



American Board  
of Internal Medicine

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# Improving Quality with CER Based Licensing and Certification Processes

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# Disclosures

- I work for the American Board of Internal Medicine
- I am licensed to practice medicine by the state of Pennsylvania and certified in Internal Medicine by the ABIM

# Overview

- Distinguishing between Licensure and Certification
- Initial Certification
  - Faculty evaluation
  - Secure exam
- Maintenance of Certification
  - Professional standing
  - Lifelong learning and self-assessment
  - Medical knowledge
  - Performance in practice
- Potential for partnerships

# Licensure

Licensure belongs to the states: 69 state medical boards license over 850,000 physicians

- Requirements vary across states
- License is *required* to practice medicine
- Licensure is *not* based on specialty
- To get an initial license:
  - Complete 4 years of medical school
  - Complete 1 to 3 years of post-graduate training
  - Pass a 3-part national examination
  - Professional standing

# Licensure

DISPLAY THIS CERTIFICATE PROMINENTLY • NOTIFY AGENCY WITHIN 10 DAYS OF ANY CHANGE

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of State  
Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs  
PO Box 2649 Harrisburg PA 17105-2649

License Type  
Medical Physician and Surgeon

License Status  
Active

Initial License Date  
12/02/1987

Expiration Date  
12/31/2012

LORNA ANNE LYNN  
510 WALNUT STREET  
SUITE 1700  
PHILADELPHIA PA 19106

License Number  
MD040573E

*Basil L. Mevoda*  
Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs

*Lorna Anne Lynn*  
Signature

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# Licensure

To keep a license

- Submit a renewal form
- Pay a fee (varies by state)
- Complete CME requirements (vary by state, subject to audit)
- “Stay out of trouble”

# Licensure

- The Federation of State Medical Boards is developing a Maintenance of Licensure (MOL) program “to ensure the ongoing competence of physicians seeking re-licensure,”
- Support lifelong learning and practice improvement, without hindering physicians’ work
- Flexibility (infrastructure and options)
- Promote transparency while maintaining privacy protections

# Licensure

- MOL Framework: Three components will be phased in over 10 years
  - Reflective self-assessment (what improvements can I make)
  - Assessment of knowledge and skills (what do I need to know and be able to do)
  - Performance in practice (how am I doing)
- High-stakes exam optional in current framework



# Certification

- Board certification refers to the 24 member boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties.
- Boards are independent, national non-profit organizations
  - Evaluate and certify that physicians have the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to practice in the specialty
  - Voluntary—not required to practice medicine, but increasingly necessary (payors, health systems)

# ABMS Boards: American Boards of...

- Ophthalmology (1917)
- Otolaryngology (1924)
- Obstetrics and Gynecology (1930)
- Dermatology (1932)
- Pediatrics (1935)
- Psychiatry and Neurology (1935)
- Radiology (1935)
- Orthopedic Surgery (1935)
- Urology (1935)
- Internal Medicine (1936)
- Pathology (1936)
- Surgery (1937)
- Neurological Surgery (1940)
- Anesthesiology (1941)
- Plastic Surgery (1941)
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (1947)
- Colon and Rectal Surgery (1949)
- Preventive Medicine (1949)
- Family Medicine (1969)
- Allergy and Immunology (1971)
- Nuclear Medicine (1971)
- Thoracic Surgery (1971)
- Emergency Medicine (1979)
- Medical Genetics (1991)

# ABIM Specialties

- General Internal Medicine (1936)
- Cardiovascular Disease, Gastroenterology, and Pulmonary Disease (1941)
- Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism, Hematology, Infectious Disease, Nephrology, and Rheumatology (1972)
- Medical Oncology (1973)
- Critical Care Medicine (1987)
- *Geriatric Medicine*\* (1988)
- Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology (1992)
- *Sports Medicine*\* (1993)
- *Adolescent Medicine*\* (1994)
- Interventional Cardiology (1999)
- Transplant Hepatology (2006)
- *Sleep Medicine*\* (2007)
- *Hospice and Palliative Care Medicine*\* (2008)
- Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiology (2010)

