



Executive Director
American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Dallas, Texas

The American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG) seeks an accomplished physician leader to become its next Executive Director (ED). Since its founding in 1927, ABOG has delivered on its mission to define standards in the field, certify obstetricians and gynecologists (OB GYNs), and facilitate continuous learning to advance knowledge, practice, and professionalism in women's health.

The next Executive Director will inherit an essential institution with a strong operation in solid financial standing prepared to continue advancing its mission in an increasingly complex world. Over 36,000 OB GYN physicians are currently certified by ABOG and actively maintain their certification. More than 65,000 OB GYNs have been certified over the life of the organization, and there are 2,000 more specialists and subspecialists certified every year. In 2024, ABOG's new home, a state-of-the-art building located in Uptown Dallas, will open, allowing for more useable office and meeting spaces, as well as on-site testing.

ABOG's next leader will build on these foundations as the organization looks to the era ahead. With significant influence on the standards of certification in OB GYN, there is potential in the coming years for ABOG to further shape the field and its evolution. ABOG's critical work of certifying OB GYNs for practice has never been more important, and this Executive Director will seize the moment on behalf of diplomates and patients. In addition, ABOG has been regarded as a leading board within the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and serves as an influential player in the domain of certification beyond OB GYN; the future holds opportunity to expand this dimension of ABOG's impact.

The next ED must be a visionary leader eager to guide the institution through the challenges and opportunities ahead. They will be equal parts proactively planful and responsive to changing conditions. Reporting to and working alongside the ABOG Board of Directors and with the support of the staff, the ED will represent ABOG's voice and interests within the ABMS; serve as a thought leader regarding certification broadly; set the organizational strategy to ensure that certification and maintenance of certification are aligned with ABMS standards and relevant and responsive to the needs of providers; fortify the institution's steady financial foundations; continually build and support an excellent staff; be a leader in addressing issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the specialty; serve as an effective spokesperson while bolstering relationships with important external entities and affiliate organizations; lead the completion of and transition into the new building; and maximize use of the new space.

The next Executive Director is expected to be chosen in the spring of 2023, with the selected candidate formally taking office in late 2023. An ABOG-certified OB GYN, the ideal candidate will bring considerable administrative credibility, as well as experience with graduate medical education and certification. Exceptional leadership, an ability to present and inspire around a shared vision, and talent for building and managing teams are required. They will be an effective, clear, and authentic communicator, a sincere listener, and bring evidence of career-long and steadfast commitment to standards of excellence in women's health.

ABOG has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this important recruitment. Please direct all inquiries and applications as indicated at the end of this document.

About ABOG

ABOG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that sets standards and certifies obstetricians and gynecologists and offers continuing certification to OB GYNs in the United States and Canada. ABOG also sets standards and administers certification in five subspecialties: Complex Family Planning; Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery; Gynecologic Oncology; Maternal-Fetal Medicine; and Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility. ABOG also offers Focused Practice Designations in Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology and Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery.

ABOG is one of the 24 certifying boards of the ABMS and among the nation's oldest. After its initial founding in 1927, ABOG was formally incorporated in 1930 thanks to the efforts of gynecologist Dr. Walter T. Dannreuther and following conferences of committees appointed by the American Association of Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Abdominal Surgeons; the American Medical Association; and the American Gynecological Society.

ABOG's certification processes requires qualified residency and fellowship graduates to take a computer-based qualifying exam and subsequently pass an oral certifying exam. Board certification is voluntary and distinct from licensure to practice medicine, which is conferred by individual state medical boards; licensure is a pre-requisite to gain and maintain diplomate status.

Since the first certificates were awarded in 1931, ABOG has awarded more than 65,000 certificates in Obstetrics and Gynecology, and more than 7,200 certificates in the subspecialties. The number of board-certified OB GYNs is on the rise, with nearly 1,500 specialists and 500 subspecialists having been newly certified in the past year.

At present, nearly 37,000 diplomates are active in ABOG's maintenance of certification program. Originally established in 2000 by the ABMS and gradually adopted by member boards, continuing certification (CC) standards, also known as maintenance of certification (MOC), established the expectation of ongoing education among board-certified physicians and transformed certification from an early career event to a program of continuous learning and assessment. These MOC standards, updated by the ABMS in 2014 and 2021, are designed to help physicians maintain up-to-date knowledge, enhance quality clinical outcomes, and promote patient safety.

