



American Board *of* Family Medicine

An ABFM Update

The Now and Future of ABFM Board Certification

— SPEAKER

Erin Myhre, MBA, PMP

ABFM Director of Certification Programs



American Board
of Family Medicine

Disclosures

- I serve as a representative for the American Board of Family Medicine.
- I have nothing to disclose financially, am on no speaker's bureaus, and will not be discussing any off-label use of any products.

Objectives for this Session

- Identify the purpose and value of ABFM Board Certification and outline the requirements for maintaining certification to provide high-quality care.
- Explain the reason for the transition to a 5-Year Cycle and recognize the benefits of this change.
- Describe the updates made to ABFM certification activities to increase relevance and support for family physicians for a variety of practices.

ABFM Vision

Our goal is to enhance family physicians' care, patient experience, and cost-effectiveness for all, while supporting the wellbeing of family physicians and their teams.

2025-26 ABFM Board of Directors



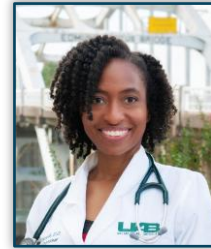
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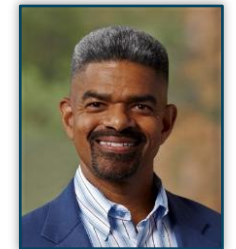
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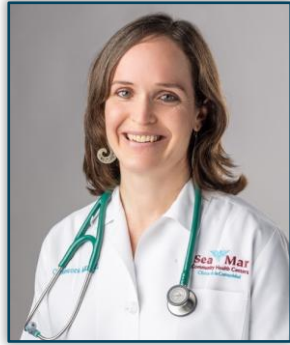
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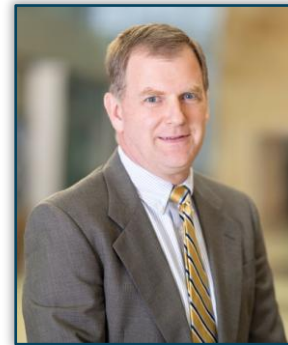
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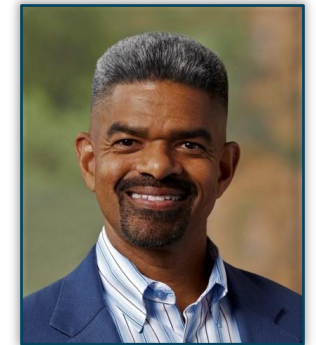
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ABMS Specialty Board Physicians

Public



Joan Anzia, MD
Psychiatry and Neurology



Anna Kuo, MD
Pediatrics



Barbra Rabson, MPH



Brenessa Lindeman, MD
Surgery



Jeanne Sheffield, MD
Obstetrics and Gynecology



Asher Tulsky, MD
Internal Medicine



Tanya Lord, PhD, MPH

Why ABFM Board Certification?

A Higher Standard

Patients expect the best medical care for themselves and their families. They want to feel confident and trust that their physician is qualified and is committed to providing safe and high-quality care.



Joseph Laterza, MD
Board Certified since 2023

The Pittsburgh Study: What's The Evidence Behind Continuing Certification Exams?

<https://www.theabfm.org/research/evidence-behind-continuing-certification-conceptual-foundations>

- 1** Cognitive Skills Need to be Kept Current
- 2** Individual Self-Assessment is Not Enough
- 3** Testing Enhances Learning & Motivation
- 4** Goals and Consequences are Important Motivators

The Components of ABFM Board Certification

PROFESSIONALISM

Maintain Licensure and Comply
with Guidelines

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Identify Gaps in Knowledge

EXAM

Measures Your Clinical
Knowledge

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Identify Opportunities for
Growth

10-Year Continuous Certification Process

Certified or
Recertified
Between 2011 & 2024

Ongoing 3-Year Stages

50 Certification Points

Self-Assessment

Performance Improvement

150 Continuing Medical Education (CME)

Meet ABFM Professionalism Guidelines

Exam Requirement

Annual Fee

Continuous Certification Process	3-Year Stages
Certification Exam	10-Year Exam
Points & Activities Complete Self-Assessment & Performance Improvement Activities to Earn Certification Points	50 Points
Continuing Medical Education	150 CME
Professionalism & Licensure Continuously Hold Medical License(s) that Meet ABFM Professionalism Guidelines	✓
Annual Certification Fee	✓

Continuous Certification Process	3-Year Stages	▶	EXAM YEAR 5-Year Cycle
Certification Exam	10-Year Exam	START 5-YEAR CYCLE IN EXAM YEAR	Begin Longitudinal Assessment in Year 1
Points & Activities Complete Self-Assessment & Performance Improvement Activities to Earn Certification Points	50 Points		60 Points
Continuing Medical Education	150 CME		200 CME
Professionalism & Licensure Continuously Hold Medical License(s) that Meet ABFM Professionalism Guidelines	✓		✓
Annual Certification Fee	✓		✓

Why Change?

