ANNUAL REPORT
2013-2014

VALUES

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF RADIOLOGY
EXCELLENCE / PROFESSIONALISM / PUBLIC TRUST - EST. 1934
The Values featured on the cover of this report combine to form a complete picture of the standards upheld by the ABR. We are proud to see these values displayed in the professional lives of ABR-certified diplomates.

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ABR Mission

To certify that our diplomates demonstrate the requisite knowledge, skill, and understanding of their disciplines to the benefit of patients.

ABR Vision

The ABR will be the recognized leader in advancing patient care by continuously improving the professional standards of our disciplines through certification of our diplomates.

Photo Credits:
At left and page 14: Department of Radiation Oncology, University of Arizona Cancer Center, Tucson, Arizona
Pages 1, 15, and 19: Department of Radiology, William Beaumont Hospital, Detroit, Michigan
Page 17: Department of Imaging Physics, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas
Professionalism in Our Time

Milton J. Guilberteau, MD

For individual radiology professionals, ABR certification is the most widely and highly valued practice and privileging credential required by medical institutions and healthcare systems. The ABR Board of Trustees, consisting of your colleagues from all walks of radiological practice, has worked hard to ensure that our programs meet the needs of practicing radiologists and medical physicists by maintaining and further enhancing the value of our certification and Maintenance of Certification (MOC) efforts in the professional, public, and regulatory arenas. For example, the Federation of State Medical Boards has agreed to accept ABR certification as meeting the requirements of its proposed Maintenance of Licensure (MOL) programs for state medical boards, and CMS recognizes the value of ABR MOC as a marker of quality care in its payment incentive programs.

While meeting the demands of professionalism isn’t easy or simple, the rewards are considerable. From self-interest to shared responsibility in integrated healthcare systems. While many underlying values have been omnipresent, new ones unique to our time have been added. These include managing resource allocation and conflicts of interest, measuring and improving quality of care, ensuring safe patient imaging, and facilitating interactions among the various players in the healthcare system. These too must be accommodated by the ABR’s programs if we are to remain relevant and empowered to shape the future of medical practice in our specialty.

Attendant with these necessary changes in the ABR’s program requirements has been the concomitant responsibility of the ABR to make diplomate compliance as efficient as possible. Our Board of Trustees and I as your President are committed to programs and processes that interface as seamlessly as possible with practice patterns. We see no contradiction in the marriage of lofty goals with the hard work we put in every day. To this end, we have devised and encouraged the use of established society registries, CMS reporting measures, electronic peer review programs, and group efforts for fulfilling MOC practice quality improvement requirements. Thus, more opportunities than ever are available to help you comply with quality efforts that exemplify present-day professionalism in the workplace. What better time and place to demonstrate our commitment to professionalism than in the evaluation of processes we engage in every day.

Although demonstrating expected behaviors and commitment to the values of professionalism are important for accountability, regulatory, and enforcement purposes, our responsibilities to professionalism do not end with individual diplomate certification and MOC. As professionals and ABR diplomates, all of us have a duty to recognize our collective responsibility to professionalism as an expression of our group obligations to the public trust, as well as our promise to hold each other accountable for meeting those obligations. In doing so, we acknowledge not only that professionalism is how we ensure that radiologists are worthy of trust, but also how we manifest a belief system about how best to organize and deliver healthcare.

Such a belief system posits that optimum patient care is best delivered and controlled by those with the knowledge, skill, and trust of patients to provide it. This sort of grand enterprise cannot be accomplished by individuals but requires representation and negotiation by strong, cohesive professional organizations that cradle and proclaim the collective standards of our profession. The ABR is vital to this mission. Moreover, the authority of the ABR in servicing this aspect of professionalism is possible only through the support of a community of radiologists who collectively agree that our values and standards must be maintained and who support the legitimacy of professional organizations to promote and enforce such standards and values. To dismiss this collective depiction of professionalism as simply a high-minded, lip-serviced abstraction would be unwise in our time. Neglect or complacency only invites further weakening or replacement of our professional belief system as a central doctrine of healthcare. And the current medical environment we inhabit is bursting with eager alternatives. One is a growing belief in consumerism, in which regulation of medical practice is governed by the expectations of consumers of medical care and implemented through competitive marketplace forces. In addition, managerialism, which is already front and center, promotes a system in which corporate managers and/or bureaucrats formulate and enforce practice standards for physicians.

In both systems, the inability of our radiology community to govern its own work would effectively present a fundamental challenge to societal confidence in professionalism and thus weaken trust in radiologist self-regulation. As a substitute for self-regulation, neither of these alternatives represents a palatable scenario, although both are sure to play roles in our future. We must remain in positions of strength today to negotiate with these alternatives tomorrow. It is our mutual responsibility as professionals to actively inform and support the efforts of the ABR and other radiology professional societies involved in preserving our heritage of professionalism.

