



American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

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

Frequently Asked Questions About Maintenance of Certification (10-Year Program)

What is Maintenance of Certification?

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 requirements: professionalism and professional standing; continuing medical education (CME) and self-assessment (SA); assessment of knowledge, judgment and skills; and improvement in medical practice (PIP).

When do I begin with the MOC process?

Diplomates are automatically enrolled in the MOC Program after achieving board certification. A diplomate should log into his/her ABPN Physician Folios account at www.abpn.com/folios to view and manage his/her MOC Program requirements.

What is ABPN trying to accomplish with MOC?

The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) has developed a credible and relevant 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 MOC requirements through institutional or practice group quality improvement programs. The ABPN MOC Program recognizes many of these efforts. ABPN has worked to develop a clear MOC program that will enable a diplomate to demonstrate his/her competence.

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.

What is the MOC Program timetable?

The 10-Year MOC program applies to diplomates certified 2005-2011. 10-Year diplomates (time-limited certificate holders) should become familiar with the current MOC requirements.

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

- Maintain an unrestricted license to practice medicine.
- Complete 300 Category 1 CME credits [including those from Self-Assessment (SA)]
- Complete 24 SA CME credits. SA activities must come from the ABPN Approved Products List at www.abpn.com.

Note: the Board may waive 8 SA CME through completion of specific non-CME activities. See the ABPN website for examples of acceptable activities.

- Complete one PIP unit. Diplomates have three choices to satisfy this requirement. See the MOC section of the website for more information.
- Meet the required deadlines on the ABPN website (www.abpn.com) to apply for the ABPN MOC examination. MOC activities must be completed prior to applying for a MOC examination.

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.

How do I keep track of completed MOC activity requirements during the MOC block?

Maintain a file that documents the completion of all CME, Self-Assessment, and PIP activities in the event you are audited by the ABPN. You are not required to enter individual activities into your ABPN Physician Folios account at www.abpn.com/folios; however, with your Folios account, you can securely log on and apply and pay for examinations and keep track of completed MOC activity requirements.

The system also has an optional feature to monitor progress of completed activities.

What do I do for MOC if I have multiple certificates?

If a diplomate has multiple certificates, he/she needs to complete only one set of MOC activity requirements (CME, SA and PIP). The activities can be either in a general specialty and/or a subspecialty field. 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 examinations in both areas, (e.g. psychiatry and neurology) or take a combined MOC examination for up to three specialties and subspecialties at one time.

What happens if my certificate expired already?

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

Should I participate in the MOC Program if I have a “lifetime” certificate?

Lifetime certificate holders (those who hold certificates dated prior to October 1, 1994) will not be required to participate in this program; 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 ABPN MOC Program and does not pass the examination, that individual will not lose their “lifetime” certificate. A physician who chooses to not enter the program will be listed as “Certified, but not meeting MOC requirements and not required to do so.”