

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Supporting Physicians Impacted by the Pandemic as Challenging times Persist

Greetings Colleagues,

We hope that you, your practice, and family are doing well. As I write this, the COVID delta variant appears to be leveling off but we know that many physicians and families have been impacted by the recent surge.

As these challenging times persist, we recognize the unique stressors and time constraints brought on by the pandemic and remain committed to supporting you by reducing the burden related to completing certification activities and by providing meaningful activities that can seamlessly be integrated into your everyday practice.

I'm delighted to share with you some of the most recent updates and enhancements made to certification since our June edition of the Phoenix.



First, to ease the pressure of upcoming stage deadlines, ABFM announced on October 6, 2021, a [six-month extension](#) through June 30, 2022, for Diplomates with a 3-year stage that was to end on December 31, 2020 or 2021. Also, in early August we launched the [National Journal Club pilot](#) to help you stay up to date by providing access to the latest peer-reviewed medical literature while also earning valuable certification points. This new activity has been well received with more than 15,000 participants accessing and completing over 21,444 article assessments since its launch in August.

To continue to support family physicians engaging in a broad scope of practice, we have partnered with the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) to provide current Diplomates with KSA credit for completion of the Advanced Life Support for Obstetrics Provider Course (ALSO®). Certification points from this activity will automatically be transferred from AAFP to ABFM and will be visible in your MyABFM Portfolio.

Finally, as we announced earlier this year, the Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment (FMCLA) was approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) as a [permanent exam alternative](#). We're excited to share that the first cohort of physicians in the pilot are nearing completion of their exam assessment and will be receiving their scores as early as January 2022.

Our goal has always been, and continues to be, supporting you as you serve your patients—throughout this pandemic and beyond, as we assure the public of your expertise. Please see below for other important dates, certification tips, and announcements, including a story on the new National Academy of Medicine (NAM) Puffer/ABFM Fellow, the 2021 Pisacano Scholars, a Health Disparity/Equity Self-Directed Performance Improvement activity example, and a closer look at our work in the development of a new Continuity of Care Clinical Quality Measure.

Thank you for all you do.

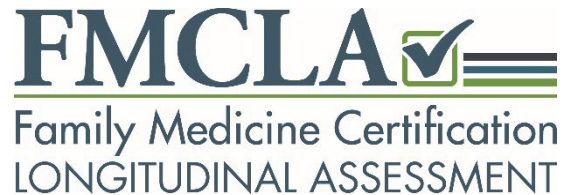
Warren Newton, MD, MPH
President and CEO
American Board of Family Medicine

2020 and 2021 Stage Requirements Receive Six Month Extension Due to COVID-19

All Diplomates with a 3-year stage that was scheduled to end on December 31, 2020 or December 31, 2021 will have an additional 6 months to complete all certification activities, including stage and exam requirements. **The new deadline to complete all stage requirements is June 30, 2022.** This 6-month extension is in addition to the earlier COVID extensions provided in 2020 and is being offered to help those who have been impacted by the recent delta surge. Additionally, ABFM is providing relief for physicians with upcoming one-day exam or FMCLA requirements, as well as residents and others who may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Read [here](#) for a full list of extensions and updates.

Physicians with 2022 Exam Requirement Eligible for FMCLA

Beginning in January 2022, we will officially launch the permanent version of Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment (FMCLA) as an alternative to the one-day Family Medicine Certification exam. If you are a Diplomate who has an exam requirement



due in 2022, you will be eligible to choose either FMCLA or the one-day examination on December 3, 2021 when the online application is available inside your MyABFM Portfolio. In the FMCLA platform, you will receive 25 questions online each quarter, to be completed at your own pace, on your own device, at a location of your choice, and allowing for use of references. We encourage you to apply before the end of the calendar year to ensure that you have the maximum amount of time to complete 25 questions in the first quarter of 2022. Learn more about FMCLA [here](#).

NEW! Partnership with AAFP Now Awards KSA Credit for ALSO® Provider Course

To reduce burden and find innovative ways for Diplomates to earn credit for activities they are already engaged in, ABFM and AAFP have partnered to provide certification credit for an AAFP activity. If you have completed the AAFP's Advanced Life Support for Obstetrics (ALSO®) Provider course this year, you will receive 10 points toward your 50-point stage requirement. This course can also meet your KSA requirement if you have not already done so. This credit will automatically be transferred from AAFP to ABFM periodically. **Credit is retroactive to January 1, 2021, and currently certified ABFM Diplomates or physicians re-entering ABFM certification are eligible to receive KSA credit for completion of the ALSO® Provider Course in 2021.** This option is currently not available to resident physicians. Course completion information will automatically be transmitted to your MyABFM portfolio. You can access the ALSO® course at the [AAFP](#).

