GIM Grand Rounds: CUSOM Maintenance of Certification Portfolio Approval Program – Part IV Credit and ABIM Overview

[Note: This material is a summarization of the information found at abim.org and is only used for the purposes of this presentation.]

Questions and Answers

Why is ABIM changing its program?

- There is growing recognition and agreement from the public, consumer groups and medical organizations that assessing knowledge and performance every 10 years is not sufficient.
The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has argued that in a profession with a "continually expanding knowledge base," a mechanism is needed to ensure that practitioners remain up-to-date with current best practices. The growing knowledge base requires that training and ongoing licensure and certification reflect the need for lifelong learning and evaluation of competencies.

Research has shown that the public expects that physicians undergo a rigorous, periodic examination of knowledge. Read more research.

- Greater frequency of engagement in MOC recognizes the changing face of medicine and the fact that maintaining certification once every 10 years is not enough.
- Board certification is a tangible part of earning the privilege enjoyed by the medical profession to self-regulate. Retaining this privilege and maintaining the trust of patients and the public requires demonstrating that a board certified internist has the requisite knowledge, and knows how to use it.
- These changes to MOC will also increase the relevancy of the credential by aligning with other physician reporting requirements.


What are the changes to ABIM's MOC program in 2014?

- For all ABIM Board Certified physicians, ABIM will begin reporting whether or not you are "Meeting MOC Requirements" (i.e., continuously engaging in MOC activities). Greater frequency of engagement in MOC recognizes the changing face of medicine and increases the relevancy of the credential by aligning with other physician reporting requirements. We will also be continuously improving our products, making them more relevant and meaningful.
  - ABIM will honor time remaining on all certifications. You will continue to be certified for the length of your current certification(s), assuming you hold a current and valid license.
  - If you hold certification(s) that are valid indefinitely, you will not lose those certification(s).
  - All diplomates whose certifications are current and whose licenses are in good standing will be "Meeting MOC Requirements" when the changes to MOC take effect in 2014.
    - To be "Meeting MOC Requirements" after the changes take effect in 2014, you must complete at least one MOC activity to earn ABIM MOC points by December 31, 2015 and every two years thereafter. By December 31, 2018 and every five years thereafter, you must earn a total of 100 ABIM MOC points with at least 20 points in medical knowledge and 20 points in practice assessment. In addition, you must fulfill a patient safety and a patient survey requirement.
    - The points earned every two years will count toward your five-year requirement, and also count toward the milestones for the certifications you are maintaining.
• You need to pass the exam every 10 years in each certification area you choose to maintain. You will also earn 20 MOC points for your first exam attempt in each certification area.

• You can earn MOC points by completing ABIM's own MOC products, or many other activities developed by other organizations that ABIM has approved for MOC.

How long will the MOC program take me?

• The changes to the MOC program are designed to spread out the requirements over time so that physicians will not feel pressured to complete multiple activities at one time.

• ABIM estimates you will be investing anywhere from five to 20 hours per year in professional development activities in order to be reported as "Meeting MOC Requirements."

• In the year you need to prepare for and take the exam, the time commitment is greater. ABIM will recognize that preparation by awarding 20 MOC points for the first time you take an MOC exam within every 10-year period for each certification you hold.

• We are working to recognize more of what you are doing in practice and provide MOC credit for other products. Our products can help you earn CME, and many of the CME products offered by medical societies can be applied to MOC credit.

What do you mean, ABIM is offering me credit for things I already do?

We know that most physicians are already involved in professional self-assessment and improvement. We are continuously expanding our MOC program to include more options to earn MOC points for activities you are already doing.

Certified by another ABMS Board:

• Certified by another member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties? The work you do to maintain certification for that board can earn you ABIM MOC points. Visit www.abim.org/dualboard to find out more.

• Physician Quality Reporting System – You can earn a financial bonus from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as a result of your activities in Maintenance of Certification (MOC) in 2013. If you've participated in CMS' PQRS program, you are eligible to participate in PQRS MOC, a separate voluntary federal program that enables physicians who are certified by ABIM and who successfully report PQRS quality measures to CMS to earn an additional bonus by completing MOC requirements in 2013. Visit www.abim.org/maintenance-of-certification/physician-quality-reporting-system.aspx for more information.

