



# ASAMNews

Newsletter of The American Society of Addiction Medicine

**SPECIAL REPORT**

## American Board of Addiction Medicine To Hold Inaugural Meeting

Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM, and Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM  
Co-Chairs, Medical Specialty Action Group

### Inside

#### ASAM at Work for You:

Members of the Medical Specialty Action Group / **2**

MSAG Progress Report / **3**

Honorary Directors Recognized / **4**

Milestones on the Path to Specialty Recognition / **6**

ABAM Directors Selected / **8**

Future of ASAM Certification / **11**

The Path Forward / **12**

**"We can pursue one [specialty] option or another, but in the end, we should do whatever will save the most lives."**

*– James W. Smith, M.D., FASAM, at the Inaugural meeting of MSAG in 2006*



**Dr. Kevin Kunz**



**Dr. Martha J. Wunsch**

On behalf of the Medical Specialty Action Group (MSAG), we are pleased to present this special report on our progress toward achieving specialty recognition of Addiction Medicine. In April 2007, MSAG was tasked by ASAM's Board of Directors with assisting in the development of an independent American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM). Today, ABAM is a reality, and will hold its inaugural meeting April 15, 2008. This initial meeting marks a special moment for all physicians engaged in the practice of Addiction Medicine, as well as for their patients, families and communities.

It was only two years ago that the MSAG was established by ASAM President Elizabeth Howell, M.D., FASAM, and charged by the Board of Directors with investigating the considerations and options involved in applying to the American Board of Medical Specialties for recognition of Addiction Medicine. To assure that the MSAG would have broad representation from the ASAM membership, the MSAG Steering Committee publicized the initiative widely and invited members to participate. Through this process, 40 members agreed to serve on one of four committees: the Process and Structure Committee, the Training Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Steering Committee (see page 2). Through the hard work of these committees, the MSAG was able to present its initial findings to the ASAM Board in October 2006.

The MSAG's recommendations and the ASAM Board's actions were prompted by members' growing concern that too few physicians are appropriately trained to diagnose and treat patients with alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use disorders. Moreover, surveys show that most patients and their families do not know how to identify a physician who has the training and skills to help with such a disorder. Thus, the pursuit of ABMS recognition of Addiction Medicine serves not only ASAM members, but their patients and the public health as well.

Through a process of consultation with ASAM members, the officials of certifying and accrediting bodies, and the leaders of new and long-standing medical specialty societies, Boards and medical organizations, the MSAG committees analyzed the requirements for recognition of certifying boards and accreditation of training programs. Based on this information and extensive deliberations, the MSAG prepared a 60-page report to the ASAM Board that (1) outlined the requirements for achieving recognition of Addiction Medicine, (2) described the specific steps to be taken to achieve formal recognition by ABMS, (3) analyzed the costs and benefits of each of the available options, and (4) offered recommendations for short- and long-term actions. The Board adopted the report in April 2007.

As outlined in the MSAG's report, a critical first step is the creation of an independent American Board of Addiction Medicine.

This special issue of **ASAM NEWS** marks the achievement of that step, which is fundamental to achievement of ASAM's longstanding goal of attaining recognition of Addiction Medicine as a medical specialty.

## Members of ASAM's Medical Specialty Action Group

The work of the Medical Specialty Action Group has been conducted by four committees: the Steering Committee, the Process and Structure Committee, the Training Committee, and the Finance Committee. To assure that the MSAG would have broad representation from the ASAM membership, the initiative was publicized widely, with an invitation to ASAM members to participate. Through this process, 30 members agreed to serve.

### MSAG STEERING COMMITTEE

The role of the MSAG Steering Committee has been to coordinate the work of the other MSAG committees, to communicate progress to ASAM members and others, and to prepare periodic reports for review and action by the ASAM Board of Directors. The MSAG Co-Chairs, the MSAG Committee Chairs, and other individuals comprised the initial Steering Committee, along with liaison members appointed at a later date. Members of the initial Steering Committee were:

Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM, *Co-Chair*  
Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM, *Co-Chair*  
James F. Callahan, D.P.A.  
David R. Gastfriend, M.D.  
Stuart Gitlow, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.  
R. Jeffrey Goldsmith, M.D., DLFAPA  
Eileen McGrath, J.D.  
Michael M. Miller, M.D., FASAM, FAPA  
Christopher M. Weirs, M.P.A. (*Staff*)  
Bonnie B. Wilford, M.S. (*Consultant*)