1

To meet the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Standards for Continuing Certification, which includes assessing Diplomates at an interval no longer than five years to retain each certificate.

2

To help maintain awareness of increasingly rapid medical advances and changes in practice guidelines.

3

Simplify the continuous certification process so that is more flexible and convenient for you.

2024 ABMS Standards for Continuing Certification



American Board
of Medical Specialties
Higher standards. Better care.®

ABFM
AMERICAN BOARD
of FAMILY MEDICINE



Longitudinal
assessment as
exam option



Incorporated
feedback into self-
assessment and
exam for learning
opportunities



Integration of
activities to
reduce burden



Engage
Diplomates in
ongoing process
improvement

Continuous Certification 5-Year Cycle

Using the longitudinal assessment as a foundation, the new 5-Year Cycle promotes ongoing learning and knowledge retention and offers increased flexibility and convenience to customize your certification.

5-Year Cycle Requirements

Exam

Answer 25 quarterly exam questions (or opt for one-day exam in year 4)

Activities

Earn 60 certification points through self-assessment and performance improvement activities

CME

Complete 200 CME

Licensure

Maintain your medical license and continuously comply with ABFM's Professionalism Guidelines

Fee

Submit annual certification fee

5-Year Cycle

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Up to 25 Exam Questions per Quarter (100/year)	Up to 25 Exam Questions per Quarter (100/year)	Up to 25 Exam Questions per Quarter (100/year)	Additional Longitudinal Assessment Time	<p>Year Off (no requirements) OR Time to Catch Up (if needed)</p>
			One-Day Exam	
<p>60 Certification Points Earn 60 points through completion of certification activities, including at least one self-assessment and one performance improvement activity.</p>				
<p>Average of 50 CME per Year Earn a total of 200 CME with a minimum of 50% in Division I.</p>				
<p>Medical License Continuously hold medical license(s) that meet ABFM’s Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct.</p>				
<p>Annual Certification Fee</p>				

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Exam Requirement

Designed to assess and measure clinical knowledge across the broad spectrum of conditions treated by family physicians.



Two Options...

Longitudinal
Assessment

OR

One-Day Exam

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How Does Longitudinal Assessment Work?



Begin participation
in January of each
5-Year Cycle



Answer 25 online
exam questions per
quarter



Open book format,
5 minutes per
question



Receive immediate
feedback and
critiques



Estimated scaled
score after year 1
(min. 75 answered)



Complete 300
questions over
three to four years

Diplomate Feedback

use references
& critiques

96%

99%

relevant to
family medicine

42,000+
participants

report less test
anxiety

92%

87%

make changes
in practice

5-Year Cycle

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Certification Activities

Purpose:

Provide a variety of activities that help Diplomates continuously self-assess and improve care in practice.

Two Types...

Self-Assessment

Identify knowledge gaps by reviewing updated clinical content.

Performance Improvement

Identify an improvement opportunity or performance gap.

Self-Assessment

Designed to help identify knowledge gaps by reviewing updated clinical content.

Knowledge Self-Assessment

10 points | 8 CME

Continuous Knowledge Self-Assessment

2.5 points | 2.5 CME

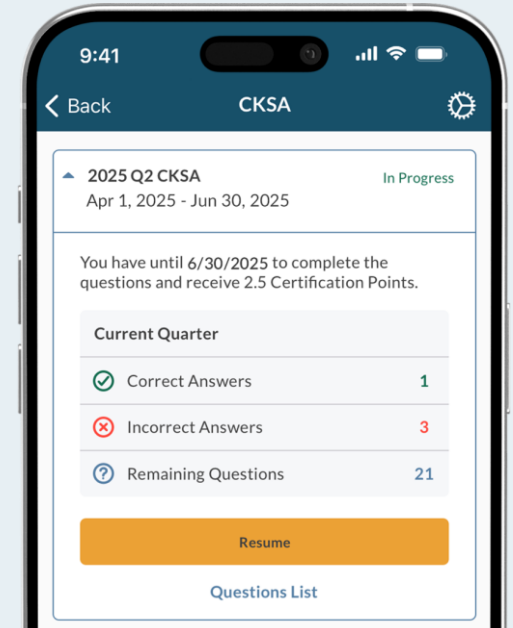
National Journal Club

1 point | 1 CME

Alternative Activities

Variable points and CME

NEW! MyABFM Mobile App with CKSA Experience



Performance Improvement

Designed to support high-quality patient care, this component will help family physicians identify an improvement opportunity or performance gap.

**Exemption for physicians who are clinically inactive.*

Activity Options...

- Self-Directed
- Health Equity
- Augmented Intelligence (AI)
- COVID-19
- **NEW PRIME-Based PI**
- ABFM-Directed
- Recognition Programs
- Organizational Projects

Self-Directed Clinical PI

Get credit for improvement work you are already doing!

