

ABOG
2014 BULLETIN
for
MAINTENANCE OF
CERTIFICATION
for
Subspecialty Diplomates

**The American Board of
Obstetrics and Gynecology, Inc.**

This Bulletin, issued in January, 2014 represents the official statement of the requirements in effect for the MOC process from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE 2014 MOC PROCESS

Many Diplomates completed a MOC 6-year cycle in 2013, and will enter a new 6-year MOC cycle in 2014. This year, they will be in MOC cycle 2 and designated as MOC 2.1.

Diplomates who are in MOC Year 6 must apply for the required Part III Examination no later than November 15, 2014 and pass the examination no later than December 15, 2014.

Diplomates who are now certified in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery (FPMRS) will have their basic certification linked with their subspecialty certification. These Diplomates will all be designated as FPMRS MOC Year 1 for 2014. They must participate in FPMRS MOC this year, or their certifications will expire.

Starting in 2014, inactive and retired Diplomates who wish to maintain their certification must have an active license to practice in at least one state.

Starting in 2015, retired physicians and Diplomates with non-time-limited certification may continue to participate in Part II of MOC, and ACOG will provide CME credit hours. However, a designation of meeting MOC requirements will require participation in Parts I, II, III and IV that are applicable to a Diplomate's practice.

ABOG is collaborating with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide Diplomates with the opportunity to receive an enhanced payment for Medicare services if they make the appropriate application and complete additional MOC. The ABOG MOC program is included in the CMS Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) MOC Program Incentive. ABOG Diplomates who successfully participate in CMS's PQRS program can earn an additional incentive payment by participating in ABOG's MOC program. The level of participation in ABOG MOC is "more frequently" than required to qualify or maintain board certification status, and includes completion of a practice assessment and patient experience of care survey in 2014. (See page 10 for more information.)

Many physicians already participate in quality improvement efforts in their local practice. The Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Approval Program (Portfolio Program) is an alternative pathway for healthcare organizations that support physician involvement in quality improvement and MOC to have their quality improvement efforts be approved for ABOG MOC Part IV credit. To find out more about the Portfolio Program, visit www.mocportfolioprogram.org.

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Time-Limited Subspecialty Certificates

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
for
ALL DIPLOMATES
with
TIME-LIMITED SUBSPECIALTY
CERTIFICATES

1. Certification by ABOG and participation in the MOC process is voluntary.
2. Physicians certified by ABOG in 1987 and thereafter hold time-limited certificates and must begin MOC in the year their certificate expires. Maintenance of Certification is a continuous process, and certificates expire on a yearly basis.
3. Diplomates who passed the 2013 FPMRS written examination or the subspecialty oral examination in April 2013, gained initial certification that will expire on December 31, 2014 unless they successfully complete all of the 2014 MOC assignments.
4. It is a Diplomate's responsibility to be familiar with the information in each year's *MOC Subspecialty Bulletin*, as changes are made to the process each year.
5. It is a Diplomate's responsibility to update their Profile on their ABOG Personal Home Page or to notify ABOG immediately of any change in address, email address, or telephone numbers.
6. ABOG is under no obligation to notify a Diplomate of impending loss of certification, deadlines, or changes in their certification status. However, as a favor to Diplomates, ABOG will attempt to email reminders to those who may be in jeopardy of losing certification using the email address provided at the time of their most recent MOC application. ABOG is not responsible for a Diplomate not receiving such emails due to change of email address, loss of the notice due to spam or other filters, or any other email problem.
7. Diplomates must enroll in MOC no later than November 15 of the year their certificate expires. All assignments for the MOC year must be completed and submitted by December 15 at 5:00 p.m. CST. Failure to complete and submit all MOC assignments by the deadline will result in loss of Board-certification.
8. Applications for MOC must be completed on-line at www.abog.org.

9. Deadlines are based on the receipt of the material at the ABOG office, not the date of submission.
10. Fees are quoted in US Dollars and must be paid on-line by credit card.
11. Board-related correspondence should be sent using a service with tracking ability (e.g., FedEx, UPS, etc.).
12. Correspondence with ABOG must be in English.
13. Each Diplomate enrolled in MOC has a personal web page showing their progress in the process. The website is accessed at www.abog.org using an ABOG ID number and password. Diplomates are encouraged to review their webpage at least every 6 months.
14. Diplomates will have access to all MOC assignments when the application process has been completed and the Diplomate has been approved to participate in the MOC process. This includes completing the application form, paying the appropriate fees, and providing a copy of the medical license(s) to ABOG by fax or email. For Diplomates without hospital privileges, an attestation form must also be faxed to the ABOG office each MOC Year 1 (Fax: 214-871-1943) or emailed to moc@abog.org.
15. Diplomates in MOC Year 6 must apply for the MOC examination no later than November 15, 2014 and successfully pass the examination no later than December 15, 2014. Detailed information about the application process, fee, and test content can be found in the section on MOC Part III, Cognitive Expertise, page 18 of this bulletin. Appendix 3 contains detailed information about the content and format of the test.
16. Diplomates who retire from practice or temporarily are inactive (e.g. not involved in the provision, supervision or administration of patient care) may request to participate in some MOC activities. Further information can be found on page 21 of this bulletin.
17. Diplomates whose certification has expired less than 6 years may regain certification through the Re-Entry process. This requires passing a secure, computer-based examination and completion of assigned MOC Year 1 requirements in the same year.
18. Diplomates who completed their MOC 6-year cycle in 2013 will begin a new 6-year MOC cycle in 2014.