While meeting the demands of professionalism isn’t easy or simple, the rewards are considerable. For those who believe that physicians—radiologists in our case—know best how to care for our patients; that we must put them first in health and safety; that we as individuals and collectively as a specialty should hold ourselves and our colleagues to reasonable standards of knowledge and skill; and that our specialty must change to meet the dynamic challenges of the future and demonstrate that we are not lagging behind in the eyes of patients and the public, the American Board of Radiology stands ready to continue its 80-year mission of preserving traditional values, as well as developing contemporary visions of an evolving professionalism. Only then can we demonstrate that ABR diplomates, individually and collectively, fulfill what is now demanded of us. In doing so, we ensure that radiologists and our professional belief system remain pertinent and powerful in the modern healthcare system.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE ABR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Valerie P. Jackson, MD, FACR

his is my first report in my new position as executive director of the ABR. I am tremendously honored and grateful to have this opportunity to serve the Board and our profession. My heartfelt thanks go to the ABR Board of Trustees and our many volunteers. I also want to thank Drs. Gary Becker and Jennifer Bosma for their leadership and many contributions to the ABR.

These are times of great change. The ABR exam changes coincided with major economic and healthcare changes in the United States. The financial crash in 2008 and uncertainty about the economic future of radiology and medicine have led to a tight job market. Fewer radiologists have been retiring, and groups have been reluctant to hire new radiologists in the face of uncertain volumes and reimbursements in the future. The result has been an unprecedented degree of anxiety and anger.

After I accepted this position, I was repeatedly asked three questions:

1. Why would you want to be the person everyone loves to blame (the ABR executive director)?

I certainly don’t want anyone to dislike me, but I don’t expect to get any love letters in this job. I understand the anger and frustration that many have about the ABR—or any organization that has an impact on one’s career and livelihood. My goal is to help our candidates and diplomates navigate our ever-changing professional world. Please keep in mind that we are here for you!

2. Why did the ABR change the diagnostic radiology (DR) examination structure?

There is folklore that the examination schedule was changed because department chairs and residency program directors complained that their senior residents were “missing in action” for their last year of residency training. While they did complain, this was not the major reason for the change. The field of diagnostic radiology has grown so much over the years, and the way we practice has changed so that it is no longer possible for a radiologist to be an expert in everything. Ninety-four percent of diagnostic radiologists practice in four or fewer domains or subspecialty areas. It no longer makes sense to repeatedly examine every radiologist on every aspect of DR if they are not going to use the information. The complaints of the past about useless minutiae on the written and oral DR exams should be gone. Now the tested information is meant to be pertinent to modern practice.

The Core Exam, which is given after the third year of radiology residency, covers everything at a level that should be expected for an individual with three years of DR training. Many or most residency programs have been proactive in developing a new curriculum to ensure exposure to all components of DR training necessary for the examination. Many have developed novel “board review” sessions to reflect the new examination format. The Association of Program Directors in Radiology (APDR) is to be applauded for its creative and thoughtful plans to help programs prepare their residents for the exam.

The Certifying Exam is taken 15 months after the completion of residency (three months after fellowship, if one is done). This is a modular exam where the candidate selects areas of current or projected practice in just the same way the modules are selected for the Maintenance of Certification (MOC)—now called Continuous Certification (ConCert)—Exam. A “general radiology” module is an option, but one that is not likely to be selected very often. I must emphasize the similarity of the Certifying Exam to the MOC Exam, as I describe below.

3. Why can’t the ABR fix the job situation?

The reasons for fluctuations in the job market for any profession are complex. Whose job is it to control the job market and the number of available radiologists?

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The ABMS specialty to complete certification during residency training. Thus, credentialing boards and hospital systems are accustomed to our new system of delayed certification until candidates are out in practice. There are no easy solutions to the difficult situations we face today. However, disseminating information about changes in ABR processes is critically important. The ABR is working to get the word out to the radiology community, practices, hospitals, and healthcare systems.

We all need time . . . for practices to start hiring again, for older radiologists to retire if they wish, for everyone to get used to the new exam process, and for the U.S. healthcare economic situation to settle down. In the meantime, I welcome your feedback about how the ABR is doing. We are here to serve you!

Despite the fact that my clinical practice of breast imaging was only one day per week or less during my 11 years as a department chair, I felt well prepared (without studying) for the parts of breast imaging that I practiced regularly—screening and diagnostic mammography, breast ultrasound, and interventional procedures. I had not been performing breast MRI, so I spent extra time reading books and articles on this topic. I did not take any time off work to study, nor did I devote months to cramming information. I had no trouble passing the exam and feel that learning new things such as breast MRI was not a waste of time, as I should be knowledgeable about all aspects of my subspecialty area, whether I actually perform and/or interpret the procedure or not.

The reasons for fluctuations in the job market for any profession are complex. Whose job is it to control the job market and the number of available radiologists?

It is important to remember that DR was the last ABMS specialty to complete certification during residency training. Thus, credentialing boards and hospital systems are accustomed to our new system of delayed certification until candidates are out in practice.