ABOG has been an innovator on multiple fronts. The organization was an early adopter of a continuous MOC process, and in 2012 it transitioned from a periodic re-certification exam model to an annual article-based assessment model. In the years since, many other medical boards have followed suit. The change has been well received. ABOG's MOC program has enjoyed popularity among diplomates and is regularly refined for improvement. ABOG has also been an innovator in introducing psychometric advances in scoring and grading models to assure fairness, reliability, and validity of its testing. ABOG has also been a leader in item, test, and rater differential functioning analyses to assure that its exams, grading, and decisions are free from bias.

Governance, Operations, and Finances

ABOG has a strong governance structure. The organization is governed by a volunteer, 23-member Board of Directors, comprising board-certified OB GYNs and one elected public member. Thirteen of the members are at-large members elected from society or self-nominations. The Board is led by four elected officers: the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Immediate Past-President. The Executive Director

and associate Executive Directors serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board. There is an Executive Committee comprising the elected officers, the physician executives, and the Chair of the Subspecialty Committee. Full board meetings are held twice annually. The Executive Committee has monthly meetings with the physician executives, including two additional in-person meetings. Much work is done outside of these formal meetings, and directors are deeply involved in key decision-making and committee work. Directors typically serve one six-year term. The Board is intentionally diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and type of certification.

Board governance is further supported by a set of five Subspecialty Divisions, differently comprised, with six individual members and each led by a chair, who in turn serves as an ex-officio member of the Board. The members serve six-year terms, and the chair's term is three years. Divisions are tasked with maintaining and updating subspecialty standards for certification, item writing, exam development, and oral exam administration. They also oversee the subspecialty MOC requirements and activities.

The talented cadre of staff at ABOG are dedicated to bringing the organization's mission to life. As the volume of work has grown, so too has the internal operation: at present, there are 42 full-time staff members on board, representing a growth of 50% inside the last five years, bringing fresh perspectives, new talent, and more diversity. The ABOG staff embrace equity-mindedness and conscious inclusion to realize the full potential and benefits of its diverse workforce. In addition to the ABOG staff, the organization manages nearly 1,000 volunteer subject matter experts whose efforts and dedication assure transparency, accountability, and diversity in OB GYN certification processes.

ABOG's finances are healthy. The annual budget is approximately \$20M. Revenues, generated from fees for initial certification and continuing certification, are highly predictable year-over-year. There is continued annual growth in the number of initial certifications and the number of diplomates participating in MOC. The Board and staff leadership have been careful stewards of the organization's resources, and reserves have grown over the last decade. The new building is being financed through a combination of these reserves and targeted fundraising.

ABOG anchors an affiliate 501(c)(3) organization, the ABOG Educational Foundation, whose purpose is to organize educational opportunities, including scholarships and seminars relating to the OB GYN field of medicine for both existing doctors and students. For example, ABOG directly supports other societies' research scientist development programs for junior scientists focusing on OB GYN. This type of educational support is an important way ABOG delivers on its mission and contributes to the field.

Strategic Plan

ABOG implemented a strategic plan in 2016 and a refresh in 2020. The 2016 plan and the work that followed resulted in a closer alignment of ABOG's activities with its core mission. This required some shifts and refinements, including the transition of responsibility of OB GYN fellowship accreditation to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Other work budding from the plan was more generative, including the creation of the new subspecialty of Complex Family Planning, launched in 2022, and new Focused Practice Designations.

The 2020-2025 strategic refresh recommits to ABOG's interest in many of the aspirations outlined in the 2016 plan, such as pursuing an ever-more rigorous and contemporary framework for defining and setting standards for certification and sparking further innovations in testing. Several more specific key areas of focus did emerge: constructing a new facility for testing and related opportunities in Dallas; better

measuring and leveraging data for improving the certification process, as well as organizational decision-making and planning; more effectively influencing physician training toward ever-greater rigor; continuously improving communication with all constituents, particularly diplomates; and optimizing internal operations and governance structures.

New Facility

ABOG has recently undertaken a \$55M construction project to replace its office building in Uptown Dallas. The new four-story building will be constructed on the organization's original lot and will house a testing center, meeting rooms, and administrative offices. Construction began in January 2022 and is on track for a two-year completion timeline. With 59 examination rooms being built, the testing center represents a real expansion of the organization's capacity to administer testing with greater ease and efficiency.