BOARD CERTIFICATION: GENERAL INFORMATION

Board certification is a voluntary process. It is the Diplomate's responsibility to complete all applications and submit required materials to maintain their certification status. ABOG is not responsible for contacting Diplomates to inform them of an impending expiration of certification.

All ABOG Diplomates certified in 1987 and thereafter hold time-limited subspecialty certificates. To maintain their status as Board-Certified physicians, they must enter the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process in the year that their certificate expires and successfully complete all assignments. For example, if a certificate expires on December 31, 2014, that Diplomate must complete the 2014 MOC process.

If an individual has basic certification in obstetrics and gynecology dated before November 1986, and a subspecialty certificate dated on or after November 1987, the only time-limit is that placed on the subspecialty certificate.

Subspecialists who no longer practice in their subspecialty and have a non-time-limited certificate in general Obstetrics and Gynecology may retain their general certification without participating in MOC. They will no longer be certified in their subspecialty or designated as meeting MOC requirements.

ABOG MOC is based on a 6-year cycle which will be described below. After completion of one 6-year cycle, the process restarts the next year. The purpose of the MOC process is to assure that ABOG-certified physicians continue to maintain a high level knowledge in the fields of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Women's Health and its subspecialties throughout their careers.

Diplomates who were in the MOC process for general Obstetrics and Gynecology before passing the subspecialty oral examination will start a six-year subspecialty MOC cycle the following January after passing the subspecialty oral examination.

The 2014 ABOG MOC process has a strict deadline of:

- a. Five p.m. (CST), November 15, 2014 for submission of applications
- b. Five p.m. (CST), December 15, 2014 for completion of all assignments

Diplomates who fail to complete all of the assignments for the year (including passing the secure, computer-based examination if in MOC Year 6) by the deadline will have an expired certificate. That is, they will no longer be listed as board-certified by ABOG and ABMS, and they may not advertise themselves as being board-certified. A Diplomate with an expired certificate can regain full certification only by passing a re-entry examination. (See Expired Certificates).

Physician Quality Reporting System

ABOG is collaborating with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide Diplomates with the opportunity to receive an enhanced payment for Medicare services.

The ABOG MOC program is included in CMS's Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS) MOC Program Incentive. In 2014, if a Diplomate successfully participates in PQRS reporting and meets all of the requirements, they will receive an incentive payment equal to 0.5% of their estimated total allowed payments for covered Medicare Part B services. PQRS MOC provides the opportunity to receive an additional incentive payment of 0.5% (or a total of an additional 1%) by combining PQRS reporting with increased activities for Maintenance of Certification.

At the present time, PQRS incentives are planned through 2014. In 2015 and 2016, there will be payment adjustments (penalties) for non-participation and unsuccessful participation of -1.5% and -2%, respectively.

Note: If a Diplomate holds multiple specialty certificates, they cannot receive more than one additional 0.5% incentive payment even if they complete an MOC program in more than one specialty.

Additional information about PQRS MOC is included in Appendix 1.

THE MOC PROCESS

The purpose of the MOC process is to assure that ABOG-subspecialty-certified physicians continue to maintain a high level of knowledge in their field.

General Information

The ABOG Subspecialty MOC is a continuous process based on annual reapplication and a 6-year cycle. During the 6-year cycle, the Diplomate will be required to complete a number of tasks that vary depending on the year of the cycle. After completion of one 6-year cycle, the process restarts the next year.

There are 4 parts to the MOC process, but not all parts are active each year. The parts of the ABOG MOC program include:

- I. Professional Standing
- II. Lifelong Learning
- III. Cognitive Expertise
- IV. Practice Performance and Self-Assessment

Some MOC assignments are still evolving. Thus, it is important that the Diplomate read the *MOC Subspecialty Bulletin* each year.

MOC Application

The Diplomate must apply for admission to the MOC process each year. The application is available on the ABOG website at www.abog.org by selecting "Login" located at the top of the page and entering the specified information. Re-application is required each year as ABOG must ascertain that the Diplomate has an unrestricted license to practice medicine in every state in which they hold a license.

Applications for 2014 will be accepted starting in December 2013, and must be submitted with the proper fee no later than November 15, 2014. Failure to submit an application by this date will result in loss of certification. There are no late deadlines and no late fees.

Requirements for All Applicants for Entry into the MOC Process

Each MOC applicant must meet all of the following requirements to be admitted into the MOC process:

1. Hold an active, unrestricted license to practice medicine in any and all states or territories (United States or a Province of Canada) in which the physician holds a current medical license. A copy of each license held, with the current expiration date, must be faxed to ABOG at 214-871-1943 or emailed to moc@abog.org.