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### General Certificates Issued by Decade (1930-2013)

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### Subspecialty Certificates Issued 2004-2013

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### General Certificates Issued 2004-2013

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### Number of Diplomates Participating in Maintenance of Certification

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<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<td>Diagnostic Radiology</td>
<td>19,668</td>
<td>2,841</td>
<td>2,473</td>
<td>(1,872)</td>
<td>(253)</td>
<td>(71)</td>
<td>(2,196)</td>
<td>*As of September 18, 2014. Number of lifetime certificate holders in parentheses.</td>
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he ABR recently launched two new beneficial programs related to Maintenance of Certification (MOC) and has joined an ABMS initiative that will help its diplomates complete Part 4 of MOC, Practice Quality Improvement (PQI). We are also in the process of establishing a direct feed of CME and Self-Assessment CME (SA-CME) data from societies to myABR. We hope these new initiatives will help save our diplomates both time and money.

### MOC Team Tracker

Many ABR diplomates are busy in group practices and seldom find time to log in to their myABR accounts. Yet, staying current with myABR attestations and entering and checking data are integral to MOC participation. To assist our MOC participants in group practices with their MOC “bookkeeping,” the ABR has developed a new online program called MOC Team Tracker.

This online tool is available to diplomates in all ABR disciplines—diagnostic radiology and the subspecialties, radiation oncology, and medical physics. Its use is optional for each diplomate, and not all members of a group are required to participate. Group practices (defined as two or more ABR diplomates) will designate a single Organization Manager who will be responsible for overseeing the program. To ensure that the system structure is scalable for groups of various sizes, the Organization Manager will be authorized to appoint one or more Group Practice Administrators (GPAs).

GPAs are authorized to sign on and manage the input of MOC participation data for the group’s members. Each GPA will have a unique list of diplomates, as well as an individual username and password that allows the GPA to log in to the MOC Team Tracker system. In addition to facilitating data entry, GPAs will be allowed to track each individual member’s progress in meeting MOC requirements and issue reminders to participants who fall behind, thus averting potentially inconvenient situations at a later date.

More information can be found on the ABR website at [www.theabr.org/moc-team-tracker](http://www.theabr.org/moc-team-tracker). To get started, email MOCTeamTracker@theabr.org.

### The Whole Practice MOC Discount Pilot Program

As an incentive for group practices to encourage MOC participation by all their members, the ABR will offer a group-wide discount of 10 percent on the current year’s annual MOC fees. Discounted fees will be available to members of qualified practices beginning in 2014, and this three-year pilot program will take place through 2016.

 Policies and requirements for receiving the Whole Practice MOC discount are outlined on the ABR website at [www.theabr.org/moc-whole-practice-discount](http://www.theabr.org/moc-whole-practice-discount). Note that requirements are different for 2014 and will change in 2015 and beyond.

### The Multi-Specialty MOC Portfolio Approval Program

Engaging groups of healthcare professionals in practice-relevant QI projects that meet specified criteria and simultaneously fulfill MOC Part 4 requirements is a potentially powerful way to advance healthcare quality and safety, while reducing the burdens on diplomates, administrative support staff, departments, and institutions. All these potential benefits can be realized through the ABR/ABMS Multispecialty MOC Portfolio Approval Program (Portfolio Program).

Because the ABR joined the Portfolio Program in July 2014, QI efforts involving ABR-certified physicians and QI efforts in the field of radiology now may be submitted by approved Portfolio Sponsors for credit through the Portfolio Program. For practices and institutions prepared to sponsor MOC Part 4 projects that meet ABR/MOC requirements, and to approve, monitor, and attest to meaningful participation of ABR diplomate-participants in these projects, the Portfolio Program may be an appropriate relationship to implement. If you believe that your healthcare organization or institution may qualify as a Portfolio Sponsor, you can find more information at [http://mocportfolioprogram.org](http://mocportfolioprogram.org). You may also contact the ABMS or email abrmccp@theabr.org.

### Coming Soon: ABR Direct Feed of Society Data to myABR

For more than seven years, the ABR has accepted automatic data transfer from the CME Gateway as a service to our diplomates participating in MOC. Individuals who opted in to the Gateway have been able to have CME and SA credits earned from participating societies automatically recorded in their ABR Personal Databases (now known as myABR). For the most part, this system has worked well in helping society members track their CME credits toward meeting the requirements of MOC Part 2 (LifeLong Learning and Self-Assessment).

In some cases, however, ABR receipt of data through the Gateway has not been complete and current due to the multiple electronic “handoffs” from the societies through the Gateway to the ABR. The possibility for unreliable data has been exacerbated by the need to separately track the new type of CME credit known as SA-CME.

To ensure the reliability of data received on behalf of our diplomates, the ABR is in the process of creating a direct data feed of CME credits from societies to the ABR. We believe this will reduce the risk of delayed updates and inaccurate data in a diplomat’s myABR account, possibly leading to inadvertently reporting a diplomate who has actually earned the correct number of CME and/or SA-CME credits as “not meeting the requirements of MOC.”

The CME Gateway will still exist as a service to radiologists for tracking CME from multiple societies and regenerating CME certificates. However, the ABR has made a decision not to consume data from the Gateway feed after a direct feed of society CME credits has been established with each respective society. You will be notified when direct data feed is operational; in the meantime, data queries from the CME Gateway will continue. Please remember to check myABR to ensure that your CME credits are properly entered ([https://myabr.theabr.org/login](https://myabr.theabr.org/login)).
Once again, this has been a busy year for the discipline of diagnostic radiology. The initial certification examination shift from the old to the new exam paradigm will be completed this year. The final oral examination, a capstone for generations of diagnostic radiologists, will be given in Louisville this November; after that, all candidates for initial certification in diagnostic radiology will be tested using the computer-based Core and the Certifying examinations. The Maintenance of Certification/Continuous Certification program also has undergone growth this year. Some changes in the program have been made since last year, which we hope will make it easier for diplomates to comply with the requirements. More details about each of these efforts can be found below.

