



American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

# Maintenance of Certification Program

**NOTE: All policies, components, and requirements of the ABPN Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program are subject to change. Each ABPN Diplomate is responsible for remaining informed about the current MOC program requirements. Diplomates are encouraged to consult the ABPN website at [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com) for regular updates.**

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# The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program

## Introduction

The ABPN MOC Program is provided as a service to diplomates of the ABPN. The program includes examination format options, tracking options, online examination registration, and a structure that will assist diplomates in remaining up-to-date in their respective fields. It is the expectation of the Board that diplomates will use the tools provided to keep themselves abreast of improvements in their individual fields and thus maintain their certification.

The ABPN has developed a 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 quality improvement programs. The MOC program will endeavour to recognize those efforts. ABPN has worked to develop a clear MOC program that will enable diplomates to demonstrate their competence throughout a certificate cycle.

The ABPN is committed to supporting its diplomates throughout their careers by advancing the clinical practices of psychiatry and neurology and by promoting the highest evidence-based guidelines and standards. **The goal of the MOC program is to ensure excellence of patient care and encourage and support practice improvement.**

The MOC program requires diplomates to participate in sanctioned self-assessment performance measures, identify possible weaknesses in their knowledge, pursue learning activities tailored to individual areas that need to be strengthened, and develop quality improvement programs based on their clinical practice. The goal for diplomates is to reflect on their personal knowledge and performance, commit to a process of improvement and reevaluation over specified time frames, and continually improve care for their patients.

## History of Recertification and Maintenance of Certification

Physicians certified in psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, neurology, or neurology with special qualification in child neurology before October 1, 1994 were granted lifetime certificates.

Between October 1, 1994 and December 31, 2011 all individuals achieving specialty Board certification by the ABPN were issued time-limited certificates that expired December 31, ten years after they were issued. Certificates issued in all subspecialties except child and adolescent psychiatry have always been time-limited. Time-limited certificates for child and adolescent psychiatry began in 1995. Beginning January 1, 2012, all certificates are dependent upon continuous maintenance of certification based on a three-year cycle of requirements with certificates being valid as long as they are maintained. The examination cycle remains at ten years.

Due to a mandate of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the recertification program transitioned to MOC in 2007. Before 2007, diplomates could recertify simply by taking the recertification examination. Beginning in 2007, admission to the recertification (now called MOC) examination required prerequisites. The change from recertification to MOC strengthened the program and guaranteed that physicians were current in ways not immediately available for testing.

## General Conditions of Maintenance of Certification

Diplomates' certification and maintenance of certification statuses are public information. This information is reported by the ABPN to the public in the ABPN verifyCERT® system and annually to the ABMS.

Specialty certification certificates (psychiatry, neurology, and neurology with special qualification in child neurology) and all subspecialty certificates must be renewed periodically in order to remain valid. Certificates that are not renewed are no longer valid and the physician is no longer certified in that specialty and/or subspecialty.

Certifications in most subspecialties are dependent upon the primary specialty. Diplomates with certificates in any subspecialty other than child and adolescent psychiatry must also maintain certification in their specialty in order to maintain certification in the area of subspecialization. Diplomates in neurodevelopmental disabilities must maintain certification in neurology with special qualification in child neurology. **If certification in the primary specialty lapses, certification in any subspecialty except child and adolescent psychiatry is no longer valid.**

Diplomates in child and adolescent psychiatry do not need to maintain current certification in general psychiatry for their subspecialty certification to remain valid and to maintain certification in child and adolescent psychiatry.

If a certificate lapses, there is no time limit on regaining certification status through MOC.

Maintenance of Certification program participation includes meeting **all** MOC requirements, [(Continuing Medical Education credits (CME), Self-Assessment (SA), Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP)] as well as passing the MOC examination. Maintenance of Certification requirements must be completed *prior to* submitting an application for the examination.

Any CME, SA, and/or PIP activities completed will apply to all specialties/subspecialties in which a physician is certified. Combined (formerly modular) examination formats are available for physicians who wish to maintain certification in more than one area.

The expertise component of the MOC program is the MOC (previously recertification) examination. A passing score on the MOC examination automatically enrolls the diplomate into the Continuous Maintenance of Certification (C-MOC) Program.

## Maintenance of Certification for Lifetime Certificate Holders

Physicians certified in psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, neurology, or neurology with special qualification in child neurology before October 1, 1994 were granted lifetime certificates.

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.