\**joint board sponsorship*

# ABIM Specialties: # of Physicians certified 2001-2010

- General Internal Medicine: 69,847
- Adolescent Medicine: 17
- Advanced Heart Failure & Transplant Cardiology: 239
- Cardiovascular Disease: 7,622
- Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology: 1,131
- Critical Care Medicine: 4,466
- Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism: 2,371
- Gastroenterology: 4,066
- Geriatric Medicine: 2,242
- Hematology: 3,062
- Hospice & Palliative Medicine: 1,849
- Infectious Disease: 3,045
- Interventional Cardiology: 3,590
- Medical Oncology: 4,795
- Nephrology: 3,942
- Pulmonary Disease: 4,378
- Rheumatology: 1,792
- Sleep Medicine: 2,146
- Sports Medicine: 110
- Transplant Hepatology: 430

# Requirements for Certification

Program Director and faculty perform ongoing evaluation and attest to competence in six areas:

**1**  
**Practice-based  
Learning & Improvement**

**2**  
**Patient Care**

**3**  
**Systems-based  
Practice**

**4**  
**Medical Knowledge**

**5**  
**Interpersonal &  
Communication Skills**

**6**  
**Professionalism**

Those with satisfactory performance are eligible to take the secure certifying exam.

# Developing the Secure Exam

- Content blueprint (public)
- Item writing by physicians who serve on subspecialty boards
  - On-the-job training
  - Editorial support
  - Ongoing peer review
- Pre-testing of all items
- Items that perform well go live

*Currently no resources allowed, but one board plans to test an open-book model*

# “Efficiency”

- Research on secure exam questions for which “no further testing” is the correct answer
- Correlation between training program and answer, except for top candidates

# Maintenance of Certification (MOC)

- 1989—last “time-unlimited” certificates awarded by ABIM
- Recertification → Continuous Professional Development  
→ Maintenance of Certification → MOC 2013

All ABMS boards follow general structure

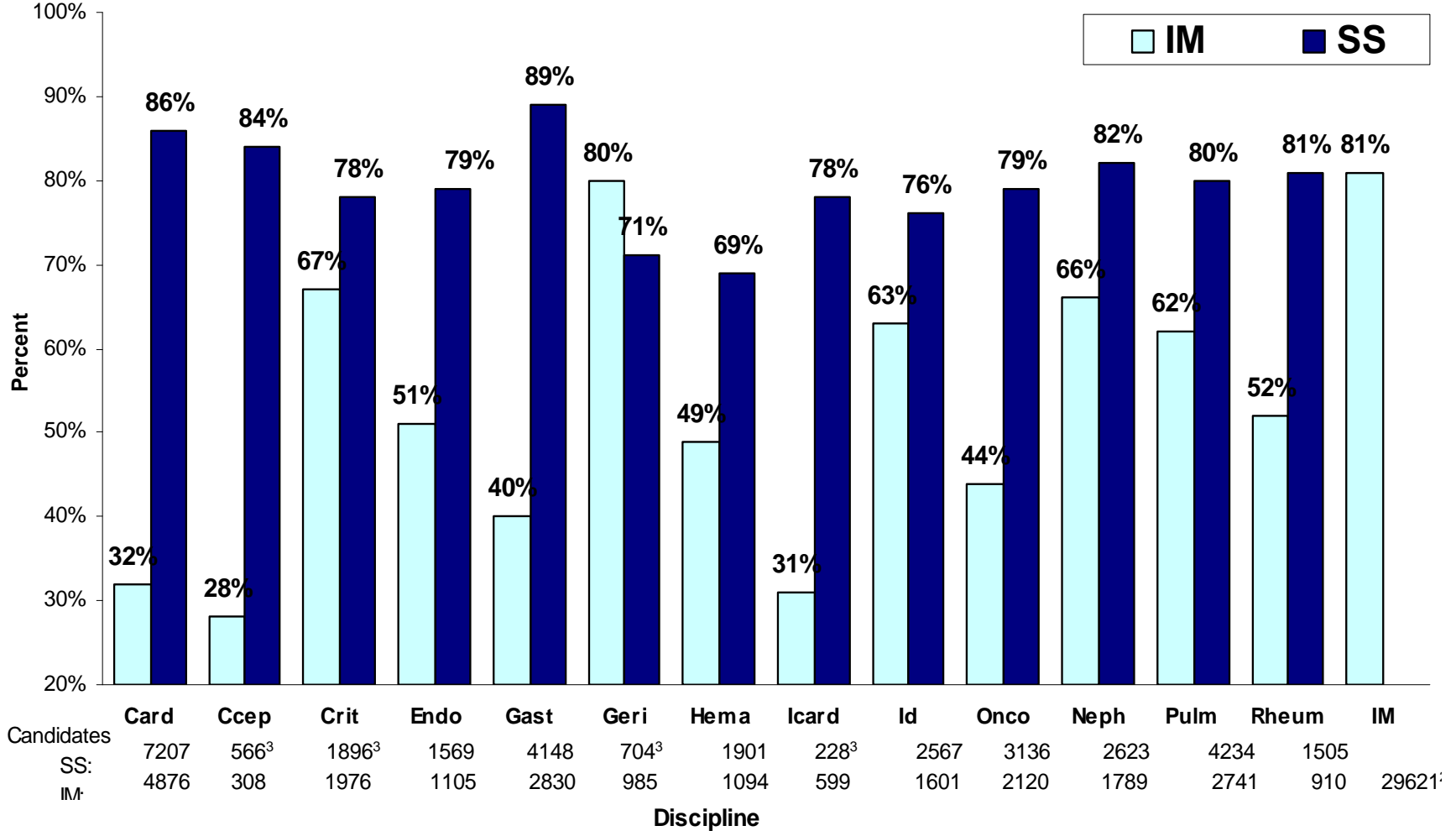
- Part 1: Evidence of Professional Standing
- Part 2: Lifelong learning and self-evaluation
- Part 3: Cognitive expertise
- Part 4: Evaluation of performance in practice