We would like to thank the 306 diagnostic radiology volunteers, serving on 31 separate committees, for helping the ABR with these endeavors. Indeed, the ABR could not perform its mission without the assistance of these volunteers, who spend countless hours writing new questions, evaluating questions written by others, and putting together the examinations.

Initial Certification

Since the last “full” oral examination in June 2013, the ABR has administered two other oral exams, with the truly final oral exam on the horizon in November 2014. Each examination has been progressively smaller but has been conducted with the same efficiency and uniformity as prior sessions. After the November 2014 exam, candidates who have not yet passed the oral exam, and who are still board eligible, will transition to the computer-based Core Exam. (For more information on board eligibility, please see the article on page 22.) Candidates who condition the exam in November will take the Certifying Exam at its first administration in October 2015, including the required Essentials and Noninterpretive Skills modules and one module in each conditioned section.

A total of 1,426 candidates took the June examination. The time to complete scoring was shortened, and candidates received their results eight weeks after the exam.

The administration of the Core Exam in June 2014 was carried out at the Tucson and Chicago exam centers. As in the past, thanks to the efforts of ABR staff and volunteers, the administration was nearly flawless. A total of 1,426 candidates took the June examination. The time to complete the scoring of the exam was shortened from last year, and candidates received their results eight weeks after the exam. The statistics for first-time takers were as follows: 91 percent passed, 0.7 percent conditioned (all in physics), and 8.3% failed. These results were similar to those of the 2013 Core Exam.

The scoring methodology for the Core Exam is explained fully on the ABR website at www.theabr.org/ic-dr-score. In short, a candidate must meet the passing standard for the entire examination (the “Angoff passing standard”), which is set by a group of ABR volunteers. If that standard is attained, then a candidate must meet the passing standard on each of 18 categories; the passing standard for physics is higher than that of the other categories, reflecting the central role that physics plays in the discipline of diagnostic radiology. The Core Exam was administered for the third time in October 2014.

The Certifying Exam will be delivered for the first time in October 2015. Physicians who satisfactorily completed their diagnostic radiology residencies in June 2014, and who have passed the Core Exam, will...
be eligible for this computer-based examination, also administered at the ABR exam centers in Chicago and Tucson. The modules on the Certifying Exam will be identical to those on the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Exam since the Certifying Exam is truly the first MOC Exam of a candidate’s career.

Some candidates who finished their residencies in June 2014 have been concerned that their inability to become board certified during residency will hinder their job searches. The ABR understands this concern and is attempting to ensure that practices are aware of the change in the examination timing. We will continue to work with the American College of Radiology, the Radiology Business Management Association, and other organizations to make certain that all practices that are hiring radiologists are aware of the change in timing of the Certifying Exam. For more information on these efforts, please see the message from Dr. Valerie Jackson, executive director of the ABR, on page 4.

Maintenance of Certification/Continuous Certification

The transition to Continuous Certification remains confusing to some diplomates. The change was undertaken to make compliance with the requirements easier and to emphasize that such compliance is best when it is a continuous, rather than episodic, process. If you have questions about the process that can’t be answered by searching the ABR website (www.theabr.org) or myABR (https://myabr.theabr.org), please call the ABR office.

The ABR has joined the other ABMS boards in the public reporting of each diplomate’s MOC status. This transparency enables the public, including credentialers, to quickly check the certification status of physicians. Each diplomate must ensure that his or her personal myABR portal accurately reflects MOC participation so public reporting will be correct.

The MOC examination remains a computer-based exam that is administered twice a year and must be passed at least once every 10 years. Diplomates may choose their clinical practice modules based on their practice patterns, and for the first time this year, a “general” module was included. As in the past, a diplomate may choose one, two, or three modules in a given practice area; the first module will be at a fundamental level, while subsequent modules in the same practice area will be at an advanced level. A Noninterpretive Skills module must be taken by all candidates. A syllabus that incorporates the information included on this module is available on the ABR website.

More information about new programs to benefit ABR diplomates participating in MOC is available in the MOC Update article on page 8 of this report.

...continued

by Paul E. Wallner, DO; Dennis C. Shrieve, MD, PhD; and Anthony L. Zietman, MD

Initial Certification

For several years, the radiation oncology community has been undergoing an introspective analysis to consider future directions for radiation and cancer biology research and the relevance of currently taught and tested topics. Some of this review was prompted by clear evidence of reduction in federal research support, but there was also a concern that current avenues of research were not likely to ensure the future growth and relevance of the clinical radiation oncology enterprise as cancer management moves more in the direction of therapies targeted at the molecular level.

