

Message From the Associate Executive Director

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Dear ABNM Diplomates:

It has been my pleasure to serve as your ABNM Associate Executive Director for the past six months. During this time, I have been getting up to speed on all aspects of the board's mission, with attention to our exams. I would like to share a little bit of what I have learned about ABNM CertLink®, our longitudinal assessment exam for Continuing Certification.

Because Nuclear Medicine certification covers the entire spectrum of molecular imaging and therapy, our diplomates have a range of practice profiles including PET/CT, SPECT/CT, oncology, general, cardiovascular, pediatric and therapy procedures. Our exams, including ABNM CertLink, thus cover all aspects of Nuclear Medicine.

CertLink questions are designed to address concepts encountered in practice; however, not all questions may reflect each individual diplomate's practice or experience. The goal of CertLink is to be not only summative, but also formative, contributing to learning. As such, each question provides key points, a critique, and references to facilitate learning about less-familiar topics. This information can be viewed for all prior questions through each member's CertLink Dashboard (see the "Question History" tab).

In addition, each examinee can provide feedback to the ABNM about any question, whether it is a point of clarification or a disagreement with the answer. While the ABNM does not respond to each individual comment, we do receive them, aggregate them by question, and review them all. Each year, some comments highlight previously unrecognized problems with a question (*e.g.*, two answers that could be correct), which leads to earmarking that question for deletion.

Unfortunately, questions scheduled for deletion can only be removed once per year from the CertLink system. Thus, an individual question might remain in circulation for several quarters before deletion. Any question deleted from the exam is removed from scoring for all test takers, not just the individuals who flagged the question for comments.

In summary:

- CertLink covers all nuclear medicine practice, which may include areas with which an individual diplomate is less familiar.
- CertLink is designed to be formative in addition to summative; each question has a key point, critique, and references that remain available in the dashboard.
- All diplomate comments (hundreds each year) regarding CertLink questions are aggregated and reviewed; some concerns lead to a question being removed from scoring for all diplomates
- Because questions can only be removed from scoring once annually, questions so earmarked will continue to be distributed up to that time
- Any removed question is not scored for any diplomate and does not return to the question pool.
- I hope this answers questions that some may have about CertLink, and we will continue to strive to improve our exams each year.

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