Self-Evaluation of Practice Performance:

• Have you done a quality improvement (QI) project in the last two years? Are you beginning a QI project now? If these projects use your clinical data, registry data or other evidence-based measures, you can earn MOC practice assessment points for these activities through either the Completed Project PIM, or the Self-Directed PIM (each earn you Self-Evaluation of Practice Assessment points). Visit www.abim.org/moc/earning-points/productinfo-demo-ordering.aspx for more information about these and other ABIM practice assessment modules.
- Is your institution or medical society engaged in quality improvement activities?
  More than 50 non-ABIM products or institutional programs can earn diplomates Self-
  Evaluation of Practice Assessment points through ABIM's Approved Quality Improvement
  (AQI) program (visit www.abim.org/moc/earning-points/productinfo-demo-ordering.aspx#aqi
  to learn more) and the Multi-Specialty Portfolio Approval Program (visit
  mocportfolioprogram.org/approved-portfolio-sponsors/ to learn more).

- Rewards and Recognition from Health Plans – Several major health insurers' pay-for-
  performance and recognition programs now reward and recognize diplomates who are
  enrolled in Maintenance of Certification and who regularly complete program activities such
  as ABIM PIMs Practice Improvement Modules®. Visit www.abim.org/moc/getting-
  more/reward-recognition.aspx to learn more.

- Bridges to Excellence – Bridges to Excellence® has recognized the ABIM PIMs Practice
  Improvement Modules® as effective tools for quality improvement and seeks to reward
  physicians who achieve certain levels of performance on the ABIM Diabetes PIM and the
  ABIM Hypertension PIM. Visit www.abim.org/moc/getting-more/bridges-to-excellence.aspx
  to learn more.

Will any of these changes benefit me?

- Your first exam attempt in each certification area you maintain can earn 20 MOC points.
- You will now have the option of paying for the program on an annual basis or for the full 10
  years in advance at a discount.
- Your MOC fee includes unlimited access to all of ABIM's self-evaluation products, many of
  which earn CME credit.
- Through your engagement in MOC, you also have the opportunity to earn additional
  reimbursement through PQRS.
- If you are in fellowship, you can earn MOC points and a fee credit for each eligible year of
  fellowship training.
- If you are newly certified in Internal Medicine in 2013 and after, you will receive a waiver of
  the annual MOC fee for the first year after you pass the Internal Medicine Certification
  Exam. You can enroll in MOC starting in January 2014.
  - When the new requirements take effect in early 2014, your log in Home
    Page and MOC Status Report on ABIM.org will be updated with
    personalized information based on the certification areas you choose to
    maintain. Your status report will show you what you need to do next to be
    "Meeting MOC Requirements" and to maintain your certifications. In the
    future, we will be rolling out improvements to these pages to further enhance
    the MOC process for all ABIM Board Certified physicians.

These weren't the rules when I certified. Why do I have to do this now?

- There is growing recognition and agreement from the public, consumer groups and medical
  organizations that assessing knowledge and performance every 10 years is not sufficient.'
  Greater frequency of engagement in MOC recognizes the changing face of medicine and
  the fact that maintaining certification once every 10 years is not enough. These changes to
  the MOC requirements will also increase the relevancy of the credential by aligning with
  other regular reporting requirements you need to meet.
• ABIM reserves the right to make changes in its fees, examinations, policies and procedures at any time without advance notice. Admission to ABIM's certification process is determined by the policies in force at the time of application.

• The new MOC program requirements apply to all ABIM Board Certified physicians, regardless of when they were initially certified.

• ABIM will honor time remaining on all certifications. You will continue to be certified for the length of your current certification(s), assuming you hold a current and valid license. However, if you miss any of the MOC program requirements, you will be reported as "Certified, Not Meeting MOC Requirements."

• If you hold certification(s) that are valid indefinitely, you will not lose those certification(s). However, if you miss any of the MOC program requirements, you will be reported as "Certified, Not Meeting MOC Requirements."


What if I don't do anything in 2014?

If you are already enrolled in MOC and don't do anything, ABIM will report you as:

• Internal Medicine [for example]: Certified
Meeting Maintenance of Certification Requirements: Yes

• [For those whose certificates expire in 2014] unless you don't complete all the requirements in time. If that happens, you will be listed as Not Certified.