ABOG was one of the first medical certification boards to move its oral Certifying Examinations from hotels to a professional testing center location more than 25 years ago. The new rooms will be equipped with enhanced functionality of AV equipment with flexibility to incorporate more technology as innovations in testing accelerate. An orientation center, personal belongings storage, and wellness rooms will also be available to better support candidates through the testing experience. In addition, new meeting spaces and a media center will be available to better support ABOG volunteers who write and administer the exams and staff who coordinate the work.

THE ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director serves as chief executive of ABOG and, reporting to and in partnership with the Board of Directors, is responsible for its success. Together they assure that ABOG remains relevant, on-mission, and accountable to its stakeholders and the ABMS.

The management and day-to-day operations of ABOG are overseen by the Executive Director. The six-person senior leadership team currently comprises an associate executive director of maintenance of certification; an assistant executive director of assessment; a chief of psychometrics & research; a chief financial officer, a chief operations officer, and a chief information officer.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Working closely with the Board of Directors, the next Executive Director will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Envision and Execute Future Pathways for ABOG While Ensuring Excellence

Modern healthcare is constantly changing and complexifying—now at ever-faster rates—and standards of care and certification must keep up. ABOG has continually upheld the highest standards for care, has reflected this in the certification processes, and is actively engaged in efforts for further development and continuous improvement. The next Executive Director will help spark a more dramatic evolution: one that is proactive, inventive, and importantly, data-driven, such that certification can become increasingly effective, efficient, and incisive.

Like so many certifying organizations over the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, test delivery has changed as remote, virtual, and hybrid testing have been introduced. The next Executive Director will help

the organization wrestle with key issues including the use of simulation and other novel technologies for initial certification, comparative benefits of in-person vs. virtual examinations, the effectiveness of oral examinations, the optimum use of psychometrics and data both *by* the certification process and *about* it, how and whether to expand subspecialty offerings or focus practice designations, whether and how to shift to longitudinal assessment, and many more. The ED will look for and seize upon opportunities to bring innovation to the examination process, including the pursuit of new, state-of-the-art testing methods. They will also ensure that any further modifications to the certification processes are made in adherence to ABMS Organizational, Initial Certification, and Continuing Certification Standards, the vast majority of which ABOG already meets. Decisions must be well supported by evidence, and all innovation and evolution must be pursued with an eye towards data and diplomate security. This leader will bring energy, curiosity, and a learner's mind to the exploration of these questions and will have motivation to move things forward quickly.

ABOG is a highly respected organization whose primary mission is to certify individual physicians in obstetrics and gynecology. Many dimensions of ABOG's certification process are best-in-class; ABOG's MOC program is among the strongest across all medical boards. ABOG has led the way in the article-based assessment pathway and receives high marks in diplomate satisfaction. The ABOG certification process that includes examination of a physician's personal practice cases is also a model for other ABMS Boards. The next Executive Director must preserve ABOG's standing in the field and ensure diplomates continue to value certification at the highest level. This will require a nimbleness, close listening, and a willingness to try new things.

Optimize Internal Operations and Effectively Manage a High Performing Staff

The internal operations of ABOG are strong and high functioning. Behind this well-oiled machine is a highly talented group of staff who work intensively and collaboratively to advance the organization's mission. When supported, empowered, and inspired, they have been the engine behind ABOG's greatest strides. Emerging from two years of remote and hybrid work and a recent return to the office, ABOG staff are in the process of re-weaving the fabric of the office and ABOG working culture. The next Executive Director will promote a positive, inclusive, and supportive working environment while enabling staff to achieve the highest standards of performance and professionalism. This includes ensuring that the organizational structure is the right one to meet these goals. The ED will be a unifying force, supporting the senior leadership team as they optimize their individual operational areas, delegating effectively, ensuring a cohesively knit set of departments, and ultimately working toward the organization's overall greater modernization and maturation.

Steward the Organization's Resources and Fiscal Health

ABOG is in very good financial condition, having taken care with its costs, investments, and reserves, and having a strong business model. Year over year, revenue is predictable and consistent. The next Executive Director will be responsible for maintaining the overall fiscal health of ABOG, working closely with the CFO and Treasurer of the Board to ensure funds are managed wisely.