Submit details in 20 minutes or less in your MyABFM Portfolio.

Up to 10 physicians can submit an improvement project together.

Submission includes initial data, intervention, and a follow-up data.

Final step is to attest to your level of participation in the project.

5-Year Cycle

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Continuing Medical Education (CME)

To view your specific CME requirements, please visit your MyABFM Portfolio.

CME earned for your state medical license board or AAFP applies to ABFM certification.

Total hours and their overall distribution parallels AAFP requirements.

AAFP members report in your AAFP CME record.

Non-AAFP members have manual entry option in MyABFM Portfolio.

5-Year Cycle

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If you complete longitudinal assessment

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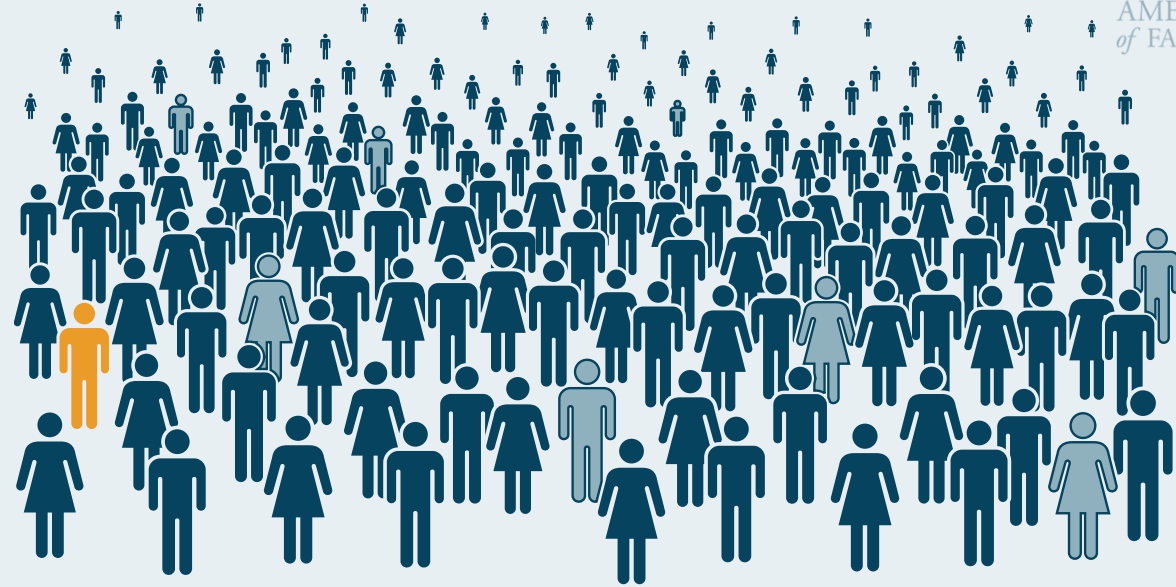
Professionalism: A 3-Part Framework



Professionalism

0.9% of Diplomates reviewed by Professionalism Committee annually

Only 0.09% lose certification and 50% of these are restored



Most Common Issues:

Prescribing controlled substances

Sexual misconduct

Personal substance use

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Cost of Certification

Did You Know?

ABFM fees have not increased since 2008!

\$200 Annual Certification Fee Covers...

Your exam (with no exam administration fee), no matter which option you choose.

All ABFM activities, including National Journal Club.

One free retake if your first exam attempt was unsuccessful.

5-Year Cycle Recap

You never have to take the one-day exam again, unless you want to!

Other activities will continue, but with more time to complete.

You will not transition to the 5-Year Cycle until your next exam is due. *

Choose the activities most relevant to your practice.

Existing 10-year commitments will be honored.

Fees will remain the same in 2025 (and for as long as we can)!

* Visit your MyABFM Portfolio to confirm when you will transition to the 5-Year Cycle.

Supporting Your Certification Journey

MyABFM Portfolio

NEW! MyABFM Mobile App

Updated KSA Platform

National Journal Club

Digital Badge & Certificate

ABFM Insights (Blog)

Scan the QR code to
view these resources
and more!



Your Voice Matters

We Want Your Feedback!

Certification
Focus Groups

Share Your
Story

Surveys &
Questionnaires

And More!



Sign up to be part of ABFM's Engagement Network in your MyABFM Portfolio.



PRIME REGISTRY™

Improving America's Health



www.primeregistry.org

Email us

primeteam@primeregistry.org

PRIME lowers your burden by:

Reporting Performance Improvement (PI) credit for ABFM Diplomates based on eligible activities submitted to CMS

Improving care through clinical quality measure dashboards and patient care gap identification

Identifying solutions for patient needs related to Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)

Reporting for physicians, practices, health systems and ACOs participating in compliance programs

Thank You!

Contact the ABFM Support Center:

Phone: (877) 223-7437

Email: help@theabfm.org

Livechat: www.theabfm.org