#### *Special Advisors:*

Brian Hurley, M.B.A. (*Medical Student*)  
David C. Lewis, M.D., FACP (*Internal Medicine*)  
John A. Renner, Jr., M.D., DLFAPA (*Psychiatry*)  
Norman Wetterau, M.D., FASAM, FAAFP (*Family Medicine*)

### MSAG PROCESS AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

The role of the Process and Structure Committee has been to gather data on the requirements, process, costs and other issues to be addressed so as to attain recognition of Addiction Medicine by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Much of this work has been conducted through an extensive series of structured interviews with leaders of other medical specialty societies and medical specialty Boards. Members of the Process and Structure Committee were:

David R. Gastfriend, M.D., *Co-Chair*  
Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM, *Co-Chair*  
James F. Callahan, D.P.A.  
Robert L. DuPont, M.D., FASAM  
David R. Fiellin, M.D.  
Larry M. Gentilello, M.D., FACS  
Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM  
David C. Lewis, M.D., FACP  
Daniel J. McCullough, M.D.  
Eileen McGrath, J.D.

Michael M. Miller, M.D., FASAM, FAPA  
Seddon R. Savage, M.D., FASAM  
Marvin D. Seppala, M.D.  
Norman Wetterau, M.D., FASAM, FAAFP

### MSAG TRAINING COMMITTEE

The role of the Training Committee has been to gather data on what Addiction Medicine needs to do to create training programs that meet the guidelines set forth by the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME); to identify the content of the training to be offered; to determine whether sufficient training programs in Addiction Medicine that meet the ACGME's guidelines currently exist, and (with the MSAG Finance Committee) to determine what it would cost to create and sustain training programs in Addiction Medicine. Members of the Training Committee were:

R. Jeffrey Goldsmith, M.D., *Chair*  
Mickey N. Ask, M.D., FASAM  
Gavin B. Bart, M.D.  
Jeffrey D. Baxter, M.D.  
Jeffrey A. Berman, M.D., M.S., FASAM  
Marc Galanter, M.D., FASAM  
Mark S. Gold, M.D.  
Denise E. Greene, M.D.  
William F. Haning III, M.D., FASAM  
Gary D. Helmbrecht, M.D.  
Merrill S. Herman, M.D.  
Mary G. McMasters, M.D.  
John A. Renner, Jr., M.D., DLFAPA  
Richard K. Ries, M.D., FASAM  
Stephen J. Ryzewicz, M.D.  
Richard Saitz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM  
Sidney H. Schnoll, M.D., Ph.D., FASAM  
Barry Stimmel, M.D., FASAM  
Joseph Westermeyer, M.D., M.P.H., Ph.D.

### MSAG FINANCE COMMITTEE

The role of the Finance Committee has been to gather data on the revenue and expenses involved in achieving ABMS and ACGME recognition of Addiction Medicine, including the income and expenses to ASAM, the costs to finance the MSAG, and the financial arrangements required to create and sustain both ABAM and the ACGME-approved Addiction Medicine training programs. Members of the Finance Committee were:

Stuart Gitlow, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A., *Chair*  
Thomas J. Brady, M.D.  
Lawrence S. Brown, Jr., M.D., M.P.H., FASAM  
Martin C. Doot, M.D., FASAM  
Brian Hurley, M.B.A.  
Lori D. Karan, M.D., FACP, FASAM  
Donald J. Kurth, M.D., FASAM  
James W. Smith, M.D., FASAM (*now deceased*)  
Penelope P. Ziegler, M.D., FASAM

## Specialty Recognition of Addiction Medicine: A Progress Report to ASAM's Members

Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM  
and Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM

The leadership of the American Society of Addiction Medicine has long been committed to achieving the formal recognition of Addiction Medicine by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). In 2006, this commitment was codified in ASAM's Mission Statement and Strategic Plan. At that time, then-President Elizabeth F. Howell, M.D., FASAM, created the Medical Specialty Action Group (MSAG) to "develop a knowledge base and recommend actions to the ASAM Board regarding the recognition of Addiction Medicine as a Board-certified medical specialty by the American Board of Medical Specialties."

The MSAG was charged with gathering relevant information regarding ABMS recognition of Addiction Medicine, analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of various options, making a recommendation as to which option ASAM ought to pursue, and explaining the rationale for and implications of the recommended course of action. The Group offered its findings and recommendations to the ASAM Board of Directors in April 2007, and received the Board's approval to move forward.

