



**American Board
of Family Medicine**

**ORGANIZATIONAL
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
PATHWAY**

Recognize Family Physicians for their Commitment to Certification and Performance Improvement

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) recognizes the commitment that family physicians make every day to delivering high value health care and improving health in their local community. We share the same commitment through our mission to serve the public and the profession through certification, research, educational standards, and support for the improvement of health care.

Family Medicine Certification (FMC) is a voluntary continuous process designed to assess important physician characteristics: Professionalism, Self-Assessment and Lifelong Learning, Cognitive Expertise and Performance Improvement (PI). For the Performance Improvement component, we ask that physicians engage in PI activities to demonstrate competence in systematic measurement and improvement in patient care.

We recognize that many physicians are already engaged in these activities through their employer, their participation in an ACO or other organized entities such as the AAFP, their state chapters and similar organizations that support physicians' quality improvement and certification needs. In these instances, the work that family physicians are doing as part of their participation will count toward their PI Activity requirement for ABFM Continuing Certification.

That's why we developed the Organizational Performance Improvement Pathway, to recognize improvement efforts that are already happening and to reduce the reporting burden for individual physicians.

Organizational Performance Improvement (PI) Pathway

Designed for organizations that support physicians in quality improvement efforts, or for clinical practices with more than 10 physicians, this pathway allows for approval for Organizational PI activities that will provide certification credit for any physician who is meaningfully participating, simply through attestation from the organizational sponsor.

As an organizational sponsor, you can create a pathway for participating family physicians to seamlessly meet their certification requirements, while conveying a shared commitment toward improving care that can potentially enhance motivation and participation in future Performance Improvement activities.

Performance Improvement Requirements

Externally sponsored Performance Improvement projects must demonstrate that physicians assess the quality of care they provide to their patients compared to peers and/or national benchmarks, and use of systematic process improvement techniques that apply the best available evidence to improve that care. Projects may be ongoing, web or workplace-based, and teams may participate at different times.

Projects must comply with ABFM Performance Improvement standards and Meaningful Participation requirements to receive certification credit. If you would like additional support with these requirements, please contact our **Support Center** at 877-223-7437 or Ann Williamson at awilliamson@theabfm.org

Project Requirements



Project Aim

Projects must have an explicit aim for improvement that will benefit patients and/or the organization. It should be expressed in a statement that describes what is to be improved, a desired numerical improvement goal, and a timeframe for achieving improvement.



Standards and Policy

While ABFM is not linked to any specific improvement process, we do encourage the use of standard methodologies such as Six Sigma, The Model for Improvement, Lean, and Continuous Quality Improvement. Projects must also comply with the ABFM Industry Support Policy (www.theabfm.org/policy).



Data and Measurement

Projects must include at least one (1) improvement cycle and requires a minimum baseline measurement prior to implementation of intervention, re-audit post-intervention, and a comparison of the two.

ABFM requires a minimum of one performance measure but encourages three when available. Projects must also measure meaningful data that supports the project aim, and whenever possible measures should be nationally approved and/or endorsed by the AQA, NQF, or AMA-PCPI. Performance data for each measure must be provided to participants and should include a comparison for clinical guidelines, peers, and/or other appropriate benchmarks.



Web-Based Projects

Web-based projects must provide the following: a self-administered patient care audit using evidence-based quality indicators for specific health areas, a mechanism for feedback on quality indicators, an individualized improvement plan design process, support for the activity, and an opportunity for physician/resident to provide feedback on the activity at its conclusion.



Meaningful Participation

ABFM recognizes that many improvement efforts are team-based and not all members of the team may be physicians. Organizations must ensure that every physician or resident meaningfully participates in the project before credit can be awarded. They must meet all of the meaningful participation requirements listed below and have a mechanism in place to track and report this participation to ABFM.

- Complete a self-administered patient care audit or assessment appropriate to your work context
- Provide direct or consultative care to patients as part of the improvement project (if appropriate and relevant to the aim of the project)
- Participate in implementing the project's interventions (the changes designed to improve care or improve processes appropriate to the work context)
- Review project data that reflect the outcomes of the care provided or the work activity, in keeping with the project's measurement plan
- Demonstrate active collaboration in the implementation of the project (e.g., team meetings, data analysis, implementation training, etc.)
- Participate for a timeframe appropriate to reach the project's goals as stated in the aim within the physician or resident's practice or work context

Purpose of Performance Improvement

To demonstrate that as board-certified family physicians, we can reflectively look at our practices, identify gaps or opportunities for improvement, assess the current state (baseline measure), implement a change intended to improve care, and re-measure to determine if that change resulted in an improvement.



"The purpose of continuing certification is to serve *diplomates, the public and the profession* by providing a system that supports the ongoing commitment of diplomates to provide safe, high-quality, patient-centered care. Diplomates who meet specialty continuing certification standards reflect their commitment to professionalism, lifelong learning and improved care."

Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future
(The Vision Commission)
February 12, 2019



HOW TO APPLY

Interested organizations should submit an online application that includes an overview and description of the Performance Improvement project.

Log in or create an account:

www.theabfm.org/apply-pi



CREATE AN APPLICATION

Upon login, create an application by selecting Organizational PI project.

It costs \$100 per approved project regardless of the number of physicians receiving credit. Applications are reviewed in 5–10 business days and projects are approved in 2-year increments. If the project is approved, you will need to collect and provide completion data for each ABFM physician or resident who meets participation requirements within a reasonable timeframe. Continuing or extending a project, or adding a new one, requires the same application process and fee.



LEARN MORE

WEB

www.theabfm.org/org-pi

EMAIL

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SUPPORT CENTER

877-223-7437

