Judgement, and Skills (Continuous Certification [ConCert<sup>™</sup>] Examination) in the second five full years of certification. Diplomates are not required

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to complete their LLS or any other MOC requirement prior to registering for the ConCert™ Examination, other than maintaining medical licensure in compliance with ABEM policy. Passing the ConCert™ Examination does not renew certification. Certification is renewed on January 1 after expiration of the current certificate if all ABEM MOC requirements have been met.

### **Improvement in Medical Practice**

Diplomates who are clinically active must complete and attest to completion of Improvement in Medical Practice (IMP) activities to maintain certification.

When IMP requirements are fully phased in, diplomates will be required to complete one patient care practice improvement (PI) activity and one Communication/Professionalism Patient Feedback (CP) activity by the end of their fifth full year of certification. They must also complete one PI and one CP activity in years six through ten of certification. IMP activities must follow ABEM IMP Activity Guidelines, described below.

Diplomates may report PI and CP activities they complete within their practice. Alternatively, they may complete any ABEM-approved third-party PI module.

Diplomates who inform ABEM that they are clinically inactive do not have IMP requirements. Clinically inactive diplomates can change their status to clinically active by completing one required IMP activity. When they become clinically active, diplomates will have IMP requirements current at the time they become clinically active.

### IMP Activity Guidelines

ABEM guidelines for completion of IMP PI activities require that the diplomate follow the following four steps:

- Review patient clinical care data from ten of the diplomate's patients. The data must be 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). Group data is acceptable if the individual diplomate's data is included. Measuring fewer than ten patients are acceptable if the activity is focused on a high-acuity, low-volume clinical issue.
- Compare the data to evidence-based guidelines. If such guidelines are not available, diplomates may use expert consensus or comparable peer data.
- Develop and implement a practice improvement plan which may be an individual or group effort.
- Review patient clinical care data from ten additional patients with the same presentation, disease, or clinical process as the first patient data review. Group data can be used if the diplomate's own patients are included, and measuring fewer than ten patients is acceptable if the activity is focused on a high-acuity, low-volume clinical issue. Use the new data to evaluate whether clinical performance has positively changed or if acceptable performance has been maintained.

ABEM guidelines for completion of IMP CP activities require that at least ten of the physician's patients be surveyed. Group surveys may be used provided that at least ten of the physician's patients are included in the survey. In addition, at least one physician behavior must be measured from each of the following three categories:

- Communication/listening
- Providing information
- Showing concern for the patient

### Reporting IMP Activities to ABEM

Diplomates report completion of IMP activities to ABEM by attesting that they have completed the activities following the ABEM IMP Activity Guidelines described above.

When diplomates attest to completion of IMP activities, they are required to specify an independent verifier of their activities. The verifier must be someone with oversight or knowledge of practice performance.

Five percent of reported IMP activities will be randomly selected for verification. ABEM will ask verifiers to affirm that all of ABEM's guidelines for completion of the activity were met. Any activity that is not verifiable will not meet the requirement.

### **Renewal of Certification**

Diplomates who have met all their ABEM MOC requirements will renew certification on January 1 immediately following expiration of their previous certification.

### **Nonrenewal of Certification**

Diplomates who do not meet all their ABEM MOC Program requirements by their certification expiration date become former diplomates and are no longer certified. ABEM provides options for former diplomates to regain certification, defined in the Policy on Regaining Certification. The options for regaining certification are based on the following:

- The number of required ABEM MOC activities a physician completed prior to certification expiration
- Whether more than five years have elapsed since the physician's certification expired.

## **PHASE-IN OF POLICY**

### **Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment**

#### CME

The MOC LLS CME requirement is being phased in as follows:

- Diplomates whose certificates expire in 2014 through 2018 have an MOC CME requirement beginning in 2012 that is due in the year their certificate expires.
- Diplomates whose certificates expire in 2019 and after have MOC CME requirements beginning in 2012. One set of requirements is due at the end of the fifth full year of their certification; another set is due the year their certification expires.

### **Improvement in Medical Practice**

IMP requirements for clinically active diplomates are being phased in as follows:

- Diplomates whose certificates expire in 2014 are required to complete and report completion of one PI activity by their certification expiration date
- Diplomates whose certificates expire in 2015 and 2016 must complete and report completion of one PI activity and one CP activity by their certification expiration date
- Diplomates whose certificates expire in 2017 must have completed and reported one PI activity by the end of 2012. They must also complete and report completion of the following:
  - A PI activity between 2013 and their certification expiration date
  - A CP activity anytime by the end of their certification expiration date

The IMP phase-in period ends in 2017. Diplomates whose certificates expire in or after 2018 have the full complement of IMP requirements.

**APPEALS**

The American Board of Emergency Medicine maintains an appeal process for diplomates and former diplomates who do not fulfill the requirements described in this policy.

**EXCEPTION**

None

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