## Current MOC Requirements: 10-year cycle

- Unrestricted medical license
- Self-assessment – “at home”
  - Medical knowledge
  - Practice improvement module (PIM<sup>sm</sup>)
- Pass 1-day multiple-choice cognitive secure exam at computer test center
- Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Rates:  
1990 – 1999 Cohorts
  - 92% enrolled in MOC
  - 83% completed the program in IM or subspecialty

**Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Completion Rates Among Physicians who initially Certified in Internal Medicine or a Subspecialty 1990-1999  
As of February 2011**



# Self-evaluation of medical knowledge

Old:

- ABIM-developed 60-question multiple choice modules

Newer:

- ABIM modules linked to educational resources provided by medical specialty societies
- Society-developed MCQ products

Newest:

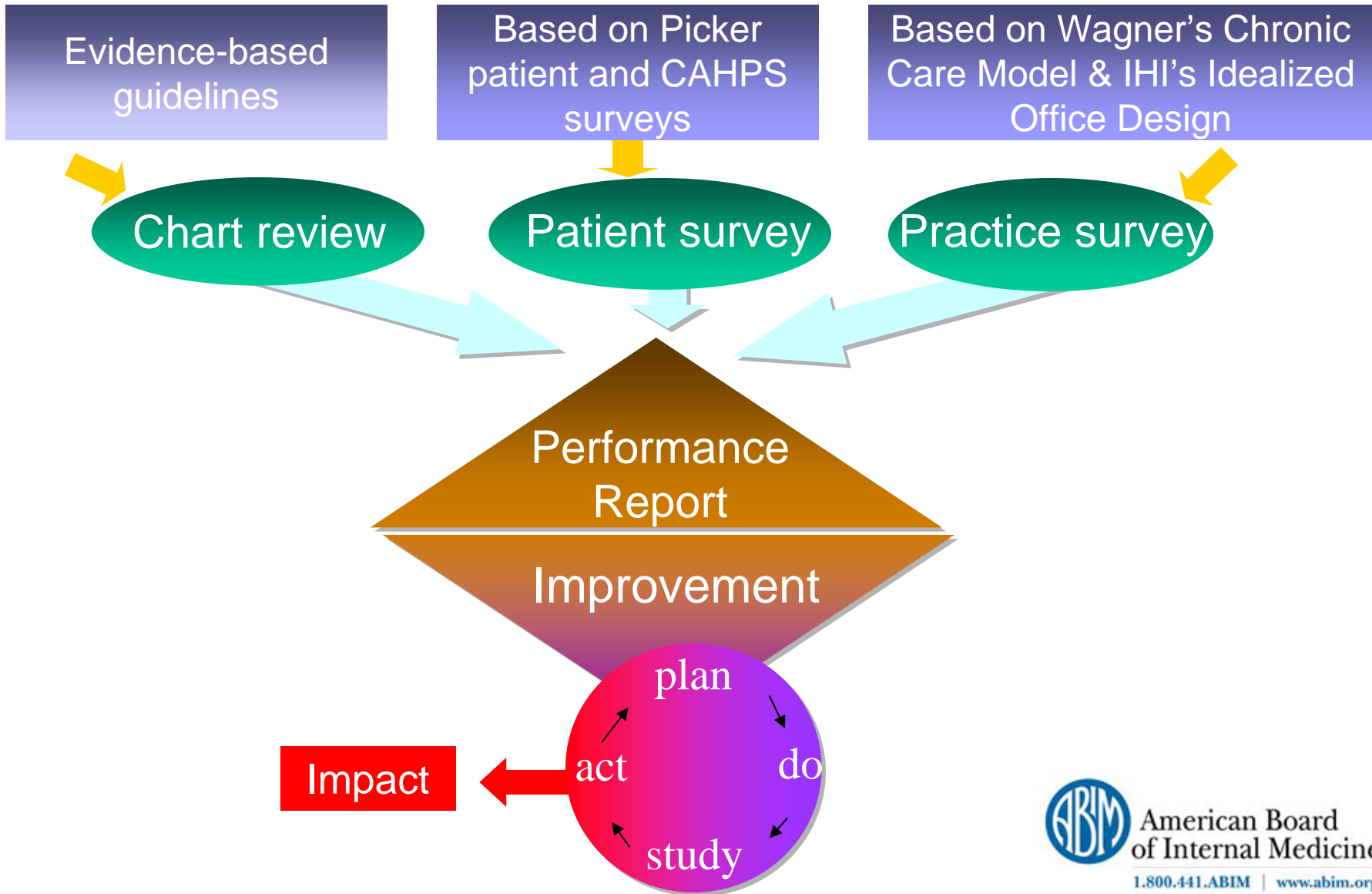
- “Recent updates” (25 questions, 3 year lifespan)

# Self-evaluation of medical knowledge

Future possibilities:

- Confidence-based learning
- Partnership with AHRQ's Evidence-based practice center
- Partnership with Annals of Internal Medicine (MCQs linked to compilations of recent articles published on CER)

# Practice Improvement Module (PIM<sup>SM</sup>)



# Types of PIMs (# completed 1/06 through 8/11)

| Clinical area         | # of physicians completing |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Diabetes              | 3756                       |
| Hypertension          | 3046                       |
| Osteoporosis          | 2114                       |
| Colonoscopy           | 1855                       |
| Preventive Cardiology | 1792                       |
| Asthma                | 954                        |