In a similar effort, the ABR radiation oncology trustees regularly evaluate material included in the initial certification examinations. Changes in examination content are designed to mirror current clinical practices and evolving trends in the basic sciences of radiation oncology. All radiation oncology clinical category committees continue to add significant image content to the computer-based examinations, as well as nonclinical skills items such as quality assurance, patient safety, biostatistics, and bioethics. These items will be increasingly evident in future examinations.

Based on previously completed American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) surveys, there is a perception that radiation oncologists may not be sufficiently experienced in diagnosis and management of radiation-related morbidity. To meet this concern, all clinical category committees will add additional morbidity-related content to written and oral examinations. The radiation oncology-related biology research community is reviewing the essential elements of the emerging science of genomics and proteomics that will be important to training and testing of future radiation oncologists. The cancer and radiation biology section of the qualifying examination will be altered accordingly. Concurrent with clinical, physics, and biology enhancements to the initial certification examinations, the web-based radiation oncology examination study guides are also being updated to enhance guidance to candidates preparing for the various examinations.

The radiation oncology trustees are committed to carrying out a triannual clinical practice analysis (CPA) designed to better inform this decision-making process for the clinical examinations. In 2010, the CPA was designed to evaluate how radiation oncologists practice, e.g., modalities employed, dosimetric considerations, utilization of brachytherapy and image-guided techniques, etc. The 2013 CPA was tailored to provide a snapshot of what radiation oncologists actually do, e.g., are ABR diplomates treating pediatric cancers, thyroid cancers, etc.? Future examinations will more closely mirror actual clinical practices.

The radiation oncology-related biology research community is reviewing the essential elements of the emerging science of genomics and proteomics.

Review of current clinical practice has also prompted revisions of the physics elements of the initial qualifying (computer-based) examinations. Items related to the rules for calculation and placement, handling, and clinical applications of sealed-source radium have been removed. With an increasing penetration of proton therapy facilities, a decision...
Diplomates enrolled in the Focused Practice Recognition in Brachytherapy initiative are required to undergo testing in brachytherapy as a critical element of the program. Their requirement may be fulfilled by selection of either one or two optional brachytherapy modules. Development of a sufficient item inventory to fulfill the needs for brachytherapy modules will necessitate a delay in introduction of these optional modules until the spring 2016 examination administration.

Radiation oncology diplomates have frequently indicated difficulty in developing MOC Part 4 Practice Quality Improvement (PQI) projects, partially because of the typical team approach of radiation oncology practice and the associated uncertainties regarding attribution of responsibility for various activities and outcomes.

The ABR has been working with the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) and its Member Boards to develop projects that will better serve the needs of institutions, departments, and individual diplomates. In July 2014, the ABR joined the new ABMS Multispecialty Portfolio Approval program, which allows practices and institutions to sponsor MOC Part 4 projects and to approve, monitor, and attest to meaningful participation of ABR diplomates who participate in these projects. Further details can be found in the MOC Update on page 8.

We have also been working with various stakeholder organizations such as the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO), the American College of Radiation Oncology (ACRO), the American Brachytherapy Society (ABS), and others, to develop template projects that can be used by individual diplomates. Links to these projects are available on the ABR website and the sites of the various organizations.
In the past year, the three medical physics trustees have remained unchanged. J. Anthony Seibert, PhD, is the trustee for diagnostic medical physics. Jerry D. Allison, PhD, continued his term as trustee for nuclear medical physics, and Geoffrey S. Ibbott, PhD, continued as trustee for therapeutic medical physics and secretary-treasurer of the Board.

Initial Certification

2014 is the first year in which new applicants for board certification in medical physics have been required to complete a CAMPEP-accredited residency to be eligible for certification. This is the last step in a series of changes that began in 2012. The purpose of these changes has been to standardize the training necessary to become a board-certified physicist. The plan for the changes was first announced in 2002, so the changes have been more than a decade in the making. Medical physics training is now very similar to that of our physician colleagues.

Exam statistics have shown the value of these changes. Graduates of CAMPEP education programs and residencies show much better performance on ABR examinations than candidates who did not have a CAMPEP education (see page 7).

This was also the last year that the ABR planned to administer the medical physics oral exam in Louisville. Those of us who had been going to the Crowne Plaza (Executive West) for decades were sad to be saying goodbye to the place. However, an in-depth analysis showed that Louisville really was the best place to hold the oral exam, so we will continue in Louisville for at least a few more years.

A big change for next year is the revision of the oral exam categories. The current categories have been used for decades, and the therapeutic medical physics categories continue to perform well. However, with changes in the fields of diagnostic medical physics and nuclear medical physics, the current categories did not discriminate as well as they should have.

A list of the new examination categories can be found on the ABR website at http://www.theabr.org/ic-mp-study-guide#oral. These categories will be used in all oral exams, for both first-time candidates and candidates who have previously taken the oral exam. Note that the category descriptions give a general idea of the content. In any particular examination, the material from the categories is sampled, and additional material related to the categories may be included as the field evolves.