### ABAM and The ABAM Foundation

A major step forward occurred in August 2007 with the formal incorporation of the American Board of Addiction Medicine and The ABAM Foundation. Further, ABAM was awarded *not-for-profit* status by the Internal Revenue Service in January 2008.

The launch of every new ABMS specialty board and subspecialty certification program has been accomplished with the help of organizations that share a common vision, mission and goals with the new entity. ASAM is fulfilling that role for ABAM. At some point, the new Board becomes independent and firewalls are erected between the specialty board and the specialty society to assure the independence of each. We are at the threshold of that stage. While ASAM's role in the launch of ABAM will soon be completed, it is possible that ABAM and The ABAM Foundation will request additional help with the many tasks ahead. The ASAM Board of Directors has signaled that it will offer an appropriate level of ongoing encouragement and assistance, while honoring the independence of the new American Board of Addiction Medicine and The ABAM Foundation.

For the purpose of incorporating ABAM and The ABAM Foundation, seven distinguished members of ASAM agreed to serve as Honorary Directors. Drs. Andris Antoniskis, Sheila Blume, Barry Stimmel and Norman Wetterau were named interim Directors of ABAM, while Drs. Robert DuPont, Stanley Gitlow and Gary Jaeger agreed to serve as interim Directors of The ABAM Foundation. These individuals are named in the incorporation papers for the new organizations and will continue to serve until regular Directors can be seated.

The Honorary Directors — along with the newly designated Specialty Directors of ABAM, the MSAG Co-Chairs, and ASAM's officers — will gather at a dinner meeting April 15th to celebrate the founding of ABAM and to conduct the inaugural meeting of ABAM and The ABAM Foundation. As noted by ASAM President Michael M. Miller, M.D., FASAM, FAPA, "The very act of setting up ABAM sends a clear message to ASAM's members and the larger medical community that Addiction Medicine is moving forward."

### Governance and Goals

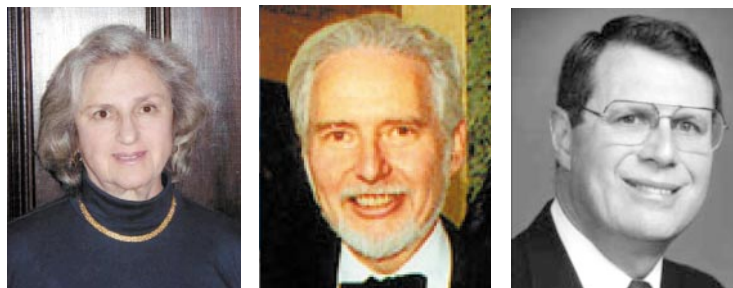
In accordance with the bylaws of ABAM, eight Specialty Directors have been selected, and the search for seven At-Large Directors will begin shortly. At the April 15th Inaugural meeting, ABAM's Honorary Directors will install the Specialty Directors. The Specialty Directors will elect an Interim President, who will oversee the search for the At-Large Directors. The Interim President will serve until September 2008, when the full complement of 15 Directors will elect a President, a President-Elect and a Secretary-Treasurer.

Also at the Inaugural meeting, several ASAM members and others will be honored for their contributions to this new and historic course of action. They include the Honorary Interim Directors; Dr. Elizabeth Howell (ASAM's Immediate Past-President); Dr. Michael Miller (ASAM President); Drs. Kevin Kunz and Martha Wunsch (MSAG Co-Chairs); the members of MSAG; Eileen McGrath (ASAM EVP/CEO); Christopher Weirs (ASAM Credentialing Director), and Dr. James Callahan (former ASAM EVP/CEO).

The goals of ABAM and The ABAM Foundation are to attain recognition of Addiction Medicine as a medical specialty by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). Such recognition affirms that a field has high standards, as well as a continuing process for education and assessment. As the ABMS has put it: "Better care is built on higher standards; Higher standards demand professional excellence; Professional excellence requires continual learning; Continual learning promotes quality improvement; Quality improvement reflects higher standards; Higher standards lead to better care."