2. Be of good moral and ethical character.
3. If the physician has unsupervised hospital privileges, those privileges must be unrestricted in each of the hospitals in which patient care has been conducted for the past 12 months.
4. If the physician has resigned from a hospital staff or other healthcare organization, including all membership organizations (e.g. ACOG), while under investigation for ethical, moral, professional or other alleged misbehavior, or substandard patient care, a letter from that hospital or other organization stating that they are no longer pursuing the investigation of the physician must accompany the MOC application. The application will not be approved until and unless such documentation is received from the healthcare organization. If the information is not received by November 15, 2014, regardless of the reason for non-receipt, the physician will not be entered into the MOC process and will lose Board certification on December 31, 2014.
5. If the physician has no hospital practice (outpatient care only), an explanation must be submitted with the application. Another ABOG Diplomate in good standing, excluding a spouse or other family member, must attest (once during each 6-year cycle) that the applicant is of good moral and ethical character and has elected to have limited or no inpatient hospital practice.
6. If the physician is not actively involved in the clinical practice of medicine but chooses to participate in the MOC process (e.g., Dean, hospital administrator, health plan administrator, researcher or sabbatical) a letter of explanation must be submitted with the application. Another ABOG Diplomate in good standing, excluding a spouse or other family member, must attest in a letter that the applicant is of good moral and ethical character and that the applicant has elected not to have a clinical practice.

Such individuals will continue to be board-certified physicians, but certification status will indicate that they are not in clinical practice. If the physician returns to clinical practice, a letter must be sent to ABOG indicating that fact.

7. In Year 1 of each MOC 6-year cycle, physicians practicing in a country other than the United States and its Territories or Canada must submit a letter with the application from a responsible senior official in the hospital or clinical setting where the applicant practices. The letter must attest that they have independent, unsupervised privileges for the practice of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and that the Diplomate's practice of medicine meets all local standards.

8. ABOG requires documented evidence concerning the applicant's professional reputation, moral and ethical character, and hospital privileges (if applicable). This evidence may be collected by ABOG confidentially from administrative officers of organizations and hospitals where the physician is known and practices, from state and local medical boards, from medical societies and other appropriate sources of information.
9. In agreeing with the terms of the application, the physician must also attest online that in the last 12 months there has been no:
 - a. Restriction (or conditions), suspension, probation or revocation of any medical license held in any state or province
 - b. Controlled substance, drug or alcohol-related offense
 - c. Limitation, suspension or loss of hospital privileges.

Diplomates who are unable to attest online to these statements will not be admitted into the MOC process.
10. Physicians who apply for MOC must also attest that they agree to adhere to all ABOG rules and policies.

Applicants Not Eligible to Participate in MOC

Physicians who fail to meet the MOC requirements are ineligible to participate in the MOC process and will lose their ABOG certification. To reinstate ABOG certification, they must apply to take the re-entry examination. Documentation that the cause for the initial disapproval has been resolved, dismissed or expired must be submitted with the application.

A physician not admitted to the MOC process may appeal the decision by writing to the Director of Maintenance of Certification within 90 days of notification of the action that is being appealed. If the physician's certification expires during the appeal process, that physician will hold an expired certificate and must pass a re-entry examination to reinstate certification. However, if the appeal is successful, Diplomate status will be reinstated; but the Diplomate must complete all MOC assignments successfully.

Description of MOC Parts I - IV

Part I: Professional Standing

Every Diplomate who applies for the Subspecialty MOC process is required to hold an active, unrestricted license to practice medicine in each state in which they are licensed. Copies of all licenses must be faxed or emailed to ABOG each year as part of the application process, and the copy must show the expiration date of each license.

Applicants must submit a written explanation of the following circumstances to ABOG:

1. if a license to practice medicine is restricted, has conditions, is suspended, is on probation or has been revoked
2. if hospital privileges have been restricted, denied renewal or revoked
3. if disciplinary actions have been taken by a hospital or other agency
4. if there is evidence of mental or physical impairment.

ABOG will review the material to ascertain whether the physician will be allowed to enter the MOC process. In most cases, ABOG will require that the applicant clear all restrictions before entry into the MOC process will be allowed.

Each physician must present evidence of good moral and ethical character and an untarnished professional reputation.

For those with a hospital practice, if requested by ABOG, a release of information form must be signed by the Diplomate. This allows ABOG to make confidential inquiries to any hospital; other medical facility; other healthcare organizations including membership organizations, physicians, nurses, trainees; and patients as needed to document that the physician fulfills all moral and ethical requirements.

If the physician has only an office practice, an attestation form must be completed by an ABOG Diplomate in good standing, excluding a spouse or family member, in MOC Year 1 of each MOC cycle.

ABOG will review the Diplomate's status with the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) and the Disciplinary Action Notification System (DANS) database. If the applicant has had a license revoked, restricted, suspended or placed on probation by any licensing authority, or has had any negative action taken by a hospital or other medical facility, or other healthcare organization, that physician will not be allowed to participate in the MOC

process until all such restrictions are removed.

If a physician is involved in an investigation regarding ethical, moral or professionalism issues, the individual will not be allowed to enter the MOC process; and the matter will be reviewed by the appropriate ABOG committee. This review may require considerable additional time, especially if the final decision requires final disposition by a court or other civil or criminal authority. If, during the period of investigation, the Diplomate's certificate expires, that physician will hold an expired certificate. (See Expired Certificate.)

Falsification of data submitted to ABOG or evidence of other egregious ethical, moral or professional misbehavior may result in deferral of a physician's application to MOC for at least 3 years. Such physicians will lose certification during this deferral period and must take the secure, written re-entry examination to reinstate Board-certification.

It is each Diplomate's responsibility to inform ABOG of any and all actions against a medical license, hospital or other privileges, and credentials.

Physicians with medical licenses on probation for a specified length of time may request admission to or be assigned to the MOC process in a "probationary status" if the reason for probation is not associated with a criminal conviction. Each request or situation will be reviewed by the appropriate ABOG committee. The decision of the committee is final and cannot be appealed. Physicians requiring more information about the probationary certification status should contact the ABOG MOC office.