Another major change in medical physics requirements is an adjustment in the documentation of requirements for a second certificate. Medical physics is unusual among the ABR disciplines in that many diplomates seek a second primary certificate. In applying to the ABR for certification in an additional medical physics specialty, the diplomate now must demonstrate that he or she has the equivalent of at least one year of clinical experience in that specialty. Another ABR diplomate, who is certified in the specialty for which the individual is seeking additional certification, must attest to this. The clinical experience need not be obtained in a full-time position but should be consistent with the requirements of the specialty, with the total time committed to clinical experience in the specialty being one year or more. One year is defined as at least 80 percent FTE effort. The clinical experience must address the competencies listed in AAPM Report 249: Essentials and Guidelines for Clinical Medical Physics Residency Training Programs, Section 2.5, 3.5, or 4.5.

Upon ABR acceptance of the application, the diplomate will be admitted into the Part 2 and Part 3 (oral) examination process. The standard ABR exam fee schedule will apply. After the diplomate has been approved for Part 2 in an additional specialty, he or she will be considered a board-eligible candidate in the additional specialty and will be allowed six years to complete the certification process. If certification is not completed within six years, the candidate’s board-
2014 is the first year in which new applicants for board certification in medical physics have been required to complete a CAMPEP-accredited residency to become board eligible.

Maintenance of Certification

The recent changes in Maintenance of Certification (MOC), due to the transition from a 10-year cycle to Continuous Certification, were addressed by the MP trustees and volunteers at the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) Spring Clinical Meeting and Annual Meeting. To answer individual questions, the ABR also had a booth at the AAPM Annual Meeting. These changes are described in detail on the ABR website at www.theabr.org/moc-rp-landing.

Continuous Certification requirements are the same across all three ABR disciplines, but medical physicists have more options for fulfilling the requirements of MOC Part 2, Lifelong Learning and Self Assessment. The annual look-back period for Part 2 is three years, and a diplomate must have completed 75 hours of continuing education in the previous three years. (An important exception for the first full look-back in March 2016 only is that credits obtained in 2012 will also be counted.) Of these 75 hours, 25 must be self-assessment CME (or CE for physicists). SA-CE is a new concept, and medical physicists have three options for earning credits, rather than two.

The first option, Self-Assessment Module (SAM) credit, is not new, and SAMs will continue to be counted as one of the forms of SA-CE. There are many sources of SAM credit, and the ABR maintains a list of available SAMs at www.theabr.org/moc-rp-sam.

The second option, which is new, is SA-CE credits for completion of all AMA Category 1 CE activities in “enduring materials” (including web-based and print) and “journal-based CE” formats. The key factor is that the materials include a post-test with a required score for successful completion.

The third option for SA-CME credits, unique to medical physics, is the self-directed educational project (SDEP). In an SDEP, the diplomate designs a learning project that meets his or her practical clinical needs. A physicist may claim up to 15 CE credits per year for successfully completing an SDEP. The SDEP does not need to be submitted to the ABR for approval, but like all self-attested material, it can be audited. Examples of SDEPs are available on the ABR website at www.theabr.org/moc-rp-sdep.

Another unique medical physics issue is the requirement for attestation for some medical physicists. Those who have a state license from Florida, Hawaii, New York, or Texas are exempt from attestation even if they do not live in one of those states. Other medical physicists must attest every five years.

If you have any questions about fulfilling the requirements of MOC under Continuous Certification, please call the ABR Connections Center at (520) 519-2152 or email moc@theabr.org.

The program requirements for the Interventional Radiology Residency Program have been approved by the Committee on Requirements of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME); at the time of this report’s publication, they were in the final editing stage. Once finalized, the program requirements will allow the ABR to continue the planning and subsequent implementation of operational details for the new certificate. The application for the new residency will be created, and requests for application for the new IR Residency are anticipated to begin in mid to late 2015. All applying sites will require an on-site visit. Programs may be able to become accredited and start to enter trainees as early as the 2016-2017 academic year.

Expected Components and Rules

Individuals interested in IR/DR certification will need to apply specifically for this new residency. Candidates may NOT be actively enrolled for certification in both DR and IR/DR—only one training program leading to certification may be pursued at any given time. However, during the initial years of implementation, some transfers from DR to the IR/DR certification pathway are expected and will be accommodated.

Candidates for the IR/DR certificate will be required to successfully complete a residency at an ACGME-accredited IR program to meet the training requirement for certification. The program requirements provide three potential ways to achieve this training: either a five-year integrated program of diagnostic and interventional radiology, or a combination of DR residency followed by an independent one- or two-year IR program. The number of years spent in the independent IR program depends on how much interventional radiology experience the resident obtained in his or her DR program. More details on certification requirements will follow after program requirements are finalized.

The examination structure will consist of the DR Core Examination in the 36th month of residency training, and an IR Certifying Examination with both oral and computer-based components three months after completion of training. Details of the examination structure and specific requirements for each exam are still being determined.

Impact on VIR Subspecialty

To increase quality and safety for the public, the IR/DR certificate is designed to eventually replace the VIR subspecialty certificate. The transition is expected to be a seven-year process. The ACGME anticipates that the last year of accreditation for one-year VIR fellowships is 2021-2022. When the ACGME ceases to accredit VIR fellowships and instead accredits only the new IR residencies, the VIR subspecialty certificate will sunset. Those who hold a VIR subspecialty certificate will be issued a replacement IR/DR certificate at no additional cost if they are meeting all MOC requirements. This process will likely begin in 2018.