More Tips to Help You Stay on Track for Stage Ending Requirements

If you prefer to stay on schedule and not delay your certification activity requirements, we have compiled a list of tips that you may find helpful in completing your requirements more efficiently.

1. Try out the [5 Tips to Avoid the December Rush](#) to help you select and bookmark activities so you can complete these most efficiently. Whether it's our COVID-19 PI activity for reporting on changes made in your practice during the pandemic, completing one of our updated Knowledge Self-Assessment (KSA) activities or reading the latest family medicine research article from the new ABFM National Journal Article pilot, we have a variety of activities to fit your specific needs.
2. Don't forget about your CME, too. Log in to [MyABFM portfolio](#) and double check that your CME credits are up to date. And remember, most ABFM certification activities also include CME credit in addition to points needed for your stage requirements!
3. Take advantage of your 2021 participation in [AAFP's Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics \(ALSO®\) Provider Course](#) which now counts toward meeting ABFM KSA and/or 50-point stage requirements.
4. Always remember that you can contact our [ABFM Support Center](#) for help completing certification requirements. Please remember that our call volumes will increase beginning in October if you're planning to complete your activities later this fall.
5. Attention CKSA Participants – As a reminder, CKSA or Continuous Knowledge Self-Assessment is NOT the longitudinal alternative to the one-day exam. Although both have 25 quarterly questions, CKSA is a self-assessment activity worth 2.5 points toward your stage requirements for each quarter completed. FMCLA, the Family Medicine Certification Longitudinal Assessment, is the alternative to the one-day examination that must be taken every 10 years. To help you distinguish between the two, click [here](#).



ABFM Diplomate Shares Story about Using the Health Disparities/Equity Self-Directed PI Activity to Drive Behavior Change

As a family physician who is a longtime nursing home medical director, Karl Steinberg, MD, CMD, FAAFP wanted to do something “more action-oriented” that might result in some behavioral change. Dr. Steinberg implemented an “Improving Awareness of Systemic Racism and Microaggressions in Long-Term Care” project to address communication and staff literacy on issues of diversity and inclusion in a nursing home setting. The project addressed awareness of microaggressions affecting nursing home staff and residents, including infantilization of the residents and racist language.

“I think something really valuable came out of this project, and the staff and patients have become more aware of their language and actions,” said Dr. Steinberg, “I've noticed a very significant improvement.”

By selecting the Health Disparities Performance Improvement (PI) activity, Dr. Steinberg was able to implement educational interventions and use observations and patient interviews to gather the baseline and follow-up data as confirmation that the intervention was effective.



Karl Steinberg, MD, CMD, FAAFP

"I was really happy to see Health Disparities and Equity as one of the options. That was really evolved, and I appreciate the Board trying to move the needle in that direction."

Karl Steinberg, MD

The Health Disparities/Equity Self-Directed PI activity was created in 2020 to allow the completion of a custom quality improvement effort related to social determinants of health; health equity (broadly defined); and/or systemic ways in which you assure that patient access, experience, and care are equitable. By utilizing this performance

improvement approach, a physician or group of physicians can address many different dimensions of care across any variety of practice types and scope.

Reflecting on his many years as a board-certified physician and his performance improvement work of the past, Dr. Steinberg said, "I was really happy to see Health Disparities and Equity as one of the options. That was really evolved, and I appreciate the Board trying to move the needle in that direction."

Revised Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct

In May 2021, we announced a revision of ABFM's [Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure and Personal Conduct](#). The result of more than a year of careful study and deliberations, these revisions serve to improve the clarity of the process by which board-certified physicians are evaluated for medical professionalism and provide greater flexibility to the Professionalism Committee of the ABFM Board of Directors that reviews these individual cases. Our editorial in the current issue of the Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine, [Revisiting Medical Professionalism and ABFM's Guidelines for Professionalism, Licensure, and Personal Conduct in a New Era](#), provides a closer look at the revisions, which include more contemporary descriptions of medical professionalism, the social contract, and the conduct and behaviors that demonstrate professionalism.