There are two pathways for Lifetime Certificate holders to voluntarily participate in the MOC program:

1. Diplomates can take an MOC examination and be automatically enrolled in C-MOC upon passing the MOC examination.

OR
2. Diplomates can elect to enroll in C-MOC, complete one block of MOC activity requirement credit [90 Category-1 CME, of which 24 need to come from SA CME, and one Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP) unit], and then pass the MOC exam within three years.

To elect into C-MOC, diplomates need to follow the prompts to “Switch to the C-MOC program” in his/her ABPN Physician Folios account’s Maintenance of Certification section, under the MOC Main Menu tab. There is a C-MOC fee of \$175 that will be credited to his/her next MOC exam.

Lifetime certificate holders who voluntarily participate in the MOC program and do not pass the MOC examination will not lose their lifetime certificate. Lifetime certificate holders who do not participate in MOC will be reported to the ABMS and on the ABPN website as, ‘Certified-not meeting MOC requirements and not required to do so’.

## Examinations and Applications for Examination

Maintenance of Certification Examinations for each specialty are offered annually. Maintenance of Certification examinations for subspecialties are offered annually beginning in the ninth year the subspecialty exists.

All MOC examinations are administered at more than 200 Pearson VUE computer-testing centers located throughout the United States and Canada. Maintenance of Certification examinations are currently administered early in the calendar year (except pain medicine). Other than pain medicine, application deadlines for MOC examinations are generally in the year before the examination.

Combined (formerly modular) MOC examinations are available for physicians who wish to recertify in more than one specialty and/or subspecialty at the same time. Combined examinations consist of 100 questions from each specialty or subspecialty area. Any MOC examinations administered by ABPN are available to be combined into this examination format. Examinations administered by other Boards (e.g., sleep medicine, pain medicine) are not available to be combined.

Applications and current *Information for Applicants* publications for each examination are available three months before the deadline indicated on the examination schedule. Applications are submitted through ABPN Physician Folios ([www.abpn.com/folios](http://www.abpn.com/folios)). *Information for Applicants* publications and the current examination schedule can also be found at [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com).

The ABPN will audit approximately five percent of the applications submitted for the MOC examination. Candidates whose applications are audited will receive an email detailing the documentation required as evidence of completion of required MOC activities (CME, SA and PIP activities). Failure to return this documentation will result in the denial of the application for the MOC examination.

## The Two Maintenance of Certification Programs

The ABPN currently has two active MOC programs and specific activity requirements exist for each:

- The 10-Year MOC Program for diplomates with time-limited certificates issued prior to 2012; and
- the Continuous MOC (C-MOC) Program for diplomates who took an exam (initial or MOC) in 2012 or later.

Diplomates who do not maintain their certification according to the requirements of the MOC program in which they are enrolled are no longer certified.

A description of the requirements unique to each program can be found in this booklet along with details on common requirements for ALL diplomates (see page 4). The 10-year MOC program description on pages 9 and 10 includes a schedule for physicians recertifying between 2015 and 2021 with the activity requirements that must be met prior to applying for an MOC examination. The C-MOC program activity requirements are based on 3-year blocks and are outlined on pages 11, 12 and 13.

# Common Requirements: Maintenance of Certification for ALL Diplomates

As mandated by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), the Board has developed an MOC program that include four components:

1. Professionalism and Professional Standing
2. Lifelong Learning (CME) and Self-Assessment (SA)
3. Assessment of Knowledge, Judgment, and Skills
4. Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP)

Any CME, SA and PIP activities completed will apply to all specialties/subspecialties in which a physician is certified. Combined examination formats are available for physicians who wish to maintain certification in more than one area.

## 1. Professionalism and Professional Standing

To show evidence of professional standing, all diplomates must continuously hold an active, full, and unrestricted allopathic and/or osteopathic license to practice medicine in at least one state, commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, or province of Canada. All licenses held by a physician must be unrestricted. An active, full, unrestricted license must be maintained even if the physician is out of the country for extended periods of time. Full details of licensure requirements can be found in any *Information for Applicants* publication on the ABPN website. Licenses must be kept up-to-date in a ABPN Physician Folios account on the ABPN website at [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com).