ABMS certification will open a clear and validated career path to those physicians who wish to gain or add specialization in Addiction Medicine. Most important, certification will provide a credential that can be used by patients and their families to find physicians who are qualified to deliver evidence-based, compassionate care for alcoholism and other diseases of addiction. ABMS certification of Addiction Medicine thus will be a major contribution to the quality of American medicine, and holds the promise of improving and advancing many aspects of the Nation's health.

## HONORARY DIRECTORS RECOGNIZED



*Sheila Blume, Barry Stimmel and Norman Wetterau*



*Drs. Robert DuPont, Stanley Gitlow, and Gary Jaeger*

**F**or the purpose of incorporating ABAM and The ABAM Foundation, seven

distinguished individuals — all members of ASAM — have agreed to serve as Honorary Directors, thus becoming the founding members of the two organizations. These individuals are named in the incorporation papers for ABAM and The ABAM Foundation and will continue to serve until regular Directors are seated.

The Honorary Directors of ABAM are Drs. Andris Antoniskis, Sheila Blume, Barry Stimmel and Norman Wetterau. The Honorary Directors of The ABAM Foundation are Drs. Robert DuPont, Stanley Gitlow, and Gary Jaeger. Each of these Directors is highly regarded within the House of Medicine. Together, their involvement lends credibility to ABAM and The ABAM Foundation, and lays the groundwork for both organizations to be guided by leaders of the highest stature.

### Honorary Directors of ABAM

The following distinguished individuals have been named Honorary Directors of the American Board of Addiction Medicine.

**Andris Antoniskis, M.D., FASAM.** Dr. Antoniskis is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and won initial ASAM Certification in Addiction Medicine in 1988, recertifying in 1998. He also has been named a Fellow of ASAM.

A graduate of the University of Nebraska College of Medicine, Dr. Antoniskis maintains a private practice in Portland, Oregon and, since 1981, has served as the Medical Director of Chemical Dependency Services at Providence Health Systems.

In addition to his clinical activities, Dr. Antoniskis served for 10 years as a member of the Health Professionals Program (HPP) Supervisory Council of the Oregon Board of Medical Examiners. He also is a past president of the Oregon Medical Association and of the Oregon Society of Addiction Medicine.

**Sheila B. Blume, M.D., FASAM.**

Dr. Blume graduated cum laude from the Harvard Medical

School in 1958 and began her career in the addictions as a psychiatric resident at Central Islip Psychiatric Center in New York, where she started a group for alcoholic women in 1962. She went on to run one of the earliest state hospital alcoholism units. Later, she served as Commissioner for Alcoholism for the State of New York, and retired from the post of Medical Director of Chemical Dependency and Compulsive Gambling Services at South Oaks Hospital. She continues to be active in the New York Medical Society's Physician Health Advisory Committee and is a member of the Professional Advisory Committee of the Caron Foundation.

Dr. Blume received the ASAM Award in 1999 for her contributions to Addiction Medicine, having served on the ASAM Board of Directors for more than 20 years and as President from 1979 to 1981. Her work also has earned her the Marty Mann Founder's Award from the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence for her advocacy for women alcoholics (1998), the New York State Governor's Lifetime Service Award for contributions to the field of addictions (2000), the Lila A. Wallis Award for contributions to women's health from the American Medical Women's Association (2003), and the R. Brinkley Smithers Award from ASAM (2004). In October 2002, she was presented with the Order of the Icelandic Falcon by the President of Iceland in a ceremony in Reykjavik.

**Barry Stimmel, M.D., FASAM.** Dr. Stimmel is Dean of Graduate Medical Education, as well as the Katherine and Clifford Goldsmith Professor of Medicine (Cardiology) and Professor of Medical Education at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York City.

A practicing internist and cardiologist, Dr. Stimmel established Mount Sinai's Narcotics Rehabilitation Center (NRC) in 1970. The NRC was the first program in New York City to use methadone solely in an ambulatory care setting. The NRC has treated more than 30,000 heroin users, serving as a model multidisciplinary treatment program for the State of New York.

Nationally and internationally known for his treatment and study of heroin dependency, Dr. Stimmel has served on the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy's Committee of Physicians for National Drug Control Strategy. He is the founding editor of the quarterly, peer-reviewed *Journal of Addictive Diseases*, and has written 8 books and more than 140 articles dealing with drug abuse, the effects of mood-altering drugs on the heart, and pain control. In addition, he lectures extensively on issues in medical education, pain management, and substance use disorders.

