**Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q:** What is Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future?

**A:** Continuing Board Certification: Vision for the Future (Commission) is a collaborative process that will bring together multiple partners to transform continuing certification into a system that demonstrates the profession’s commitment to professional self-regulation, aligns with national and international standards for certification programs, and establishes a program that is meaningful, contemporary and relevant.

**Q:** What is the role of the Planning Committee and who will serve on it?

**A:** The Planning Committee will identify the construct and membership of a 21-25 member Commission, identify key questions for consideration by the Commission, and oversee a national opinion survey. Members of the Planning Committee will include representatives from ABMS, the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the Coalition for Physician Accountability, Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS), and Council on Medical Education (CME) of the American Medical Association (AMA) as well as public members.

**Q:** Who will serve on the Commission?

**A:** The Commission will include representatives from the physician community as well as professional medical organizations and societies, hospitals and health systems, the general public, and other stakeholders.

**Q:** What is the framework for the Commission?

**A:** The Commission construct and process will be designed to engage physicians, the public, users of the credential and other stakeholders in a collaborative, transparent, inclusive process that is rigorous, high quality and expeditious. It will be a three-phased process, overseen by the Commission’s Planning Committee:

- **Phase I** – Building on previously obtained feedback, Phase I of the Commission will solicit input from a wide variety of key constituents using multiple methods including a national survey. The Planning Committee will identify the construct and membership of a 21-25 member Commission, identify key questions for consideration by the Commission, and oversee a national opinion survey expeditious.

- **Phase II** – The Commission will hold hearings, provide information publicly, and test and seek feedback on concepts and ideas during this second phase of the process.
• Phase III - The Commission will submit a final report with recommendations to ABMS and its Member Boards for consideration and implementation.

Q: Does this address all of Board Certification or just continuing certification?

A: The Commission will focus on the process of continuing certification. In the course of that review and evaluation, suggestions for initial certification may arise and be considered.

Q: How long will the process take?

A: The three phases of the Commission will take approximately 12-15 months.

Q: There has been a lot of feedback from physicians already. Why are you conducting such an additional commentary process?

A: While many ABMS Member Boards have sought and obtained helpful, constructive feedback on continuing certification from their membership, the Commission will be a collaborative effort led by the Planning Committee. They will solicit commentary from a broad cross section of the physician community, as well as from a diverse number of stakeholders including: specialty medical societies, state medical associations, patients, the public, hospitals, health systems and related health care organizations.

Q: What new ideas do you expect to learn since physicians have repeatedly shared their concerns about continuing certification?

A: Upon completion of all three phases, the results of the Commission will help the Boards Community:

• Consider principles, frameworks and program models for the continuing board certification system that is effective, relevant, meaningful, contemporary and of value to those who depend on the credential of Board Certification;
• Build inclusive, candid and collaborative dialogue with all stakeholders across the community;
• Preserve the responsibility and privilege of professional self-regulation for the medical profession; and
• Retain its commitment to serving the public through continuing Board Certification (the public trust).

Q: What specific changes will result from this process and how soon will they be implemented?

A: The actual recommendations will not be known until the Commission’s work is completed. However, progress reports, progress milestones, and concepts under consideration will be made public throughout the process, with a final report due for review by the Member Boards in the first quarter 2019.

Q: Will all the ABMS Member Boards support the recommended changes and implement them? And, if so, what will be the implementation timeline? How will the work and recommendations of the Commission impact current innovations currently underway at many Member Boards?

A: The ABMS Member Boards have already begun to pilot and implement a whole host of programmatic innovations and changes that have helped make the continuing certification process more practice relevant, accessible, and less costly for physicians. The recommendations from the Commission will
support existing change underway as well as discover additional, powerful ways to further improve the process. We anticipate the process to take between 12 -15 months.

Q: Will current Diplomates receive relief from continuing certification from their Member Board while these recommendations are finalized and implemented?

A: Decisions regarding current continuing certification compliance are at the discretion of the Member Boards. It is not the intent of the Commission to disrupt current processes or program innovations underway, but to discover additional potential improvements and program designs.