## 2. Lifelong Learning (CME) and Self-Assessment (SA)

### A. Continuing Medical Education (CME)

Diplomates are required to complete an average of 30 specialty or subspecialty CME credits per year. Continuing Medical Education must be relevant to the specialty and/or subspecialties in which the diplomate practices. Acceptable CME credits are Category 1 CME accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), Category 1A CME accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), or Category 1 CME accredited by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Diplomates certified in more than one area only need to accrue an average of 30 CME credits per year, because the same CME credits can be used to satisfy CME requirements for multiple specialties and subspecialties. This requirement was phased in beginning in 2006 for diplomates applying for 2007 MOC examinations.

- Diplomates must accrue an average of 30 Category 1 CME credits per year (averaged over three years).
- Continuing Medical Education must be relevant to the specialty/subspecialty in which the diplomate practices.
- At least an average of eight of the CME credits per year (averaged over three years) should involve self-assessment.

### B. Self-Assessment (SA)

Diplomates are required to participate in ABPN-approved broad-based self-assessment activities. SA requirements may be fulfilled by multiple SA activities. Each SA activity must cover new knowledge and/or current best practices in one or more of the competency areas and provide feedback that can be used by the diplomate as the basis for focused CME, lifelong learning, and/or career development. That feedback must include the correct answer and recommended literature resources for each question, and comparative performance to peers.

- An average of eight CME credits per year should involve SA.
- CME from SA activities counts toward total CME credits per year.

### C. NEW Non-CME Self-Assessment (Effective July 2014)

- The ABPN will waive eight CME credits for the completion of a non-CME SA activity.
- The ABPN will waive a maximum of 16 SA CME credits for two different non-CME SA activities in one three-year MOC block.
- Diplomates in C-MOC must complete the approved non-CME SA activity during the block for which they are earning non-CME Self-Assessment credit.
- Diplomates in the 10-year MOC Program, who are due to recertify in 2015-2021, must complete the non-SA CME activities within the 3 years *prior* to applying for the MOC examination.

## **Common Requirements: Maintenance of Certification for ALL Diplomates Continued**

### **Applicable Non-CME Self-Assessment Activities**

Eight CME credits from a self-assessment activity will be waived for ONE of the following options:

- Passing an ABPN cognitive certification or recertification examination,
- Approved scientific grant application (funding not required), with documented peer review/feedback. Individuals seeking credit must maintain evidence of grant submission, approval, and peer review/feedback, and attestation to a significant/major contribution to the grant writing,
- Academic/Scientific journal article accepted for publication, with documented peer review/feedback. Individuals seeking credit must maintain evidence of article submission, acceptance for publication, and peer review/feedback, and attestation to a significant/major contribution to the article writing,
- ABPN-approved non-CME self-assessment examinations that are part of patient safety courses and done post-residency,
- Four hours of peer supervision with written feedback about the diplomate's clinical performance, medical knowledge and patient care, OR
- Peer review with written feedback about the diplomate's clinical performance, medical knowledge and patient care.

**Note: item writing and teaching/supervision do not count as approved non-CME SA activities.**

**Beginning January 1, 2014, diplomates are required to use only ABPN-approved products for self-assessment activities, which are found on the ABPN website ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com)). The ABPN will approve additional programs over time and reserves the right to approve or reject any course or guideline submitted for approval.**

### **3. Assessment of Knowledge, Judgment, and Skills**

Passing the MOC examination at least once every 10 years fulfills the Knowledge, Judgement and Skills program requirement. To sit for a MOC examination, all current MOC activity requirements must be satisfied at the time one applies for the MOC examination.

Practice-relevant, clinically oriented, multiple-choice, computer-administered examinations are delivered in over 200 Pearson VUE testing centers throughout the country.

To prepare for the MOC examinations, diplomates should keep current with research and developments in their field, review specialty-specific journals and practice guidelines, and practice relevant CME programs.

- Diplomates must pass the MOC examination once every 10 years.
- Maintenance of Certification program participation includes meeting all MOC requirements, including passing the MOC examination. All MOC activity requirements must be met prior to applying for examination.
- Maintenance of Certification examinations are currently administered early in the calendar year (except pain medicine). Other than pain medicine, application deadlines for MOC examinations are currently in the year before the examination.
- Combined (formerly modular) MOC examinations are available for physicians who wish to recertify in more than one specialty and/or subspecialty at the same time.

### **4. Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP)**

There are two modules to a PIP unit: a clinical module and a feedback module. Each module has three steps:

Step A: Initial Assessment

Step B: Identify and Implement Improvement

Step C: Reassessment

Improvement in Medical Practice is designed for 'clinically active' physicians (see definitions below) to promote practice improvement activities through both chart review and second-party external review. One PIP unit must be completed every three years.