Continuity of Care – It Matters to Patients

Continuity of care is one of the pillars of [high-quality primary care](#). It matters to patients and it is essential to a high-functioning health care system. The national Measures That Matter for Primary Care



initiative, coming from the [Center for Professionalism and Value in Health Care](#), is creating a suite of new clinical quality measures aimed at simplifying and improving measurement in primary care practice, including four core measures: Person-Centered Primary Care, Continuity of Care, Comprehensiveness of Care, and Low Value Care, all in the process of development to become endorsed clinical quality measures in the future. This effort involves an array of data, including the [PRIME Registry](#), Medicare claims, and state All-Payor Claims data sets, and outstanding partners such as the [AAFP's Robert Graham Center](#), [Stanford University's Division of Population Health](#), and [Harvard University's Center for Primary Care](#). Look for future publications, [resources](#), and [bibliographies](#) describing this work as it evolves.

Residency Papers Published: A Re-Envisioning Residency Education Update

If you have an interest in the future of family medicine residency education and would like to have input into the standards that are currently being drafted by the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) for family medicine, we encourage you to visit the [Re-Envisioning Family Medicine Residency Education website](#), hosted by ABFM, to access the many focus group reports, surveys and papers developed for the ACGME to consider when writing the new standards.



Over 3,500 Diplomates, residents and residency faculty members have participated in focus groups and surveys, and/or attended a virtual national summit in 2020! In July of this year, a special issue of [Family Medicine](#) published 35 peer-reviewed papers that emerged from this effort. The papers are grouped into seven subjects: Foundations of Residency Redesign, The Practice is the Curriculum, How Do We Teach?, What Should We Teach?, Building a Better National System of Residency Education, Increasing the Social Accountability of Residencies, and, finally, Shaping the Future of the Specialty. Links to all of these are available on the site.

The ACGME group writing the new draft standards will be requesting public feedback on them later this fall. ABFM welcomes continuing engagement of our community to help shape the future of residency education and our specialty! We continue to be energized by the progress, and appreciative of the contributions made to help ensure that family physicians leave residencies well trained to serve their patients and their communities, and to help lead change in health and health care.

Steven Lin, MD, Selected as 2021 NAM Puffer/ABFM Fellow

The National Academy of Medicine (NAM) has selected Steven Lin as the [2021 James C. Puffer, MD/American Board of Family Medicine \(ABFM\) Fellow](#). Dr. Lin is a clinical associate professor in the Division of Primary Care and Population Health at Stanford University School of Medicine, Family Medicine Service Chief at Stanford Health Care, and Head of Technology Innovation for Primary Care and Population Health. He is the founding director of the [Stanford Healthcare AI Applied Research Team](#) (HEA3RT), a first-of-its-kind center dedicated to translational research on artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) in health care with the mission to bring leading edge technologies from “code to bedside.” Read more about Dr. Lin [here](#).

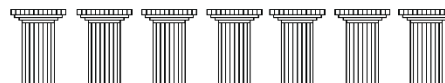


Steven Lin, MD

Pisacano Leadership Foundation Announces 2021 Pisacano Scholars

The Board of Directors of the Pisacano Leadership Foundation, Inc. is pleased to announce its selections for the 2021 Pisacano Scholarships. The scholarships, valued at up to \$28,000 each, are awarded to up to 10 medical students per year who are attending U.S. medical schools and demonstrate a strong commitment to the specialty of Family Medicine. To be considered, each applicant must show demonstrable leadership skills, superior academic achievement, strong communication skills, identifiable character and integrity, and a noteworthy level of community service. The 2021 Pisacano Scholars are:

PISACANO LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION



The Leadership Foundation of the American Board of Family Medicine, Inc.

Katie Brown – University of Cincinnati College of Medicine
Preston Butler – Boston University School of Medicine
Jordan Gemelas – Oregon Health & Science University School of Medicine

Garrett Kneese – UTHSA Long School of Medicine
Emiliano Lemus Hufstedler – UC-San Francisco School of Medicine
Jessica Meyer – University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry
Abhinaya Narayanan – David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
Alberto Ortega – Keck School of Medicine at USC
John Romano – UMass Chan Medical School

Read more about the [2021 Pisacano Scholars](#).

UPCOMING DATES AND DEADLINES

Exam Dates	Hospice & Palliative Medicine: November 1, 2021
	Geriatric Medicine: November 3, 2021
	Sleep Medicine: November 3, 2021
	Family Medicine: November 8-13, 2021
	Sports Medicine: November 8-13, 2021
	Designation of Focused Practice in Hospital Medicine: November 18, 2021
FMCLA Deadlines	FMCLA 2021 Quarter 4 Deadline: December 31, 2021

Thank you to the more than 10,000 Diplomates and residents who completed the 2021 Communication Survey. Look for findings to be shared in the next issue of *The Phoenix*.