Part II: Lifelong Learning

Note: *The number of required questions varies in some years. See the specific yearly assignments below.*

If the subspecialty-certified Diplomate has completed the application, paid the appropriate fee(s), and has been approved to enter the MOC process, ABOG will deliver 3 reading assignments to the Diplomate's personal ABOG webpage, usually during the first week of January, May and August.

After the reading assignment has been completed successfully, the Diplomate will receive 30 Category 1 CME credit hours from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). No additional CME credits can be earned in subspecialty MOC Part II.

Diplomates must attest that they personally read the articles and answered the questions.

In MOC Year 3, Part II is handled differently.

The reading assignment for subspecialists is composed of two parts:

- a. articles in general obstetrics, gynecology and office practice, and
- b. articles in the Diplomate's subspecialty.

Each subspecialist must complete an assignment from each group of articles, as follows:

Articles in general Obstetrics, Gynecology and Office Practice

Each reading assignment will contain the titles of at least 15 articles: 5 in Obstetrics, 5 in Gynecology and 5 in Office Practice & Women's Health. Additional articles in areas such as, but not limited to, patient safety, communication, professionalism and ethics may also be listed in some reading lists. Each article will be accompanied by 4 questions. It is the Diplomate's responsibility to obtain copies of the articles, read them, and answer the 4 questions accompanying that article. *Obstetrics & Gynecology* has added a feature that will help Diplomates obtain access to these articles, many at no cost. Articles published in the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology* are made available without charge for 18 months after publication date. ABOG is not allowed to supply copies of the actual articles due to U.S. copyright laws.

In MOC Year 3 only 8 general articles must be read, and 32 questions submitted from the general articles.

Articles in the subspecialties:

During the first week of January, May and August, the subspecialist will receive a list of articles specific to their subspecialty area. The number of articles may vary, but each group of articles is associated with 30 questions. The subspecialist must answer all 30 questions in each of the 3 reading assignments (90 total questions), and 80% of the answers must be correct.

Some of the listed articles have been approved by American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM) or the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL) for credit toward their continuing education requirements. Those who would like to receive such credit should contact AIUM or the AAGL for more details.

In MOC Year 3 only 1 subspecialty reading assignment with 30 questions from the subspecialty articles are required.

Summary of subspecialty MOC Part II assignment:

Each MOC year (except MOC Year 3), the subspecialist must answer a total of 150 questions, as follows:

60 questions from 15 articles in general OB, Gyn and/or Office practice
 And
 90 questions—30 from each set of subspecialty articles—in subspecialty

If 80% of the questions are answered correctly (except in MOC year 3) the subspecialist will be awarded 30 category 1 CME hours by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). Diplomates who are not ACOG members will be charged a fee of \$390 each year to cover the cost of administration of the CME credit (for MOC Parts II and IV). If a Diplomate fails to answer 80% of the MOC Part II questions correctly, the Diplomate may re-enter answers for the questions for any article where one or more answers were incorrect. All answers must be submitted to ABOG no later than 5 p.m. on December 15, 2014 to avoid having an incomplete assignment.

EXAMPLES:

1. *In January, May and August an MFM Subspecialty-certified Diplomate reads the 5 Obstetrics articles and submits the 60 questions associated with those 15 articles. The Diplomate also completes the 30 questions from the January, May and August MFM subspecialty articles and submits them. If 80% of the 150 submitted questions are correct, the assignment is completed.*
2. *The Diplomate submits all 90 questions in their subspecialty, but none from the general articles. The assignment is incomplete.*
3. *The Diplomate submits the 60 general and 90 subspecialty questions, but only 65% are correct. The assignment is incomplete.*

Diplomates must attest that they personally read the articles and answered the questions.

MOC Part II is different in Year 3. The Diplomate must submit a total of 32 questions from 8 general articles and one set of 30 questions from the subspecialty articles with a minimum of 80% correct (62 total questions).

As soon as the 62 questions with 80% correct have been submitted, the Safety and Communication course will open on the Diplomate's web page. The entire Safety and Communication course must be completed in MOC Year 3 by December 15, 2014. This assignment includes a pretest (no passing grade) and 14 educational chapters. There is a set of questions at the end of each chapter. 80% of all of the questions at the end of each chapter must be answered correctly before the next chapter will open.

There are 120 questions in the Safety and Communication course. When the course is completed the Diplomate will be awarded 35 Category 1 CME credits by ACOG (10 CME hours for the 62 questions from Part II and 25 CME hours for the Safety and Communication Course). No additional fee will

be charged for either the Safety and Communication course or the additional CME credits.

All of the 2014 reading assignments will appear on the Diplomate's webpage, as many Diplomates have requested that they be able to see all of the articles for the year. However, it is only possible to complete 62 questions. Diplomates are strongly encouraged to complete the 62 questions from the January set so that work on the Safety and Communication course may be started.

Part III: Cognitive Expertise

Each Diplomate must take and pass a secure, computer-based examination in MOC Year 6. It will be administered at Pearson VUE testing centers throughout the United States and will be available most days of the year except Sundays and holidays.

When a Diplomate applies for MOC Year 6, they will be notified that they must pass a secure, computer-based examination before December 15, 2014. They will also be required to pay an additional fee of \$175 to cover the administrative costs of preparing the examination and the test center fee. This fee will be in addition to the \$305 fee for MOC Parts I, II and IV.