## Common Requirements: Maintenance of Certification for ALL Diplomates Continued

If a diplomate participates in an institutional QI program approved by the Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Program of the ABMS, that institutional participation will fulfill the PIP clinical module. If a diplomate participates in Portfolio Program approved peer review in a clinical setting, that institutional activity will fulfill the PIP feedback module. Physicians participating in QI programs not approved by the Portfolio Program must get preapproval from ABPN in order for the program to fulfill the clinical or feedback modules and should submit an *Individual Part IV Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP) Approval Request Form* from the Approved MOC Products List on the website.

Physicians may complete one of the ABPN-approved PIP products listed on the ABPN website or seek individual preapproval. Physicians who wish to complete a PIP module that is not listed on the ABPN approved PIP products list or the Portfolio Program must get preapproval from ABPN in order for the program to fulfill the clinical or feedback modules and should submit an *Individual Part IV Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP) Approval Request Form* from the Approved MOC Products List on the website.

### A. Clinical Module (Chart Review)

#### **Step A: Initial Assessment**

- Diplomates are required to collect data from at least five of their own patient charts in a specific category (e.g., diagnosis, type of treatment, treatment setting) obtained from the diplomate's personal practice over the previous three-year period.

#### **Step B: Identify and Implement Improvement**

- Diplomates must then compare data from the five patient charts using a minimum of four quality measures with published best practices, practice guidelines, or peer-based standards of care (e.g., hospital QI programs, standard practice guidelines published by specialty societies), and develop and carry out a plan to improve effectiveness and/or efficiency of individual clinical activities.

#### **Step C: Reassessment**

- Within 24 months, diplomates must collect the same data from at least another five of their own patient charts in the same specific category and review that data to see if improvements in practice have occurred. The same or different patients may be assessed in the original and follow-up data.

### B. Feedback Module (Patient or Peer Review)

#### **Step A: Initial Assessment**

- Diplomates must solicit personal performance feedback from either their peers or patients regarding their own clinical activity during the previous three years.

#### **Step B: Identify and Implement Improvement**

- Based on results from the feedback, diplomates must then identify opportunities for improvement in the effectiveness and/or efficiency in their practice as related to the general competencies\* and take steps to implement improvements as needed.

#### **Step C: Reassessment**

- Within 24 months, and using the same forms, patients or peers are surveyed again and the results are used to compare to the original survey to see if practice improvement has taken place. The same or different patients or peers may offer feedback.

**Feedback modules require that diplomates collect feedback from only one of the following options:**

#### **ABPN-Approved Feedback Module Options (choose ONE)\*:**

- Patient feedback from five patients,
- Peer feedback from five peers,
- Resident evaluation from five respondents,
- 360 degree evaluation from five respondents,
- Institutional peer review from five respondents, OR
- Supervisor evaluation from one supervisor

## Common Requirements: Maintenance of Certification for ALL Diplomates Continued

Note: Feedback forms are available on the ABPN website ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com))

\*The general competencies to be reviewed on the Feedback Forms are:

- Medical Knowledge
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Patient Care
- Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
- Professionalism
- System Based Practices

**The ABPN recommends that diplomates allow up to 24 months to complete each PIP unit.**

- Peers may include other professional healthcare staff such as counselors, nurses, physicians, psychologists, and social workers.
- Patients may include those for which the diplomate supervises the care of another provider (e.g., resident).
- Approved peer and patient feedback forms are available on the Forms page of the ABPN website ([www.abpn.com/forms](http://www.abpn.com/forms)).
- ABPN will not collect patient or peer data. If audited, ABPN will require that diplomates explain how they carried out the Improvement in Medical Practice unit and submit information about their process and improvement plan.

**Beginning January 1, 2014, diplomates are required to use only ABPN-approved products for Improvement in Medical in Practice (PIP) activities. The ABPN will approve additional programs over time and reserves the right to approve or reject any course or guideline submitted for approval.**

### 5. NEW Patient Safety Course (Effective 2016)

Beginning in 2016, diplomates certified or recertified will be required to complete an approved Patient Safety Course either prior to board certification or in their first C-MOC block (2017-2019). The Patient Safety Course must include didactic information, along with questions, and performance feedback. The diplomate/board-eligible candidate must provide documentation of successful completion of the Patient Safety Course, including course topics. ABPN will accept Patient Safety Courses whether or not they generate CME, but non-CME Patient Safety Courses must be developed and given by accredited institutions (e.g. hospitals, clinics, training programs). Patient Safety Courses must include at least ten Topic Modules, of which at least five modules must come from the Required Topics list, and the remainder of topics can come from the Required Topics list or Optional Topics list. See the ABPN website for the Topics List.

