

## **Requirements Document for CME Providers Applying for ABFM Certification Credit for approved AAFP PI-CME Activities**

In order to meet the ABFM's requirements for the Performance Improvement component of Family Medicine Certification, externally developed and sponsored activities must demonstrate that the participants assess the quality of care they provide to their patients compared to peers and/or national benchmarks, and use systematic process improvement techniques that apply the best available evidence to improve that care.

As a general rule, if the Activity meets the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) requirements for a Performance Improvement CME activity, the Activity is likely designed to meet the ABFM Certification requirements.

### **Application Process**

In completing your application for PI-CME through the AAFP you have indicated that you wish to apply for ABFM Certification credit for your activity and therefore are being asked to acknowledge that your Activity meets the following principles, guidelines and requirements. In addition, you will be certifying that your activity meets the ABFM Industry Support Guidelines.

### **General Principles**

The ABFM is responsible for determining the content and standards for Family Medicine Certification and related requirements. The responsibility for securing ABFM approval rests with the external provider of a given activity.

It is the responsibility of the external provider to de-identify any patient health information or markers that could identify a patient, in accordance with HIPAA regulations, prior to submitting data to the ABFM. The ABFM cannot and will not be responsible for an external provider's violation of privacy requirements under HIPAA.

In any advertising or description of the provided materials, the external provider shall not state or imply that the ABFM has approved or endorsed these materials, unless the ABFM has done so in writing.

The external provider must retain and make available upon request, as appropriate, faculty (author) disclosure forms from all individuals who participated in the development of the activity.

ABFM Diplomates completing an external activity for Performance Improvement credit must pay any ABFM fees that may be due before the external activity can count toward Family Medicine Certification requirements. The external provider of an approved activity may establish its own fee structure for approved activities; however, the ABFM will not provide reimbursement to external providers or reimbursement of or credit against fees to Diplomates for any associated charges.

External providers of Performance Improvement activities must provide personal and, when appropriate, online support for activities, including participation instructions, introductory QI materials, technical support, etc.

Criteria for Performance Improvement Activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Activities must be developed using best available evidence criteria and national standards
- Activities must ensure meaningful participation
- Activities must incorporate self-evaluation, pre- and post-intervention audits of your performance using quality indicators based on best available evidence
- Activities must incorporate the development and implementation of an individualized plan for intervention
- Activities must be free of industry support in accordance with the ABFM industry support policy

### **Practice Improvement Principles for Activity**

Performance Improvement Activities must incorporate a self-evaluation that may be completed by an individual physician or by a group of physicians who share responsibility for a practice. In a group practice setting, individual physicians must participate meaningfully in the activities unless otherwise determined by the ABFM. The physician must conduct a pre-intervention audit or be provided pre-intervention audit data in group-conducted activities. In addition, ABFM Diplomates (rather than staff members), must demonstrate active involvement in the improvement process.

The ABFM understands and appreciates that many quality improvement efforts are team-based, and that all members of the team may not be physicians. However, it is the responsibility of the activity sponsor to ensure that every physician participates meaningfully in the activity and that there is a mechanism in place to track physician participation and adjudicate disagreements regarding this participation.

The activity's *goals and objectives* must be clearly defined, and should be designed to improve patient care. The activity's aim statement should include measurable, time-specific objectives; and the activity's timeframe should be adequate to meet the defined goals and objectives.

The activity should include a sufficient number of *performance measures* (the ABFM encourages at least three measures) to provide meaningful data about the quality of care provided by the participant. Whenever possible, the measures should be nationally approved and/or endorsed by AQA, NQF, or AMA-PCPI. *Performance data* for each measure must be provided to the participants, and should include a comparison to clinical guidelines, peers, and/or other benchmark.

The activity must provide *education* related to the topic of the QI effort. Additionally, appropriate tools must be used to assist participants in analyzing their practice as it

relates to the activity, and resources must be available to assist with the development of an individualized *quality improvement plan* that allows participants to identify appropriate evidence-based *interventions*. Participation should be required for an adequate timeframe to reach the activity's goals and objectives.

The activity also must include an *evaluation* completed by participants regarding activity components and reflection on the value of quality improvement to the participant's practice.

ABFM Diplomates who successfully complete an approved activity will receive Family Medicine Certification credit for 1 Performance Improvement Activity or 20 Performance Improvement points, as appropriate (Diplomates should visit their portfolios at [www.theafm.org](http://www.theafm.org) to determine what kind of credit they will receive.)

### **Activity Standards and Requirements**

The Web-based American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) Performance Improvement Activity platform involves multiple components:

1. A self-administered patient care audit using evidence-based quality indicators for specific health areas.
2. A mechanism for feedback on quality indicators, as well as peer comparisons.
3. An individualized quality improvement (QI) plan design process.
4. Submission and implementation of an individualized plan for intervention.
5. A self-administered post-intervention audit measuring the same indicators and the same patient population as the pre-intervention audit.
6. A process of completion from pre- to post-audit of a duration appropriate for the context of the improvement topic.
7. Completion of at least one QI cycle (one cycle is required for purposes of Family Medicine Certification requirements; however, completion of multiple QI cycles is encouraged).
8. An evaluation of activity components upon completion of the activity.