When the Diplomate's application has been approved (usually fewer than 4 weeks), information will be sent to the Diplomate's email address explaining the process for scheduling a test at a Pearson VUE test center. Reservations at each test center are scheduled on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Physicians are encouraged to schedule their examinations as soon as possible after receiving the notice of approval.

If a physician does not pass the secure, computer-based examination, it may be retaken up to four more times. The original test fee will cover the costs of all repeat examinations. The last day a repeat examination can be taken is December 15, 2014.

If a physician fails to pass the MOC Part III examination by December 15, 2014, their certificate will expire; and they must pass a re-entry test to reinstate their Board certification.

In addition to passing the secure, computer-based MOC examination, Diplomates in MOC Year 6 must also complete the Part I Professional Standing, Part II Lifelong Learning and Part IV Quality Improvement assignments.

A practice test is available on the ABOG website. The structure of the test can be found in this Bulletin in Appendix 3.

Part IV: Practice Performance and Self-Assessment

This part of the MOC process is a joint project of ABOG and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). It is accessed through the ABOG website (see below). Each Diplomate chooses topics that are appropriate from a list of modules.

There are two phases to each module. Phase 1 of the module typically involves reading an evidence-based paper, reviewing up to 10 of the Diplomate's patient records, and answering several questions. Some topics do not involve patient record review. Phase 2 of the module process is entitled Impact on Practice and occurs 3 months later. The Diplomate will receive an email from ACOG and must complete an Impact on Practice question(s) to complete the module. Three Category 1 CME credits will be awarded by ACOG for each module after Phase 2 is complete.

Each subspecialty Diplomate must open and complete one Phase 1 module each year for the first 5 years in the 6-year cycle. Phase 2 will be available after 3 months. Each subspecialist must choose 3 modules from their subspecialty, and 2 from the list of general topics. The subspecialist should choose topics that are relevant to their practice. The general and subspecialty modules may be completed in any order, as long as a total of 5 (3 subspecialty and 2 general) are completed in each 6-year cycle. All 5 modules must be completed before the end of MOC Year 6. Completion of duplicate modules is not allowed.

Diplomates will not be allowed to start any assignments in the next year unless the previous year's required module is opened, and/or completed.

There is no charge for MOC Part IV for ACOG Fellows. ACOG coordinates this part of MOC and considers it to be one of the benefits of membership. For Diplomates who are not fellows of ACOG, there will be a \$390 fee per year to cover the cost of administration of the CME credit (for Parts II and IV).

Modules are accessed through the ABOG website. A Diplomate logs in with their ABOG ID number and password. The Personal Home Page has a Part IV Performance Assessment section. Click on the MOC Module link and the physician will be taken to the module home page. A module may be selected and ACOG will track the physician's progress in completing the module. The only information retained after the module has been completed is that the physician successfully completed the module. This information will be automatically submitted to ABOG.

Many physicians already participate in quality improvement efforts in their local practice, institutions and professional organizations. The Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Approval Program (Portfolio Program) is an alternative

pathway for healthcare organizations that support physician involvement in quality improvement and MOC to have their quality improvement efforts be approved for ABOG MOC Part IV credit. To find out more about the Portfolio Program, visit www.mocportfolioprogram.org.

Diplomates in Non-Clinical Positions

Diplomates in non-clinical positions, (e.g., Deans, administrators, researchers, individuals on sabbaticals, etc.) may maintain certification by completion of MOC Parts I, II, and III. ABOG must be notified of the Diplomat's status and approve the exemption from modules in Part IV that are not applicable.

Such Diplomates may be designated as ABOG-certified but currently not in the active practice of medicine. If the Diplomat returns to active clinical practice, ABOG may be petitioned to remove the designation.

Diplomates who are temporarily clinically inactive or retired from clinical practice

Diplomates with non-time-limited subspecialty certification

A Diplomat with a non-time-limited subspecialty certificate who retires from active clinical practice must notify ABOG of this transition. The Diplomat will then be listed as an inactive board-certified physician who will be designated as not required to meet MOC requirements.

An inactive, retired Diplomat may request to participate in MOC (voluntary MOC). Such physicians must pay the appropriate MOC fees and complete MOC Parts I, II and III assignments each year, as appropriate for a 6-year MOC cycle. Such Diplomates will be designated as meeting MOC requirements. Beginning in 2014, these Diplomates will be considered to be in MOC Year 1. In MOC Year 6, Diplomates in voluntary MOC will be required to pass the Part III MOC examination.

Inactive, retired physicians who only wish to participate in MOC Part II to gain CME credit hours must contact ABOG for approval. Starting in 2015, participation in only Part II will not meet the criteria to be designated as meeting MOC requirements.

Inactive, retired physicians who re-enter practice must notify ABOG of that transition. Diplomates with prior non-time-limited subspecialty certification will be required to regain certification through the appropriate re-entry examination, if they have not voluntarily participated in MOC in retirement. That physician will then be eligible to re-enter the process in MOC Year 1.

Diplomates with time-limited subspecialty certification

A Diplomat who temporarily is clinically inactive or takes leave from their practice for medical, family or personal reasons may request to participate in MOC without hospital privileges or an outpatient practice. Such physicians must pay the appropriate MOC fees and complete MOC Parts I, II and III assignments each year; and they will be designated as meeting MOC requirements. Failure to

complete the yearly MOC requirements during the temporary inactivity will result in expiration of certification. When these Diplomates re-enter clinical practice, they must notify ABOG, meet the MOC eligibility requirements, and resume participation in MOC Part IV.