If you achieved initial certification in 2013, you will have a fee waiver but will need to enroll starting January 2014 and no later than March 31, 2014. Assuming you do this, ABIM will report you as:

• Internal Medicine [for example]: Certified
Meeting Maintenance of Certification Requirements: Yes

If you achieved initial certification in 2013 and do NOT enroll by March 31, 2014, ABIM will report you as:

• Internal Medicine [for example]: Certified
Meeting Maintenance of Certification Requirements: No

If you have time remaining on your certificate, but have no fee credit and haven't enrolled in your MOC program, ABIM will report you as:

• Internal Medicine [for example]: Certified
Meeting Maintenance of Certification Requirements: No

If you hold certification that is valid indefinitely but haven't activated your MOC program by March 31, 2014, ABIM will report you as:

• Internal Medicine [for example]: Certified
Meeting Maintenance of Certification Requirements: No
**How much does it cost?**

Beginning 2014, fees for MOC will depend upon which certifications you choose to maintain. You have the option of paying annually or pre-paying for 10 years. Fees below include the first exam attempt in each certification you are maintaining and access to all of ABIM's self-evaluation modules. Some fee examples are below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Annual Fee</th>
<th>10-year Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Medicine*</td>
<td>$194</td>
<td>$1,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Medicine</td>
<td>$206</td>
<td>$2,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Subspecialty Certificate</td>
<td>$256</td>
<td>$2,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM + 1 Subspecialty Certificate</td>
<td>$353</td>
<td>$3,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Subspecialty Certificates</td>
<td>$384</td>
<td>$3,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Anyone newly certified in Internal Medicine will receive a waiver of their annual MOC fee for the year after they pass the Internal Medicine Certification Exam. This includes the diplomates who passed the Internal Medicine Certification Exam in 2013, who will receive a waiver of their annual MOC fee for 2014. However, you will need to claim your waiver by logging in to ABIM.org and enrolling in MOC starting in January 2014 and no later than March 31, 2014.

**Already enrolled in MOC:**

- Most diplomates won't owe any additional fees when the MOC changes take effect in 2014.
- Additional fees may be incurred if you choose to take an additional exam or for exam retakes.
- Your next payment will be due when your current enrollment expires. At that point, you can choose to pay annually or pre-pay for 10 years at a time. To find out whether you are enrolled, log in to ABIM.org and check your MOC Status Report.

**Not currently enrolled in MOC:**

- If you are maintaining more than one certification, the cost will be the fee of the most expensive certification plus half for each of the others. You can choose which certifications you will maintain when you activate your MOC program after logging in to ABIM.org.
- If you are in a fellowship program, you may have to pay the MOC fee in 2014 unless you were previously enrolled in MOC or you initially certified in Internal Medicine in 2013 (in which case, you receive a fee waiver for being newly certified). Upon completion of each eligible fellowship year and receipt of your evaluation from your program director, you will receive a one-year fee credit.

**Can MOC activities before 2014 be applied to "Meeting MOC Requirements"?**

- Only points earned for MOC activities completed in 2014 and after will count toward the new "Meeting MOC Requirements" reporting.
  - Unfortunately, no. In order to be "Meeting MOC Requirements," you will need to earn points by the two- and five-year milestones. This requirement
begins in early 2014 for everyone – regardless of the points they earned prior to 2014, or when they initially certified.

• If you have certifications that expire prior to 2018, points earned prior to 2014 will only count toward the 100 points you need to maintain your certifications and will not count toward the "Meeting MOC Requirements" reporting.

• If you have certifications expiring in 2018 and beyond, you will follow the new requirements starting in early 2014, including completing an MOC activity every two years and earning 100 ABIM MOC points with 20 points in medical knowledge and 20 points in practice assessment every five years. Any points earned prior to 2014 will not count toward maintaining certifications expiring in 2018 or beyond.

Do these new rules wash away all the points I've earned?

• Points earned prior to 2014 will count toward certifications expiring from 2013 through 2017 but will not count toward the "Meeting MOC Requirements" reporting. Only those points earned in 2014 and after will count toward "Meeting MOC Requirements."

• If you have a certification expiring in 2018 or beyond, any points earned before 2014 will not count toward maintaining your certification. To maintain certifications expiring 2018 and beyond, you will follow the new MOC requirements starting in early 2014, including completing an MOC activity every two years and earning 100 ABIM MOC points with 20 points in medical knowledge and 20 points in practice assessment every five years.

