



---

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MOC (10YR-MOC)

(Nov. 2009)

### 1. What is Maintenance of Certification (MOC)?

Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is an initiative of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) aimed at insuring that physician specialists, certified by one of the 24 member boards of the ABMS, offer quality patient care through an ongoing process of self-improvement. MOC entails four basic components: professional standing, self-assessment and continuing medical education (CME), cognitive expertise, and performance in practice.

### 2. Why should I participate?

It is likely that the public and political emphasis on the continuous documentation of clinical competence and quality improvement by physicians will only increase over the years ahead, making a program like MOC essential.

### 3. What is ABPN trying to accomplish with MOC?

The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) has strived to develop a credible MOC program for our diplomates that strikes a balance between what will likely be required by organizations that license, credential, and pay physicians and what is reasonable and straightforward enough to be accomplished by busy physicians. Many of our diplomates are already participating in various components of MOC through institutional or practice group quality improvement programs and the MOC Program will try to recognize those efforts. ABPN has tried to develop a clear MOC program that will enable a diplomate to demonstrate their competence throughout a 10-year certificate cycle.

### 4. What is the MOC Program timetable?

The MOC program is being phased in incrementally, and diplomates should become familiar with the current requirements and phase-in schedule for the 4-part ABPN MOC Program.

### 5. Is participation in the MOC Program mandatory?

While participation in the MOC Program is voluntary, it is a requirement in order to maintain certification for diplomates with time-limited certificates. Holders of time-limited certificates must complete all components of the ABPN MOC Program in order to maintain their Board certification.

### 6. Should I participate in the MOC Program if I have a "lifetime" certificate?

Participation in the MOC Program is not required for diplomates with "lifetime" certificates; however, credentialing requirements for hospitals, practice groups, and third-party payers may require evidence of continuous certification efforts. In addition, some states are considering the implementation of Maintenance of Licensure Programs, similar to the MOC Program. If a lifetime certificate holder voluntarily participates in the MOC Program and does not pass the cognitive examination, that individual will not lose their "lifetime" certificate.

### 7. How do I keep track of completed MOC components during the MOC cycle?

Maintain a file that documents the completion of all Self-Assessment, CME, and PIP activities in the event one is audited by the ABPN.



The ABPN has developed a new online ABPN Physician web portal for our diplomates at <https://application.abpn.com/webclient/folios.aspx>. A diplomate is able to securely log on to the ABPN Physician Folios to apply and pay online for examinations and keep a record of completed MOC components. The system will also monitor progress of completion according to an individual's MOC cycle.

**8. When do I begin with the MOC process?**

You are automatically enrolled in the MOC Program after achieving board certification. A diplomate should log on to the ABPN Physician Folios to activate their online account and keep updated on MOC Program requirements.

**9. What should I do now to make sure I keep current with the MOC requirements?**

- Maintain an unrestricted license to practice medicine.
- Complete a Self-Assessment activity that provides CME credit such as those listed on our web site, [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com).
- Earn at least an average of 8 hours of CME credit per year from Self-Assessment activities.
- Use the results of completed Self-Assessment activities to design a plan for subsequent CME.
- Complete at least an average of 30 hours of CME credit per year (this includes the 8 hours of CME credit per year from Self-Assessment activities).
- Become familiar with practice guidelines relevant to one's area of clinical practice in anticipation of the requirement (in 2013) to compare data from one's own clinical cases to those practice guidelines in the PIP Clinical Modules.
- Become familiar with the peer and patient feedback forms on the ABPN website ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com)) in anticipation of the requirement (in 2013) to solicit feedback from one's patients and peers about one's clinical practice in the PIP Feedback Modules.
- Encourage the Quality Assurance Program of one's hospital, clinic, practice plan, etc. to design its programs to provide the type of information that will fulfill the requirements of the PIP Clinical and Feedback Modules.
- Meet the required deadlines on the ABPN web site ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com)) to apply for the ABPN MOC Examination.

**10. What happens if my certificate expired already?**

Diplomates who are not recertified before their certificates expire are no longer Board certified in that area. Once a former diplomate completes all of the MOC Program requirements and passes the MOC examination, however, he or she will regain certification status. It is not necessary to sit for the initial certification examination again or complete additional training.

**11. If I hold more than one certification, do I need to accrue CME credits and perform other MOC activities for each certification?**

If a diplomate is certified in two or more areas, any CME, self-assessment, and PIP activities completed in one area of specialization/subspecialization may accrue and count for multiple certifications. However, if the diplomate is certified in more than one specialty/subspecialty (e.g. psychiatry and neurology) and wants to maintain certificates in both, the diplomate must pass cognitive examinations in both areas, (e.g. psychiatry and neurology).