A Diplomate with a time-limited subspecialty certificate who retires from clinical practice must notify ABOG of this transition. The Diplomate will then be listed as an inactive, retired physician. Such physicians will be designated as not required to participate in MOC. Failure to notify ABOG at retirement and/or failure to continue the MOC process will result in expiration of certification.

All inactive physicians who re-enter practice must notify ABOG of that transition. Inactive physicians with prior time-limited subspecialty certification who have not participated in MOC will be required to regain certification through the appropriate re-entry examination. That physician will then be eligible to re-enter the process in MOC Year 1.

A retired Diplomate may request to participate in MOC (voluntary MOC). Such physicians must pay the appropriate MOC fees and complete MOC Parts I, II and III assignments each year, as appropriate for a 6-year MOC cycle. Such Diplomates will be designated as meeting MOC requirements. Beginning in 2014, these Diplomates will be considered to be in MOC Year 1. In MOC Year 6, Diplomates in voluntary MOC will be required to pass the Part III MOC examination.

Inactive, retired physicians who only wish to participate in MOC Part II to gain CME credit hours must contact ABOG for approval. Starting in 2015, participation in only Part II will not meet the criteria to be designated as meeting MOC requirements.

MOC DEADLINES AND FEES

MOC Deadlines

Five p.m. CST, November 15, 2014: Deadline for applications to be accepted.

Five p.m. CST, December 15, 2014: Deadline for completed assignments to be accepted.

*MOC Application Fees: Years 1-5**

ACOG Fellows and Junior Fellows (30 CME credits for Part II) \$305

Non-ACOG Fellows (30 CME credits for Part II) \$305 + \$390 = \$695

*In MOC Year 3, thirty-five CME credits will be awarded after completion of the Safety and Communication course and the Part II assignments at no additional charge.

MOC Application Fees: Year 6

ACOG Fellows and Junior Fellows (30 CME credits for Part II) \$305 + \$175 = \$480

Non-ACOG Fellows (30 CME credits for Part II) \$305 + \$390 + \$175 = \$870

Fees for MOC have been computed to cover the administrative expenses associated with the process and cannot be refunded or credited to a future year. Fees are quoted in U.S. dollars and must be paid by credit card through the ABOG website (www.abog.org).

Access to the MOC assignments will not be allowed until the MOC application is approved and payment is received.

Failure to Complete MOC Process / Loss of Board Certification

A Diplomate who fails to enter into or to successfully complete all of the required assignments in any given MOC year will lose their Diplomate status. That is, they will no longer be board-certified.

***Example:** A Diplomate was required to be enrolled in the MOC Year 1 process in 2014 to maintain certification. An application was completed and the proper fee paid, but the physician did not complete the Part II reading assignment by submitting the answers to 120 article-related questions by the deadline. That physician will no longer be Board certified as of January 1, 2015.*

Diplomate status may be regained by completing the re-entry process. However, during the interval between January 1 and the completion of the re-entry process, the physician is not board-certified and may not advertise or assert Diplomate status.

Re-Entry Process / Re-Establishment of Diplomate status

A physician who loses Diplomate status by failure to complete the MOC process in any year must apply for, take and pass a secure, computer-based re-entry examination, unless their certificate has been expired for 6 or more years. The physician is also required to complete their MOC assignments the same year that certification is regained. There will be a combined fee for the re-entry process that includes the examination and MOC.

A physician holding a certificate that has been expired for 6 or more years must complete the basic written and oral examinations to re-establish their Diplomate status. See the section on Expired Certificates for further details.

Expired Certificates

The following section applies to those previously-certified physicians who have lost ABOG certification due to lack of participation in, or failure to complete, the MOC process. Such physicians are no longer Diplomates of the ABOG, and may not advertise or otherwise designate that they are ABOG certified.

Certification Expired fewer than 6 years

Physicians seeking to regain certification must pass a secure, computer-based re-entry examination and then complete MOC Year 1 assignments in the same year. Re-entry examinations will be given on March 3, 2014 and May 20, 2014 for Diplomates with expired certificates. All examinations will be administered at Pearson VUE testing centers throughout the United States.

A. Application process

Applications for the March 3 re-entry examination will be available on-line at www.abog.org beginning December, 2013, but the physician must call the ABOG MOC office for access to the on-line application. The final date to apply for the March 3 examination is February 18, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. CST. No application for the March date will be accepted after this date. The final date to apply for the May 20 examination is April 29, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. CDT, and no application will be accepted after that date. A non-refundable combined examination and MOC fee of \$1025 must be paid by credit card at the time of application. No application will be processed without payment of the application fee and submission of all required documents.

B. Testing sites

An email will be sent to each applicant approximately 6-8 weeks prior to the examination date after their application has been approved and the appropriate fee has been paid. The email will be sent to the email address provided as part of the application process.

Two business days (48 hours) after the email is received, the candidate should contact the testing center to obtain a reservation for the examination. Instructions for contacting the testing center will be included in the email. Reservations at the testing centers in individual cities are limited and are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Thus, there is no guarantee that a specific city site will be available. Applicants are encouraged to complete the application process as soon as possible after January, 2014.