Suggestions for Candidates Currently in Training

The ABR recommends that these candidates continue their training and seek certification according to the current processes. Those interested in practicing in IR can seek certification in DR with a subspecialty in VIR, or pursue these two certificates via the Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology Enhanced Clinical Training (DIRECT) pathway. Those who have begun DR training also may have the opportunity to transfer into an IR residency at their own institution to seek initial certification in IR/DR.

The ABR will continue to provide information regarding the new IR/DR specialty certificate as it becomes available. Please check our website at www.theabr.org for the latest information.
W illiam G. Spies, MD, FACR, is a diagnostic radiologist and nuclear medicine physician at Chicago’s Northwestern Memorial Hospital, the main teaching hospital of Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine. As an ABR diplomate who is certified in diagnostic radiology and also holds a subspecialty certification in nuclear radiology, he has served as an ABR volunteer since 1986 in various capacities: oral examiner for both the Diagnostic Radiology and Nuclear Radiology Oral Exams, panel chair, member of the Written Examination Committee and chair of the Nuclear Radiology Section, member and co-chair of the Core Examination Nuclear Radiology Committee, and member and chair of the Nuclear Radiology Subspecialty Examination Committee.

Dr. Spies has volunteered for the ABR over the years for several reasons. His primary academic interest is in the area of undergraduate and resident and fellow education, including examination development and administration. In addition, he thinks that service to the Board is a vitally important element in maintaining high-quality resident training and evaluation.

“I fully subscribe to the ABR mission to serve patients, the public, and the medical profession, and I strive to ensure that ABR diplomates continue to maintain the high standards of knowledge, performance, safety, and professionalism set forth by the Board,” he told us. “My involvement with the Board has also allowed me to improve the focus of my own resident teaching and to provide me with insight into the general state of radiology residency training across the country and beyond. In addition, my service to the ABR has been one of the most rewarding aspects of all my professional experiences throughout my career.

“The best part of volunteering for the ABR has been the opportunity to meet and interact with so many highly intelligent, talented, motivated, and dedicated professionals in the numerous fields of radiology, as well as the highly professional, capable, hardworking, and personable ABR staff. None of what we do for the ABR could be accomplished without the help of all these wonderful people. This experience has afforded me the opportunity to meet and spend time with many of the leaders and emerging leaders of radiology in an environment in which everyone doesn’t have to run off to fulfill other professional or personal obligations and can take the time to unwind and interact with colleagues in a relatively relaxed setting.

“In many cases, this environment has facilitated developing more meaningful relationships with those who were previously my mentors, as well as those whom I have mentored. Throughout these experiences, I have been able to learn a great deal and to develop extremely rewarding professional relationships and friendships that I highly value. The spirit and morale of all those who contribute to this organization at all levels has never ceased to impress me, more than any other professional organization that I have worked with. For all the time and hard work we volunteers contribute to the ABR, we are constantly and sincerely reminded in many ways of how much our efforts are appreciated, and we also never fail to have a good time and a laugh or two along the way as we accomplish the sometimes formidable tasks set before us by the Board.”

For Dr. Spies, the practice of academic nuclear medicine and other areas in radiology with which he has been involved, such as body imaging, has been very rewarding and stimulating. He feels that due to the ever-changing nature of clinical practice in these areas, his work never becomes stagnant and continues to challenge and stimulate.

The interaction with residents and involvement in resident training and evaluation has been a major source of career satisfaction, as has his involvement in clinical research with partners in imaging, clinical practice, and industry.

“As for many of my peers, this overall satisfaction and enthusiasm has been somewhat dampened by growing frustrations created by increasing government intrusion, politics, red tape, and administrative regulation over the years, which often places barriers between physicians and their practice of medicine,” Dr. Spies explained. “These factors have sometimes led to more challenging work environments and economic conditions, and a degree of deterioration in the relationships among radiologists and colleagues in other specialties and hospital administrative staff. Nevertheless, the practice of medicine remains a vibrant, enjoyable, and meaningful career. These challenges will in large part need to be met and addressed by the rising younger generation of physicians who will ultimately replace us, including the residents we currently train and evaluate via the ABR examination process.”

Board certification is, to Dr. Spies, an important symbol and verification of the achievement of a level of excellence in training and professionalism commensurate with the expectations of patients, colleagues, and the public.

“All of us who have achieved this certification have a right to be genuinely proud of our accomplishment,” he said. “Coupled with the related concepts of Maintenance of Certification and continuing medical education, board certification is an important element in preserving the level of quality in radiology practice and ongoing education that we have come to enjoy and expect from all our diplomates—past, present and future.”

**Dr. Spies thinks that service to the Board is a vitally important element in maintaining high-quality resident training and evaluation.**
The ABR currently has about 500 volunteers, not including oral examiners in medical physics and radiation oncology.

years ago, an honor he shared with co-examiner and friend Mike Hartshorne, which has since also been bestowed on other examiners.

"And I would be remiss in not mentioning my great appreciation for the many colleagues who helped me develop into an effective member of the ABR volunteer team and made this experience so much better."

