

Continuing Certification Requirements Updated in 2024

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The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and its 24 Member Boards, including the ABNM, has made significant changes to the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Standards developed in 2015. The MOC Standards have been replaced by the Standards for Continuing Certification (CC) **effective January 1, 2024** <https://www.abms.org/board-certification/board-certification-standards/standards-for-continuing-certification/>. The new standards were developed with wide input from diplomates across all medical specialties, professional societies, and many other stakeholders. A summary of the most important changes, include:

- **Member Boards must determine at intervals no longer than 5 years whether a diplomate is meeting continuing certification requirements to retain each certificate.**

Beginning in 2025, ABNM certificates will expire after 5 years, including initial certificates and continuing certificates. There is no additional cost to diplomates, and diplomates participating in CertLink® will not have any additional requirements. Diplomates must not be more than one full calendar year behind in continuing certification requirements to be considered meeting requirements. For diplomates who prefer to take the recertification exam instead of CertLink, they will need to pass the exam every 5 years to get a new certificate. There is no additional cost for the exam.

- **Member Boards' continuing certification programs must reflect principles of continuing professional development (CPD) with an emphasis on clinically oriented, highly relevant content.**

The ABNM no longer requires 8 hours per year of Self-Assessment Module (SAM) credit. The ABNM still require an average of 25 hours of AMA category 1 continuing medical education per year, but diplomates can choose the education that is most relevant to them.

- **Member Boards must assess whether diplomates have the knowledge, clinical judgement, and skills to practice safely and effectively in the specialty. Member Boards must offer assessment options that have a formative emphasis and that assist diplomates in learning key clinical advances in the specialty.**

The ABNM launched its formative longitudinal assessment program, CertLink, in 2018. More than 90% of ABNM diplomates recertify by participating in CertLink rather than take the recertification exam. CertLink helps diplomates stay up to date by presenting clinically relevant questions with immediate feedback.

ABNM requirements for professionalism (licensure and ethical behavior), and improving health and health care (quality improvement activities that most physicians are already doing) are unchanged. See “Message from the Chair” in this issue of Tracers for more details.