Currently, the most significant institutional investment is the capital project underway in Uptown Dallas. This \$55M state-of-the-art building is on schedule to open in 2024. The next ED will continue oversight of the timely and cost-effective completion of this project and drive its launch. Funded through reserves and tailored fundraising efforts, the new ED will prudently manage finances and pursue additional philanthropic opportunities to meet ABOG's needs. Additionally, they must leverage this new property

and facilities to the greatest possible end, both in terms of mission served and revenue generated. The building serves as a fantastic canvas upon which to create the forward-thinking and technology-enabled innovative approaches to examination; it will also be a space to convene stakeholders to plan for the future of the specialty.

Manage and Strengthen External Relations

ABOG's relationships with its constituencies and external audiences are important and strong. This includes the most significant constituency—the diplomates—but also other OB GYN societies and associations, other certifying boards, [other organizations](#) focused on medical training and certification, and the public. A well-established partnership with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists provides support for OB GYN diplomates in their continuing education and MOC. The close coordination with the ACGME and the Review Committee is critical for ensuring establishment and further definition of standards for OB GYN training and certification; there is also important collaboration, research, and data-sharing that takes place between the organizations. ABOG is a respected voice within ABMS and the member board community. There are some board-certified physicians in Family Medicine who do reproductive healthcare, and the field overlaps with other surgical specialties and Pediatrics. Therefore, relationships with the corresponding ABMS specialty boards are also important.

The next ED of ABOG will serve as its external face and primary representative; they must attend appropriately to these relationships such that the organization's capacity to fulfill its mission is amplified. The ED serves ex-officio on the ACGME Review Committee and several other specialty society boards. In addition, the organization's communications function is central to managing the organization's public relations; the strategy employed to engage with the public, with younger audiences, and across various media platforms, should be continually refined in this fast-paced environment.

Work Toward Greater Diversity, Equity, Belonging, and Inclusion

A commitment to building a culture of diversity, equity, belonging, and inclusion is essential to the future of ABOG and the specialty. The ED will be engaged in efforts to promote DEIB both locally and nationally. Within ABOG's reach as the certifying organization for OB GYNs, there is opportunity to influence improvements in maternal health outcomes, reduce implicit bias, and address racial health disparities.

Navigate the Current Political Landscape

The next ED will inherit an organization at the center of a national political conversation. The ED must navigate these waters with a careful eye to the mission of the organization – to certify physicians and ensure the highest quality care for patients and the public. ABOG is fully committed to maintaining its headquarters in Dallas.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

For this critical role, ABOG seeks a candidate with reputation and stature at a national level, significant administrative experience and skill, vision for what is ahead in the field, exceptional interpersonal skills, and a strategic mind to lead the organization forward. They will be a bold leader, passionate about the organization's mission, committed to its longstanding standards of excellence, and motivated by role in advancing the fields of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Women's Health.

While no one candidate will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications and possess these personal characteristics, attributes, and values:

- Sincere commitment to the core mission of ABOG
- Demonstration of innovation in advancing excellence in care outcomes
- Organizational and administrative management skills sufficient to effectively lead a complex organization
- Financial skills sufficient to direct and utilize appropriate advisors, as well as tend to the day-to-day fiscal affairs of ABOG
- A naturally collaborative, respectful, and accessible leadership style, coupled with an inclination to circulate, listen, and learn
- The willingness to lead decisively and to energize and inspire, even when consensus is elusive
- Sound judgment; a highly ethical and honest individual in both person and intellect
- A willingness to stand for the principles and mission of ABOG in a sometimes-tumultuous external climate
- A tangible commitment to diversity, equity, belonging, and inclusion among stakeholders
- Commitment to elimination of systemic racism and OB GYN health disparities
- A deep understanding of graduate medical education and program accreditation
- The ability to speak to and communicate well with a variety of stakeholders and in a variety of settings
- Exceptional skill for mentoring, developing, and empowering staff
- Strong understanding of certification processes; past engagement with or service to ABOG a plus
- Engagement with ABOG throughout career is expected
- MD or DO degree, ABOG certification in OB GYN, and participation in MOC required

TO APPLY

ABOG has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be sent in confidence to the following:

Ariannah Mirick, Partner
Natalie Leonhard, Partner
Chloe Kanas, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller
www.imsearch.com/8659

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