See the ABPN website for the Topics list and periodic updates.

## Clinical Activity Status

The ABMS has issued definitions of ‘Clinically Active’ and ‘Clinically Inactive’ and requires that all diplomates self-report their status once every 24 months in each area of certification. This information will be available to the public.

1. **Clinically Active:** Any amount of direct and/or consultative patient care has been provided in the preceding 24 months. This includes the supervision of residents.
  - A. Engaged in direct and/or consultative care *sufficient* to complete Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP) Units
  - B. Engaged in direct and/or consultative care *not sufficient* to complete PIP Units
2. **Clinically Inactive:** No direct and/or consultative patient care has been provided in the past 24 months.
3. **Status Unknown:** No information available on the clinical activity of this diplomate.
  - Diplomates who are in Category 1A above are required to complete all components of the MOC program including PIP units.
  - Diplomates who are in categories 1B or 2 above are required to complete all components of the MOC program except PIP units.
  - A change in diplomate status from 1B or 2 to 1A requires the completion of at least one PIP unit.

**Diplomates must update their Clinical Activity Status as needed through ABPN Physician Folios on [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com) in the Diplomate Information and Status section.**

## **MOC Fellowship Waiver**

A three-year block of C-MOC requirements (CME, SA and PIP) will be waived for diplomates who graduated from an ACGME-accredited subspecialty fellowship training program in 2011 or later and who pass the corresponding ABPN subspecialty exam. Diplomates will receive a three-year block MOC activity waiver for the current block they are in at the time of passing the subspecialty exam.

Upon passing the subspecialty exam, diplomates will see the waiver reflected in their Physician Folios account. Diplomates are required to pay the annual fee.

If a diplomate believes he/she is eligible for the credit, but do not receive notice of the credit waiver, he/she should contact the Board via [questions@abpn.com](mailto:questions@abpn.com)

## **Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Program**

The ABPN recognizes that many physicians already participate in quality improvement (QI) efforts in their local institutions. The Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Approval Program (Portfolio Program), sponsored by the ABMS, is an alternative pathway for healthcare organizations that support physician involvement in QI and MOC to have their QI efforts be approved for MOC Part IV credit. Diplomates of the ABPN who successfully complete an approved QI program receive credit for one PIP clinical module. If the approved QI effort includes a patient or peer survey, ABPN Diplomates may also receive credit for one PIP feedback module.

## **ABMS Member Board Maintenance of Certification Credit**

The ABPN recognizes that all ABMS Member Boards have built their MOC programs based on the same guidelines issued by ABMS. Therefore, diplomates of any ABMS Member Board, who are also ABPN Diplomates, will be able to receive CME, SA, and/or PIP credit as long as they are currently meeting the other Board's MOC activity requirements. Physicians receiving such credit must still pass the ABPN MOC examination and pay the annual fee in order to maintain their ABPN certification.

## Specific Requirements: 10-Year MOC Program

### Program for Diplomates certified before 2012

Diplomates in the 10-Year MOC program who are not recertified before their certificates expire are no longer board certified in that area of certification. Once a former diplomate completes all MOC activity requirements and passes the MOC examination, he or she will regain certification status. **The ABPN recommends that diplomates sit for the MOC examination the year in which the diplomate's certificate is due to expire so that there is no lapse in certification status.**

Physicians with expired certificates who wish to recertify must meet the MOC activity requirements of the year in which they wish to take the MOC examination.

**Physicians certified or recertified in 2005, or those with 10-year certificates who wish to recertify in 2015, must apply for the 2015 MOC examination in 2014.**

**Application Requirements:**

- 270 Category 1 CME credits (150 in previous five-year block)\*
- 24 SA CME credits
- One PIP unit

**Physicians certified or recertified between 2006 and 2011 or those with 10-year certificates who wish to recertify between 2016 and 2021 must apply for their MOC examination the year before the examination is held.**

**Application Requirements:**

- 300 Category 1 CME credits (150 in each five-year block)\*
- 24 SA CME credits
- One PIP unit

\* including CME credits from SA

The 10-Year MOC program will sunset December 31, 2021. After that date, all diplomates, other than those with lifetime certificates, will be enrolled in the C-MOC program.