C. Re-entry Certification Limits

Candidates who successfully pass the re-entry examination in March or May 2014 will have their Diplomate status re-instated for the remainder of 2014, provided that the Diplomate enters the MOC process in 2014 and completes the assignments. Diplomate status will be renewed annually provided that the MOC process is completed successfully each year.

Candidates who fail to pass the re-entry examination in March may apply for the May-examination by completing an application and paying an additional \$780 application fee. Applicants who fail to pass the May re-entry examination may apply to take the re-entry examinations offered in 2015.

Certification Expired for 6 or more years

Diplomates who hold a certificate that has been expired for six or more years are not eligible to apply for the re-entry examination. They may re-establish Diplomate status only by taking and passing the basic written and oral examinations.

**Voluntary MOC
for
Physicians
with
Non-Time-Limited
Subspecialty ABOG
Certification**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Physicians who achieved subspecialty certification by ABOG prior to 1987 hold certificates that are not time-limited. That is, their certificates do not expire. However, those physicians may elect to participate in some or all of the parts of the MOC process voluntarily. Such participation does not change their certification status in any manner. The duration of their certification remains non-time-limited.

VOLUNTARY MOC APPLICATION

Diplomates holding non-time-limited subspecialty certificates who wish to participate in MOC voluntarily must contact the ABOG MOC office for access. They may participate in MOC Parts I, II, III and IV.

The Diplomate must submit the appropriate additional materials and pay the application fees. Please read the sections describing the application process in this Subspecialty Bulletin for those with time-limited certificates. The instructions for application and the fees are identical to those described for Diplomates with time-limited certification.

Starting in 2015, in order to be designated as meeting MOC requirements, Diplomates must participate in all parts of MOC applicable to their practice. In most cases this will require participation in Parts I, II, III and IV. Starting in 2014, Diplomates in voluntary MOC will be considered in MOC Year 1. In MOC Year 6, Diplomates in voluntary MOC will be required to pass the Part III MOC examination.

Diplomates with non-time-limited certification who only wish to participate in MOC Part II to gain CME credit hours must contact ABOG for approval. Starting in 2015, participation in only Part II will not meet the criteria to be designated as meeting MOC requirements.

Appendices

Appendix 1: PQRS MOC Requirements

In order to qualify, a Diplomate must meet the following requirements:

- Participate in PQRS reporting by satisfactorily submitting data on PQRS quality measures for a 12-month reporting period either as an individual physician or as part of a group practice under one of the PQRS group practice reporting options. Submission can be accomplished by any of the approved PQRS reporting options—through Medicare Part B claims reporting, a CMS-qualified electronic health record or through a CMS-qualified registry.
- Participate in ABOG MOC "more frequently" than is required to qualify or maintain board certification status, including completing a practice assessment and patient experience of care survey in 2014.

The CMS asked each qualifying specialty Board to define what "more frequently" meant in terms of changes to their basic MOC requirements. The ABOG has defined the "more frequent" requirements as follows:

1. Diplomates with time-limited certification:
 - a. Part II (lifelong learning and self-assessment): Participate more frequently by reading an additional 15 articles and correctly answering 80% of the evaluation questions.
 - b. Part IV (practice assessment and quality improvement): Complete a practice assessment including a patient experience of care survey in 2014 and each year of participation in PQRS MOC. The patient survey requirement may be fulfilled by participating in surveys administered by an institution (such as a hospital or clinic), department or other organizations.
2. Diplomates with non-time limited certification:
 - a. Complete a practice assessment including a patient experience of care survey in 2014 and each year of participation in PQRS MOC. The patient survey requirement may be fulfilled by participating in surveys administered by your institution (such as a hospital or clinic), department or other organizations.
 - b. Participate fully in the ABOG MOC process.

To participate in PQRS MOC reporting, Diplomates will need to provide a National Provider Identifier (NPI) and Board identification number at the time of registration. If Diplomates choose to participate in the PQRS registry option they will also need to provide a Tax Identification Number (TIN).

ABOG has partnered with American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to create [MOC Matters](#), a web portal to assist with meeting the PQRS and PQRS MOC Program Incentive program requirements.

MOC Matters provides access to:

- Attestation Page: Use the attestation to confirm the MOC activity completed in 2014. Information will be verified by ABOG and sent to CMS. Diplomates must submit an attestation through the MOC Matters portal in order to earn the PQRS MOC Program Incentive bonus.
- PQRS Registry: An optional tool for reporting clinical measure data to CMS.
- ABMS Patient Survey: An optional tool for meeting the patient survey requirement for PQRS MOC. See PQRS MOC Requirements above for other options.

The tools in the MOC Matters portal will remain open and accessible through December 31, 2014 to allow reporting on 2014 activities.

Note: To avoid being locked out of the MOC Matters portal, Diplomates should not submit an attestation until they have finished submitting all their clinical data to CMS by the PQRS registry or have gathered enough patient surveys using ABMS Patient Survey tool.

For more information about the ABOG PQRS MOC program, please refer to the ABMS website at <https://mocmatters.abms.org/board.aspx#abog>.

CMS will require Diplomates to attest on an annual basis to fulfilling the "more frequent" requirements, and ABOG will need to validate this attestation.

Requirements must be completed within the calendar year of 2014. The tools in this application will remain open and accessible through December 31, 2014. Requirements for subsequent years are subject to change depending on CMS rules.

Appendix 2: Outline of Yearly MOC Assignments for 2014

Determine your MOC Year for 2014 (available on your personal ABOG website) and complete the appropriate assignments for that year. Subspecialists must complete 5 modules during the 6-year cycle (3 modules in their subspecialty field + 2 general gynecology, obstetrics or office practice).

