

## President's Message: Improving the Value of Board Certification and Advocating for the Specialty

Greeting Colleagues,

As we look to the close of another year, I hope that you and your family are doing well and are able to enjoy some respite and quality time over the holidays—and that your clinical team continues to heal from the challenges of the pandemic.

This issue highlights improvements we are making to Family Medicine board certification to ensure its value to you. In clinical medicine, value is often expressed as the equation -- **Quality plus Experience over Cost**. At ABFM, we use each of these three variables to guide improvements in certification, frequently seeking input from Diplomates along the way. You'll learn how we are working to increase the *quality* of certification activities, improving your *experience* with certification, while also identifying ways to *reduce your burden*. These include the addition of longitudinal assessment (FMCLA) as a permanent alternative to the one-day exam, revision of all Knowledge Self-Assessments (KSAs), the addition of the National Journal Club, and providing a streamlined process to report on improvements you're already making in practice for your Performance Improvement requirement. Additionally, you will read important updates on how we are advocating for improvements in residency education, focusing on leadership development, influencing health policy, and more.



Warren Newton, MD MPH  
President and CEO

Residency education is the future of Family Medicine and one of the most important issues facing residency programs today are changes related to new program requirements for training family medicine residents. The Family Medicine Review Committee published a set of draft standards for Family Medicine residencies in December 2021. There are many specifics, but, overall, the proposed changes are the most significant since the founding of the specialty in 1969. These include a reemphasis on the residency practice as the curriculum, outreach into communities to address disparities of health outcomes, participating in residency learning networks, and implementing competency based medical education. With this was intended to be some return of faculty dedicated time for education, which was previously taken away by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) in 2019. Over the summer, unfortunately, the ACGME Committee on Requirements rejected or weakened all the major changes proposed by the specialty in their release of the final version of the revised standards, which will become effective July 2023.

In response to these decisions the entire specialty of Family Medicine, including ABFM, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors (AFMRD), the Association of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM), the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM), the North American Primary Care Research Group (NAPCRG) and the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP), have formally requested that the ACGME Board of Directors reconsider their decision about faculty time and address the transparency of the process. You can find this open letter [here](#). At the time of this newsletter, we await their response. Meanwhile, the ABFM Foundation, in partnership with the Family Medicine Review Committee, AFMRD, STFM, the ACOFP and others, are developing national initiatives to support the residencies and the specialty evolve residencies. We must create the future that we want, and the country needs, ourselves. More to follow!

Finally, I am delighted to tell you about a wonderful new addition to the ABFM leadership team. Dr. Gary LeRoy has officially begun his role as the [Senior Vice President of Diplomate Experience](#), working with Dr. Libby Baxley until her retirement next summer. Dr. LeRoy is familiar to many of you, having served as President of the American Academy of Family Physicians from 2019-2020. Dr. LeRoy has a very impressive track record in the leadership of medical organizations as well as service to his home community of Dayton, Ohio in many different roles, including service to students and faculty as Associate Dean for Student Affairs at the Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine. He will be leading the ongoing development of our communication, outreach, and professionalism work at ABFM, and also plans to continue his clinical care at the federally qualified East Dayton Health Center. I am honored to have him as a colleague! Please join me in welcoming Dr. LeRoy to his new role in service to our specialty.



Gary L. LeRoy, MD  
Senior Vice President  
for Diplomate Experience

We look forward to hearing from you about the stories in this issue.

Thank you for all you do.

Warren Newton, MD MPH  
President and CEO  
American Board of Family Medicine

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### 2023 Exam Applications are Now Open!

For those physicians with a 2023 examination requirement, ABFM has opened the application window earlier this year to ensure you have plenty of time to apply. Exam applications for both the one-day exam and the longitudinal assessment (FMCLA) option are now available in your [MyABFM Portfolio](#). For more information, visit the links below. Reminder: the longitudinal assessment option is only available for currently certified physicians. Initial certification must be achieved through the one-day exam.



