

Dear Colleagues,

As part of ACC's efforts to help cardiovascular professionals maintain professional competency, the College has been engaged with both the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) and the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to streamline and improve maintenance of certification (MOC) credit-earning processes.

ACC Approved to Provide Part IV Credit

The College was recently notified by ABMS that it has been approved as a Portfolio Program sponsor through the [Multi-Specialty Portfolio Approval Program](#).

As a sponsor, the College can deliver more meaningful and relevant quality and process improvement experiences and award Part IV credit for ABMS MOC to its members with dual board certifications (i.e., pediatrics, and thoracic surgery), as well as its growing number of Affiliate members involved in areas like family medicine, radiology and emergency medicine. Additionally, while the ABIM has suspended Part IV requirements under its MOC program, credit is still granted for practice improvement activities. Those physicians choosing to participate in the MOC program and subsequently Part IV activities will benefit from this new development.

On a broader scale, Portfolio Program sponsor designation also positions the College as a trusted source of patient safety, patient voice and practice improvement activities for those members looking to maximize their efforts to meet Quality Payment Program requirements outlined under [the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 \(MACRA\)](#). Physicians choosing to participate in the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) option under the Quality Payment Program must take part in improvement activities ranging from offering expanded evening and weekend hours to participating in MOC Part IV. In short, physicians who elect to participate in MOC Part IV activities can get credit for certification and federal payment at the same time.

ACC Exploring Society Pathway Alternative to 10-Year Exam

On the ABIM front, the ACC is one of three medical specialty societies working with ABIM to explore a "Society Maintenance Pathway" option that would serve as an alternative to the 10-year exam.

In May, the ABIM announced plans to offer a new MOC assessment option beginning in 2018 that would allow physicians who "engage in and perform well" on shorter assessments to test out of the current 10-year exam. Since then, the College and other internal medicine stakeholders have participated in meetings to discuss the possibility of an alternative MOC pathway offered through professional societies. Subsequently, the ACC, the American College of Physicians and the American Society of Clinical Oncology have been asked by ABIM to further develop Society Pathway pilots that, if successful, would be expanded to more internal medicine subspecialty groups.

For cardiology, this could mean the ACC would provide clinicians with learning material and modular assessments modeled after the lifelong learning self-assessment program (ACCSAP) and report the names of successful diplomates to ABIM. Those diplomates choosing not to participate or who are unsuccessful in completing the Society Maintenance Pathway would have the option of taking the ABIM's 10-year exam before any action would be taken by the ABIM regarding their certification status.

Details about the pilot program and the specifics of professional society pathways for MOC, including a time frame, have yet to be determined and will be discussed with ABIM over the coming weeks. However, ABIM's willingness to listen to stakeholders and consider society pathways as a viable option is encouraging. As always, the ACC will continue to advocate for improvements to ABIM's MOC process to ensure it provides the most value and relevance for those members choosing to participate in the process. Stay tuned to ACC.org/MOC for continued updates, as well as access to all of the College's MOC activities, which are free to members.

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