**Physicians certified or recertified in 2012 or later should refer to the C-MOC section on page 13.**

### Diplomates Not Meeting 10-Year MOC Requirements

Diplomates' certification and maintenance of certification statuses are public information and are reported by the ABPN to the public in the ABPN verifyCERT® system and to the ABMS annually.

- Diplomates who do not meet the specific admission requirements for the MOC examination in the year in which they wish to recertify will not be admitted to the examination.
- Diplomates who do not complete the MOC examination in their specialty/subspecialty by the expiration date of their certificate will be reported as, 'Not Certified' in that specialty/subspecialty.

### Change of Status from 'Not Certified' to 'Certified and Maintaining Certification'

Physicians with lapsed certificates who were initially certified in the 10-Year MOC program may regain certification by meeting the MOC activity requirements for the year in which they wish to recertify and by passing the MOC examination.

## Summary: 10-Year Program Requirements

- Possess an active, full, and unrestricted medical license with no restrictions on any license
- Completion of MOC activities as required by the MOC requirement schedule including:
  - Category 1 CME credits (including CME credits from SA)
  - 24 SA CME credits
  - One PIP unit
- Pass the MOC examination before the expiration date of certification

The following chart illustrates the examination application prerequisites for the remaining years of the 10-Year MOC program. All prerequisites will be required beginning in 2016 for physicians recertifying in 2017. The 10-Year MOC program will be eliminated after 2021.

10-Year MOC Program Requirements						
Original Certification or Recertification Year	MOC Application Year	MOC Exam Year	Medical License	CME Credits	CME from SA Activities	PIP Unit
2005	2014	2015	Active, full, unrestricted license	270	24	1
2006 – 2011	Applications due year before exam	2016 - 2021	No restrictions on any license	300		
2012	<i>*See Continuous MOC Program (C-MOC) at <a href="http://www.abpn.com/c-moc">www.abpn.com/c-moc</a></i>					

- All CME, SA and PIP activities must be completed *prior* to applying for MOC examination.
- SA CME credits contribute to the overall number of required CME.
- SA activities must be selected from the Approved MOC Products List on [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com) or from the ABPN list of specific non-CME activities
- PIP activities must be selected from the Approved MOC Products List, from an ABMS Portfolio Program OR be preapproved for an individual or institutional QI activity.

## Specific Requirements: Continuous Maintenance of Certification (C-MOC)

### Program for Diplomates certified or recertified beginning in 2012

Beginning in 2012, diplomates who certify or recertify are enrolled into the Continuous Maintenance of Certification (C-MOC) Program. Diplomates certified before 2012, including lifetime certificate holders, may elect to participate in the program through their Physician Folios.

The ABMS requires that the ABPN report the following annually regarding every diplomate:

- Is the diplomate still certified?
- Is the diplomate actively maintaining certification?

The C-MOC program will assist diplomates in complying with MOC requirements and timeframes. The program will also facilitate the required annual attestation required of diplomates and the reporting of diplomate participation to the ABMS.

The C-MOC program is organized through the use of ABPN Physician Folios. Using the link on the homepage of the ABPN website ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com)), physicians can create accounts that will enable them to keep their demographic and license information up to date, view and attest to their MOC activities, and apply and pay for examinations. Physicians must activate an ABPN Physician Folios account on the ABPN website to begin the MOC process and gain the benefits of the program.

While passing an MOC examination is still required at least every ten years, a diplomate's certification status is dependent upon fulfillment of all four MOC program requirements (Professional Standing, CME and SA, Cognitive Expertise, and PIP), along with annually attesting to completed MOC activities in the ABPN's Physician Folios, as well as payment of the annual fee.

Diplomates must accomplish MOC requirements in three-year blocks. Diplomates must satisfy and attest to the following activity requirements **every three years**:

- 90 Category 1 CME credits (includes 24 CME credits from SA)
- 24 SA CME credits
- One PIP unit

Instead of a single fee at the time of the MOC examination, participants in the C-MOC program pay an annual fee. This fee covers Maintenance of Board Certification status, use of a personalized ABPN Physician Folios account with customized MOC tracker, and development and administrative costs of MOC examinations, including credit towards an MOC examination in a ten-year period. Certificates issued in the C-MOC Program do not have an end date as continuous certification is contingent upon meeting all parts of the C-MOC Program.