Despite fully understanding the reasons for abandoning the diagnostic radiology oral examination process, Dr. Spies said that he will nevertheless greatly miss his biannual trips to Louisville to meet and work with his many valued ABR friends and associates, not to mention the thousands of residents they have helped to train and evaluate over the years.

The ABR currently has about 500 volunteers, not including oral examiners in medical physics and radiation oncology. For more information on contributing to the profession of radiology by serving as an ABR volunteer, please visit www.theabr.org/volunteers.

The ABR Board Eligibility Policy

According to the ABR Board Eligibility Policy, adopted in 2011, candidates have specific time limits for remaining eligible to be initially certified by the ABR and to maintain their status as "board eligible." Those who have not achieved certification by the end of their time limit can no longer describe themselves as board eligible.

For diagnostic radiology (DR) and radiation oncology (RO) candidates who have already completed training, the board eligibility period ends according this schedule:

End of Training | Termination of Board Eligibility
---|---
2004 or prior | December 31, 2014
2005 | December 31, 2015
2006-2010 | December 31, 2016
2011 and later | Six full calendar years from end of training

Board eligibility begins at the completion of DR or RO residency training in a department with a residency program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC). For international medical graduates, "end of training" is defined as the end of the four-year period outlined in the Sponsoring Department Agreement. After they become board eligible, candidates have six calendar years to attain certification. DR candidates must pass the Core and Certifying exams, and RO candidates must pass the qualifying (computer-based) and oral exams.

To become board eligible in medical physics (MP), candidates must complete a CAMPEP-accredited residency program or be approved for Part 2 of the initial certification examination, whichever comes first. The candidate then will have six calendar years to attain certification by passing Part 2 and the oral exam (Part 3). Candidates who completed their training or received approval for Part 2 before January 1, 2011, will have until December 31, 2016, before their board eligibility expires.

For more information on board eligibility and reinstatement of board eligibility status, see www.theabr.org/icg/gen-board-eligibility.

The ABR welcomes the following new trustees, whose terms of service began on July 1, 2014. ABR trustees participate in leadership and decision making to carry out the ABR’s mission and set standards for board certification in initial certification and Maintenance of Certification.

Dr. Donald J. Flemming, MD, a diplomate of the ABR in diagnostic radiology, is the G. Victor Rohrer professor of radiology education at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. He is a renowned musculoskeletal (MSK) radiologist, regarded as one of the foremost authorities in the field.

Dr. Flemming earned his medical degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1985 and served his internship and residency at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He completed a one-year fellowship at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington in 1996. An active medical researcher, Dr. Flemming has written extensively on MSK imaging and is coauthor of Arthritis in Black and White, 3rd Edition. He has also received numerous honors and awards for excellence in teaching and mentorship service.

John A. Kaufman, MD, is a 1982 graduate of Boston University School of Medicine who was a surgery intern at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and then a general medical officer in the U.S. Indian Health Service. He trained in diagnostic and vascular/interventional radiology at Boston Medical Center and then joined the Section of Vascular Radiology at Massachusetts General Hospital, until becoming a member of the Dotter Interventional Institute as a professor and Frederick S. Keller Chair of Interventional Radiology.

Dr. Kaufman is also professor of radiology, surgery, and medicine at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland and is chief of vascular and Interventional radiology and director of the Dotter Institute. He has published peer-reviewed articles, edited several books, and lectured at local, national, and international meetings.

The ABR thanks the following trustees, whose terms ended June 30, 2014. We greatly appreciate their many years of faithful and dedicated volunteer service.

James P. Borgstede, MD, a board-certified diagnostic radiologist, is currently professor and vice chair of radiology at the University of Colorado Denver. Dr. Borgstede was a member of a private radiology practice for 27 years in Colorado Springs. He left this practice in 2007 for a fellowship in magnetic resonance imaging at the University of California at San Diego. He served the ABR as a trustee for nine years beginning in 2005 and was ABR president from 2012 to 2014.

Dr. Borgstede also oversaw the Noninterpreters' Skills (NIS) Certifying/MOC Exams Committee and chaired the MOC Coordinating Committee from 2008 to 2011. He has been active in the politics and leadership of radiology and has delivered more than 100 lectures nationally and internationally regarding socioeconomic issues, government relations, quality, safety, and other medical topics.

Thomas A. Berquist, MD, who is board certified in diagnostic radiology, has been affiliated with the Mayo Clinic since 1977, first in Rochester, Minnesota, and then in Jacksonville, Florida. In Jacksonville, he became chair of the Department of Radiology before serving as director of the Radiology Residency and Musculoskeletal Fellowship programs. He has been either a member or chair of more than 50 Mayo committees.

Dr. Berquist served as an ABR trustee from 2006 to 2014, overseeing various musculoskeletal committees as well as being an item writer. He is recognized as an accomplished author of 36 widely used radiology textbooks and over 100 publications, and he has given more than 170 lectures and presentations, both nationally and internationally.
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From left: Lisa A. Kachnic, MD, President-elect; Milton J. Guiberteau, MD, President; and Geoffrey S. Ibbott, PhD, Secretary/Treasurer