| HIV                   | 831                        |
| Care of the Elderly   | 498                        |
| Hepatitis C           | 473                        |
| Cancer Screening*     | 246 (2009)                 |
| COPD*                 | 21 (2011)                  |
| CKD*                  | 4 (2011)                   |

# Current Diabetes Composite Measure

- Intermediate Outcome Measures
  - Control of A1C, LDL cholesterol, blood pressure
- Process Measures
  - Retina exam, foot exam, test for urine protein, smoking assessment/counseling
- Patient Experience Measures
  - Patient satisfaction (2), self-care support (7)

***Currently no questions on specific treatments in the Diabetes or other PIMs.***

# Hypertension PIM

- Data are collected on what class of drugs are currently prescribed (diuretic, beta blocker, ACE inhibitor, ARB, calcium channel blocker, etc.)
- Feedback is given on # of patients using different classes of drugs
- Feedback is given on # of patients at goal blood pressure, including subgroups with heart failure, diabetes, and CKD



# Communications PIMs

- ABMS will require all boards to include patient feedback beginning in 2013
- ABIM has included patient surveys since 2003
  - CAHPS primary and subspecialty care patient surveys
  - Condition-specific surveys (DM, hypertension, asthma, prevention, care of the elderly, COPD)
- Questions on treatment options and shared-decision-making

# Opportunities for Partnerships

## Self-evaluation

- Medical knowledge
  - Links with resources
  - Assessments of *how* questions asked and answered
- PIMs
  - Incorporation of specific treatment questions and feedback

## Secure exam

- Explicit incorporation of CER content
- Use of resources?