**See Section V for information on the MOC Fellowship Waiver.**

There are several advantages C-MOC program participants gain:

- Annual fee instead of a large fee at the time of application
- Customized list of MOC activities that can be provided to employers, hospitals, licensing boards, etc.
- Reminders from the ABPN regarding MOC requirements that are due to be completed
- Easy-to-use system to track individual requirements
- Personalized ABPN Physician Folios account

### Diplomates Not Meeting C-MOC Requirements

Diplomate' certification and maintenance of certification statuses are public information and are reported by the ABPN to the public in the ABPN verifyCert system and to the ABMS annually.

- Diplomates are required to attest to their completed MOC activities and pay their annual fee in three year blocks through their ABPN Physician Folios account.
- Diplomates who do not complete one block of the MOC program by the end of the three years will be reported as "Certified-Not Meeting MOC Requirements."
- Diplomates who do not complete two blocks of the MOC program by the end of six years will be reported as "Not Certified."
- After six year of insufficient MOC activities, a physician must complete one block of requirements, pay the full exam fee, and pass the MOC examination to have their certification reinstated.

• Diplomates will be reported as, “Not Meeting MOC Requirements” if they fail or miss the MOC examination. Diplomates will be allowed to retake the examination within one year of the failed/missed examination. Diplomates who fail or miss the MOC examination on the second attempt will be reported as, “Not Certified.”

## Change of Status from ‘Not Meeting MOC Requirements’ or ‘Not Certified’ to ‘Certified and Maintaining Certification’

- Diplomates who have not met all MOC activity requirements for one block (three years) of the program will be reported as, ‘Not Meeting MOC Requirements’. The status may be revised to, ‘Certified and Meeting MOC Requirements’ if diplomates complete insufficient block activities, current block activities, and pay all required fees.
- Diplomates who miss more than two blocks (six years) of MOC activities will be reported as, ‘Not Certified’. The status may be revised to, ‘Certified and Meeting MOC Requirements’ upon successful completion of the following:
  - An active unrestricted medical license and no restrictions on any license
  - 90 Category 1 CME credits (including CME credits from SA)
  - 24 SA CME credits
  - One PIP unit (one clinical module and one feedback module)
  - Paying the full MOC exam fee
  - Passing the MOC examination

## Summary: C-MOC Program Requirements

- Possess an active, full, and unrestricted medical license with no restrictions on any license.
- Completion of one stage of MOC activities **every 3 years**:
  - 90 Category 1 CME credits (including CME credits from SA)
  - 24 CME credits of SA
    - One PIP unit (one clinical module and one feedback module)
- Pass the MOC examination for every certificate at least **every 10 years**.
- View and attest to three-year block activity requirements in ABPN Physician Folios.
- Update medical license, mailing address, and email address as needed.
- Update Clinical Activity Status as needed.
- Pay the annual fee.

## Summary: C-MOC Program Requirements Continued

<b>Continuous MOC (C-MOC) Program Requirements</b>						
Original Certification or Recertification Year	MOC Application Year	MOC Exam Year	Medical License	CME Credits	CME from SA Activities	PIP Unit
2012 - Present	Online applications due year before exam	Every ten years for every certificate	Active, full, unrestricted license  No restrictions on any license	90  Every three years	24  Every three years  <i>CME from SA contributes to overall CME credits</i>	1  Every three years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ All CME, SA and PIP activities must be completed <i>every three years</i>.</li> <li>➤ SA activities must be selected from the Approved MOC Products List on <a href="http://www.abpn.com">www.abpn.com</a> or from the ABPN list of specific non-CME activities</li> <li>➤ PIP activities must be selected from the Approved MOC Products List, from an ABMS Portfolio Program OR be preapproved for an individual or institutional QI activity.</li> </ul>						

- A diplomate's certification status is dependent upon fulfillment of all four C-MOC Program requirements: Professionalism and Professional Standing (Medical Licensure); Lifelong Learning/Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Self-Assessment (SA); Assessment of Knowledge, Judgment and Skills (MOC Examination); and Improvement in Medical Practice (PIP).
- Diplomates must also attest to completed MOC activities on an annual basis and pay an annual fee in ABPN's Physician Folios at [www.abpn.com/folios](http://www.abpn.com/folios). The annual fee covers maintenance of Board certification status, use of personalized Physician Folios account and development and administrative costs of MOC examinations, including credit towards an MOC examination in a 10 year period.
- You must have an active Physician Folios account on the ABPN website to begin the C-MOC process. Your account includes a customized view of your C-MOC requirements, including a timeline for completion and an attestation page, plus an optional MOC activity tracker.