• The points earned every two years will count toward your five-year requirement, and also count toward the milestones for the certifications you are maintaining.

I hold a certification that is valid indefinitely. Why are you reporting that I am not meeting MOC requirements when I don't have any requirements to meet?

• There is growing recognition and agreement from the public, consumer groups and medical organizations that assessing knowledge and performance every 10 years is not sufficient.

• The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has argued that in a profession with a "continually expanding knowledge base" a mechanism is needed to ensure that practitioners remain up-to-date with current best practices. The growing knowledge base requires that training and ongoing licensure and certification reflect the need for lifelong learning and evaluation of competencies.

• Research has shown that the public expects that physicians undergo a rigorous, periodic examination of knowledge. Read more research.

• Greater frequency of engagement in MOC recognizes the changing face of medicine and the fact that maintaining certification once every 10 years is not enough.

• These changes to the MOC requirements will also increase the relevancy of the credential by aligning with other regular reporting requirements you need to meet. The new MOC program requirements apply to all ABIM Board Certified physicians, regardless of when they were initially certified.
• **ABIM will honor all certifications already issued**, and diplomates who received certifications that are valid indefinitely will remain certified (assuming you hold a current and valid license).

• However, for all ABIM Board Certified physicians, regardless of when they were initially certified, ABIM will begin reporting whether or not they are "Meeting MOC Requirements."

• In addition to the "Meeting MOC Requirements" requirement, diplomates with a certification that is valid indefinitely will need to pass the MOC exam in their certification area by December 31, 2023 in order to be reported as "Meeting MOC Requirements." This is in addition to continuing to meet the point requirements of the MOC program.

• Log in to ABIM.org in 2014 to learn your specific MOC program requirements.

• Those holding certificates that are valid indefinitely who do not activate their MOC program by March 31, 2014 will be reported as Certified, Not Meeting MOC requirements." They will NOT be reported as "Not Certified" for failing to meet MOC requirements.

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**How do I reinstate my certification status if I fall behind?**

• You must complete any outstanding requirements in order for your certification and "Meeting MOC Requirements" status to be reinstated.

• If your certification has lapsed, you will need to complete your existing program requirements to reinstate your lapsed certification. After you complete your requirements, you will receive a new certificate, the ongoing validity of which is contingent upon "Meeting MOC Requirements."

• Log in to ABIM.org in 2014 and view your MOC Status Report to find out what you need to do.

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**What is the evidence that supports the need to meet MOC requirements on a more continuous basis? How do you know the public wants this?**

• At ABIM, our obligation is to make the MOC process more efficient without losing the rigor of the credential, and to create a program that is relevant to you, your colleagues and your patients. In addition to meeting physicians’ professional expectations, the new MOC process will position the credential potentially to satisfy much of the reporting you need to do as a physician – to licensing boards, hospitals, Medicare or insurers. We want those entities to recognize that MOC, as a professionally created activity informed by the wisdom of expert clinicians, is sufficient to track your performance in practice and your commitment to lifelong learning, and as better than something they might develop on their own.

• The changes to ABIM's MOC program requirements are designed to engage all diplomates in activities on an ongoing basis to demonstrate that physicians are maintaining their certification and "Meeting MOC Requirements."

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- Read research on the effectiveness of MOC and on the public's expectations of physicians.

**What is the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)?**

- ABIM is one of 24 medical specialty boards that make up the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Through ABMS, the boards work together to establish common standards for physicians to achieve and maintain board certification. As a member of the ABMS, ABIM abides by its standards in developing requirements for new areas of certification and the Maintenance of Certification program. ABMS is an independent, non-profit organization. For more information about ABMS, visit www.abms.org.

**Is ABIM the only ABMS Board with a continuous program?**

While ABIM believes that a more continuous MOC program helps you keep pace with the changes in the science of medicine and assessment, we are not making these changes alone. In fact, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), of which ABIM is a member, is requiring that all of its 24 member Boards implement a more continuous MOC program.

**Will hospitals and health plans require new MOC requirements?**

Some hospitals and health plans require board certification and others require Maintenance of Certification. ABIM has no control over their requirements.

**How will credentialists know that I am certified if my certificate is contingent upon meeting the requirements of MOC?**

ABIM is actively reaching out to the credentialing community to educate them about the new MOC requirements, and we are specifically addressing how to understand and report certifications contingent upon "Meeting MOC Requirements."

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