#### Examination Options:

- [Family Medicine Longitudinal Assessment \(FMCLA\)](#) – for currently certified Diplomates only
- [Family Medicine One-Day Exam](#)

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### New! Longitudinal Assessment Options Now Available for Select CAQs

Adolescent Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, Hospice & Palliative Medicine, Pain Medicine, and Sleep Medicine now offer longitudinal assessment examinations. The application window for several of the Certificates of Added Qualification (CAQs) is now open. If you're interested in applying for Geriatric Medicine, Hospice & Palliative Medicine, or Sleep Medicine, you may start your application today. For those interested in Adolescent Medicine or Pain Medicine, the application window begins November 18<sup>th</sup>. For complete details, visit the links below. Apply in your [MyABFM Portfolio](#).



#### CAQ Options:

- CAQ - [Adolescent Medicine](#) (Available November 18<sup>th</sup>)
- CAQ - [Geriatric Medicine](#)
- CAQ - [Hospice & Palliative Medicine](#)
- CAQ - [Pain Medicine](#) (Available November 18<sup>th</sup>)
- CAQ - [Sleep Medicine](#)

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### National Journal Club Committee Selects New Articles!

The ABFM National Journal Club Committee was hard at work in the fall of 2022, meeting several times to finalize a new selection of articles. The 45 new articles will be available in December in the MyABFM Portfolio for any family medicine resident or certified physician, to keep up with the latest evidence on topics relevant to family medicine while also earning Self-Assessment points.

“It’s really inspiring to work with this great group of family doctors to gather the best articles from the past six months to help diplomates apply evidence in practice, said NJC Committee Member, Dr. Steven R. Brown. “Diplomates can read the most important articles across many journals that may change practice. Our committee finds the most pertinent learning points from each article to impact patient care. We also point out key learning points about methodology so family docs can continue to develop their skills in information mastery.”



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### Pisacano Leadership Foundation Announces 2022 Pisacano Scholars

The Board of Directors of the Pisacano Leadership Foundation is pleased to announce its selections for the 2022 Pisacano Scholarships. The scholarships, valued at up to \$28,000 each, are awarded to up to 10 U.S. medical students per year who demonstrate a strong commitment to the specialty of Family Medicine. Over the last two years, given the need for Family Medicine leadership as health care transformed, the ABFM has funded a doubling of the number of Pisacano scholars. To be considered, each applicant must show demonstrable leadership and communication skills, superior academic achievement, personal character and integrity, and a noteworthy level of community service.



2022 Pisacano Scholars

The 2022 Pisacano Scholars, highlighted below and on the Foundation’s [website](#), were recognized during PLF’s annual symposium in early October:

- Jessica Cerdena – Yale School of Medicine
- Jiyun Chang – University of North Carolina School of Medicine
- Rebecca Chen – Baylor College of Medicine
- Alexandra Greenberg – SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University
- Sarah Heady – Baylor College of Medicine
- Savannah Lusk – West Virginia University School of Medicine
- Thomas Marcroft – University of Minnesota Medical School
- Jaleh Najmi – Perelman School of Medicine @ University of Pennsylvania
- Naomi Nkinsi – University of Washington School of Medicine
- Rebecca Wolinsky – Boston University School of Medicine

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### New Public Member selected for ABFM Board of Directors

The ABFM Board of Directors recently elected Tanya Lord, PhD, MPH to fill a vacancy as one of the public members of the Board. Dr. Lord, who serves as the Director of Patient and Family Engagement at the Foundation for Healthy Communities in Concord, New Hampshire, was recently interviewed about this new volunteer opportunity. She was driven to work in the field of health care after her young son, Noah, tragically passed away from complications arising from a tonsillectomy. Now she works to create positive change in her home state and across the nation by sharing her story and advocating for improved patient safety. [Read More](#)



Tanya Lord, PhD, MPH

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## Starfield Summit on Advancing and Improving Measurement and Value in Primary Care

The Center for Professionalism & Value in Health Care (CPV), the ABFM Research department, and the Virginia Center for Health Innovations recently completed a four-part, virtual event focused on how to refine measures on Low Value Care in an effort to support the pursuit of value in primary care health care delivery. Funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ), this [5<sup>th</sup> Starfield Summit on Advancing and Improving Measurement and Value in Primary Care](#) assembled 50 prominent advisors including federal and state policy leaders, academics and measurement experts, payors, clinician leaders, and patients to focus more attention on the value that primary care delivers through continuous, caring relationships. In this series, these experts refined a small set of ‘no value services,’ built on evidence from Choosing Wisely and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, intended to direct further investments that more substantially recognize the value that family medicine provides in American medicine. A final report from this work and a number of public-facing products are expected to emerge in the months ahead. Stay tuned for those updates!