MOC Year 1

Apply at www.abog.org; pay fees before November 15, 2014.

- Part I: Professionalism: Submit medical license(s) and attestation (if needed).
- Part II: Lifelong Learning: Complete 150 questions by December 15, 2014.
- Part III: Cognitive Expertise: Secure, computer-based exam not required.
- Part IV: Performance Assessment: Open and complete Phase 1 of one MOC module.

MOC Year 2

Apply at www.abog.org; pay fees before November 15, 2014.

- Part I: Professionalism: Submit medical license(s).
- Part II: Lifelong Learning: Complete 150 questions by December 15, 2014.
- Part III: Cognitive Expertise: Secure, computer-based exam not required.
- Part IV: Performance Assessment: Open and complete Phase 2 of module started in Year 1, if unfinished. Open and complete Phase 1 of a second MOC module.

MOC Year 3

Apply at www.abog.org; pay fees before November 15, 2014.

- Part I: Professionalism: Submit medical license(s).
- Part II: Lifelong Learning: Complete 62 questions. Open and complete Safety and Communication course and article assignment (80% correct) by December 15, 2014.
- Part III: Cognitive Expertise: Secure, computer-based exam not required.

Part IV: Performance Assessment: Complete Phase 2 of Year 2 module, if unfinished. Open and complete Phase 1 of a third MOC module

MOC Year 4

Apply at www.abog.org; pay fees before November 15, 2014.

The assignments are the same as MOC Year 2. In Part IV, complete Phase 2 of module opened in Year 3, if unfinished, and open and complete Phase 1 of a fourth MOC module.

MOC Year 5

Apply at www.abog.org; pay fees before November 15, 2014.

The assignments are the same as MOC Year 2, except in Part IV to complete Phase 2 of module opened in Year 4, if unfinished, and open and complete Phase 1 of a fifth MOC module.

MOC Year 6

Apply at www.abog.org; pay fees before November 15, 2014.

Part I: Professionalism: Submit medical license(s).

Part II: Lifelong Learning: Complete 150 questions by December 15, 2014.

Part III: Cognitive Expertise: Pass the secure, computer-based exam by December 15, 2014.

Part IV: Performance Assessment: Complete Phase 2 of module started in Year 5.

Appendix 3: Part III Secure, Computer-based Examination Description for Subspecialty Diplomates

A. Examination Content

1. The examination will consist of two 50-question “selectives” chosen by the Diplomate. (See below.) The test will last 105 minutes and will be administered at Pearson VUE testing centers throughout the United States.
2. The questions will be multiple-choice, one-best-answer type and will be based on common clinical problems.

B. Test Selectives

Each Diplomate will have their Subspecialty selective from List A (Subspecialties) and must choose one from List B (General OB-Gyn) at the time of application. The list of choices is shown below:

Selective List A--Subspecialties (50 questions)

1. Maternal-Fetal Medicine
2. Gynecologic Oncology
3. Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility
4. Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery

Selective List B (50 questions)

1. Obstetrics, Gynecology, Office Practice, and Women’s Health
2. Obstetrics
3. Gynecology
4. Office Practice and Women’s Health

C. Fees

The fee for the secure, computer-based examination is \$175 and was determined based on the costs associated with test preparation and the use of the testing centers. The fee must be paid at the time of MOC application.

If the examination is not passed, the physician may re-take the examination up to 4 more times before December 15, 2014. There will be no additional charge each time the test is taken in the same year.

D. Practice Test

ABOG posted a practice test at www.abog.org. The questions on the practice test are representative of the type of questions that will be asked on the actual examination, but are not meant to be interpreted as the actual questions that will be on the examination. Practice subspecialty questions are not available.

E. Study Materials

There is no single source which will serve as the basis for all questions on the examination. Diplomates are advised to be familiar with the material in the *ACOG Compendium of Selected Publications* and publications from the appropriate subspecialty societies. General textbooks in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery, Gynecologic Oncology, Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility are also good resources for study for examinations.

Appendix 4: Diplomate Disability: MOC Part III Examination

ABOG shall not exclude any Diplomate from the MOC Part III secure, computer-based examination solely because of a disability if the ABOG is provided with notice of the disability in time to permit the ABOG to make such adjustments in the examination as are reasonably necessary to accommodate the disability. The physician must provide sufficient documentation to permit the ABOG to verify the existence, nature and extent of the disability no fewer than 90 days prior to the date of the examination. The documentation must specify the requirements or accommodations deemed necessary to overcome or compensate for the disability. In addition, the Diplomate must supply any additional information the ABOG may subsequently request.

If any of the requirements cannot reasonably be provided, ABOG will notify the Diplomate and will indicate those alternative accommodations which it deems appropriate in consideration of the disability claimed and documented, and the integrity of the examination.

If the Diplomate fails to notify ABOG of a disability 90 days before the examination and fails to achieve a passing grade, that candidate may not appeal the results of the examination, however, the Diplomate shall be entitled to take the next available examination.

If a Diplomate claims that their MOC Part III examination results were adversely affected by illness, injury or other temporary physical impairment at the time of the examination, that Diplomate may not appeal the results of the examination. However, if the Diplomate provides sufficient evidence of such illness, injury or impairment, they shall be entitled to re-schedule and repeat the written examination during the same MOC year without another examination fee.