## Responsibilities of Diplomates

- Diplomates are responsible for understanding and following current requirements for MOC and submitting application materials for MOC examinations by the appropriate deadlines.
- Diplomates are responsible for keeping their medical license information up-to-date.
- Diplomates are responsible for keeping their mailing and email address up-to-date.
- Diplomates are required to continuously satisfy their CME, SA and PIP requirements.
- Diplomates are responsible for choosing their own MOC activities. Physicians may choose the continuing medical education, self-assessment and practice improvement plans that will best address their own needs, expand their expertise, and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their practice. Category 1 CME activities that are relevant to their practice will be acceptable. Self-assessment and PIP activities must come from the ABPN Approved Products List beginning January 2014.
- Diplomates must successfully complete the MOC examination in all specialties/subspecialties in which they are certified in order to retain certification in that specialty/subspecialty.
- Diplomates must attest to the completion of the required activities on their applications for the MOC examinations.
- Diplomates must keep a file of documentation related to completed MOC activities. In the event of an audit, ABPN may request documentation of completed MOC activities.

## Responsibilities of the ABPN

- The ABPN will provide online services for the convenience of diplomates through ABPN Physician Folios. The Physician Folios includes mechanisms for tracking diplomates' CME, SA and PIP activites, online applications for applying and paying for MOC examinations, and updating personal contact information.
- The ABPN will provide regular reminders to diplomates regarding requirements, updates to the MOC program, and other information of interest to diplomates. This information will be provided by email or via the website ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com)).
- The ABPN will make available a current examination schedule on our website ([www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com)). This examination schedule will include examination date choices and application deadlines. Applications are made through ABPN Physician Folios and are available three months before the initial deadline. Applications received after the initial deadline will incur a late fee.
- The ABPN will make available online *Information for Applicants* publications for each examination three months before the application deadline. These publications will provide detailed information about the requirements for admission and the administration of each examination and will remain available for reference until the subsequent publication.
- A blueprint describing the content of each examination will be available on the website.
- The ABPN will collaborate with professional organizations to ensure the availability of adequate numbers of SA and PIP MOC products.
- The ABPN staff will be available by phone and email during regular business hours to answer questions about requirements and examinations and offer ABPN Physician Folios and MOC support.

## ABPN Physician Folios

The ABPN Physician Folios offers a single information source for a physician at all the various stages of his/her relationship with the ABPN - from resident through seasoned diplomate engaged in MOC. ABPN Physician Folios offers a personalized account where physicians can manage and update personal contact information, keep licensure information up-to-date, apply for and pay for examinations, as well as view and attest to their MOC activities.

Please visit the ABPN website at [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com), click the ABPN Physician Folios button and follow the instructions to activate your account.

### What's in the site?

The ABPN Physician Folios site gives you access to two main functions: Views and Actions. Views are simply displays of information. The actionable items that can be performed are typically stated as such and appear in an underlined dark red font like these examples: [Apply for an Examination](#) or [Update License Information](#).

### How do I activate an account?

In order to log in to the secure portal, you must have an established relationship with the ABPN through one of the following methods:

- You are a diplomate of the ABPN.
- Your training program has entered your residency and/or your fellowship training into the ABPN preCERT® system.
- You have previously applied for an ABPN examination.

- 1) Go to [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com). You may wish to bookmark ("ctrl D") the login page for future quick reference.
- 2) Click the "Activate Account" button on the right.
- 3) A secondary authentication page will be launched asking for your current email address, first name, last name, birth date, and the last four digits of your social security number. (If the system is not able to authenticate you using these pieces of information, you can click on the Activate Account Assistance link for instructions.)
- 4) Upon authentication and activation, a unique case-sensitive password will be emailed to you.
- 5) Return to Physician Folios on [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com), enter your email address and your password, click login.
- 6) Once you log in, you can change your password by clicking on the Change Password link at the top of the page.

For questions, please email [questions@abpn.com](mailto:questions@abpn.com).

## Finally

The ABPN has made every effort to create an MOC program that will meet the requirements of our diplomates well into the future. The program is modified periodically to adjust to changes in the needs of our diplomates and to meet new requirements of the ABMS.

It is the desire of the ABPN to continue to provide services that will enhance our diplomates' practice. To that end, the Board welcomes the comments and ideas of our diplomates, and encourages them to contact the ABPN office with any questions or concerns.

For more information, please visit the Maintain Certification section at [www.abpn.com](http://www.abpn.com).

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