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## PRIME Registry, Helping Independent Practices Stay Independent since 2016

More than 600 practices across the United States currently use the PRIME Registry to turn their EHR data into information they can use with very little burden. Some use it to monitor quality and see how they are doing compared to peers. Some use it to participate in the Medicare Quality Payment Program (MIPS, APMs, MSSP) or to share their quality measures with whomever they need to. Others want access to cutting-edge high-value primary care measures like the Person-Centered Primary Care Measure (PCPCM) and Continuity—both exclusively available to PRIME participants for reporting for MIPS. Finally, some want to better visualize and understand the patient population they serve and what their risks are due to social drivers of health.

*“We are excited about the shared mission and vision of PRIME and the ABFM, along with our independent, physician-owned ACO, to keep our independent practices independent and our patients first and at the center of what we do.”*

Medical Director, PRIME Registry ACO

The ABFM knows that, for primary care, the whole is more valuable than the sum of the parts. The highest value functions of primary care—first contact, continuity, comprehensiveness, care coordination, family- and community-centered care—are currently not among the 100+ measures used to “value” primary care. The Measures That Matter initiative is an effort by ABFM and Center for Professionalism & Value in Health Care (CPV) to refocus quality assessment on those things that family physicians and patients have long valued. In addition to the PCPCM and Continuity measures, MTM is currently testing two other measures that we know are valuable to physicians and to patients to see if they can also be used for measures reporting: Comprehensiveness and Trust. This related effort is aimed at helping health systems and insurance companies understand the importance of supporting these functions so that family physicians have the resources to do them. At the recent AAFP FMX conference, we presented and talked to dozens of family physicians about these measures. One full-time physician said, “this was the most important session that I attended!”

If you think your practice or a friend might benefit from PRIME, please contact [prime@theabfm.org](mailto:prime@theabfm.org) or visit [primeregistry.org](http://primeregistry.org). If you aren’t sure PRIME is a fit but are interested in the primary care Measures That Matter, please contact [jshuemaker@theabfm.org](mailto:jshuemaker@theabfm.org), or visit [professionalismandvalue.org](http://professionalismandvalue.org).

## Certification Fees Reduced Effective July 1, 2022

The ABFM Board of Directors recently approved additional reductions in the costs associated with maintaining certification, effective immediately. ABFM has not increased fees for board certification in more than a decade and a half, and actually reduced the annual fee from \$235 to \$200 per year in 2012. The new changes to the fee structure include eliminating the \$250 exam application fee, waiving the fee for the first year of certification, providing a free retake for physicians who have an unsuccessful exam attempt, and reducing the cost of any subsequent exam retake by 50%. The cost savings associated with these are shown below.



Fee Categories	WAS	NOW
First Year of Certification after Initial Certification	\$200	\$0
Exam Application Fee for Continuing Certification Exam	\$250	\$0
First Exam Retake after an Unsuccessful Attempt	\$1,300	\$0
Subsequent Exam Retakes after an Unsuccessful Attempt	\$1,300	\$650

## Important Dates

Upcoming Exam Dates		
Family Medicine:	Spring: April 11-28, 2023 (excluding Sundays)	
Adolescent Medicine:	January 1 – September 30, 2023 (Continuing Certification)	
Designation of Focused Practice in Hospital Medicine:	Spring: April 10, 2023	
Geriatric Medicine:	Fall: October 18, 2023	
Hospice & Palliative Medicine:	November 9, 2023	
Pain Medicine:	September 16, 2023 (Certification)	Sept 16 – 30, 2023 (Continuing Certification)
Sleep Medicine:	November 21, 2023 (Continuing Certification Only)	
Sports Medicine:	Summer: July 11-15, 2023	Fall: November 6-11, 2023
FMCLA Deadlines		
FMCLA 2022 Quarter 4 Deadline: December 31, 2022		
Certification Stage Deadline		
Stage 2020-2022 Participants	December 31, 2022	