**Norman Wetterau, M.D., FASAM, FAAFP.** Dr. Wetterau graduated from Wheaton College in 1993, from the Duke Medical School in 1967, and from the University of Rochester Family Medicine Program in 1970. In 1974, Dr. Wetterau joined a new nonprofit family practice in rural upstate New York and learned that addictive diseases were a major unrecognized problem in the patient population. He since has devoted his career to integrating Addiction Medicine into primary care and teaching other physicians how to do so. He also helped the local outpatient addiction treatment program grow from one staff member in 1980 to a dozen staff in two offices today, and has helped various rural communities develop prevention coalitions. He also joined the clinical faculty of the University of Rochester Family Medicine program, where he was named New York State Family Physician of the Year in 1998.

Dr. Wetterau's passions also include teaching local physicians to conduct Screening and Brief Intervention through a Join Together award, distributing prevention materials through physicians' offices (a project funded by the New York State Academy of Family Physicians and the federal Center for Substance Abuse Treatment), and developing educational materials on safe prescribing of opioids for chronic pain. In each of these activities, Dr. Wetterau's focus has been on reaching out to practicing physicians with tools that can help them be more effective in preventing, identifying, and managing substance use disorders in their patients.

## HONORARY DIRECTORS OF THE ABAM FOUNDATION

The purpose of The ABAM Foundation is to support ABAM by defining the field of Addiction Medicine, conducting seminars for medical leaders, policymakers and the media, and developing fellowship training programs in Addiction Medicine. The following leaders have been named Honorary Directors of The ABAM Foundation.

**Robert L. DuPont, M.D., FASAM.** Dr. DuPont has been involved in drug abuse prevention and treatment for more than 30 years, and has played a formative role in creating many of the Federal agencies that oversee addiction policy, research, and practice. For example, Dr. DuPont was Director of the Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention (SAODAP) from 1973 to 1975, then went on to chair the President's Cabinet Committee on Drug Abuse Prevention (1975-1977), which evolved into the White House drug policy office. Concurrent with those assignments, Dr. DuPont also was the founding Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (1973-1978).

On leaving Federal service, Dr. DuPont became President of the Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc., in Rockville, MD ([www.ibhinc.org](http://www.ibhinc.org)) and Vice President of Bensinger, DuPont and Associates (BDA), a national consulting firm dealing with workplace substance abuse that was founded in 1982 by Dr. DuPont and former DEA Administrator Peter Bensinger. Dr. DuPont also is Clinical Professor of

Psychiatry at the Georgetown University School of Medicine and maintains an active practice of psychiatry, specializing in addiction and the anxiety disorders.

As author of more than 200 journal articles and 15 books and monographs, Dr. DuPont has helped to educate both professional and lay audiences. In 2005 alone, Hazelden published three books by Dr. DuPont on drug testing: *Drug Testing in Drug Abuse Treatment*, *Drug Testing in Schools*, and *Drug Testing in the Criminal Justice System*. Dr. DuPont's books for the lay public include *Getting Tough on Gateway Drugs: A Guide for the Family*, *A Bridge to Recovery: An Introduction to Twelve-Step Programs* (written with the late John P. McGovern, M.D.) and *The Selfish Brain: Learning from Addiction*.

**Stanley Gitlow, M.D.** Dr. Gitlow is Clinical Professor of Medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York City. A Diplomate of the American Board Internal Medicine, Dr. Gitlow entered the field of Addiction Medicine in 1952 while working with Dr. Ruth Fox and, with Dr. Fox and others, in 1954 founded the organization that evolved into ASAM. He was elected President of the New York Medical Society on Alcoholism in 1961 and of the American Medical Society on Alcoholism in 1970.

A member of the Committee on Alcoholism of the American Medical Association (1973-1976) and of the Panel on Alcoholism of the AMA's Council on Mental Health (1976-1985), Dr. Gitlow also served as an expert consultant to the U.S. Department of State (1979-1988) and as Vice Chairman and Chairman of the New York State Board for Professional Medical Conduct (1975-1980), of which he was a member until 2001.

Dr. Gitlow's work has earned many awards, including the Malvern Institute Citation of Merit in the Humanities in 1980; the American Society of Addiction Medicine's 1990 Annual Award; the Richard J. Caron Award for Excellence in 1997; the William Dock, M.D., Master Teacher Award in Medicine (from the State University of New York College of Medicine) in 1998; the SECAD Award (1998); the Ewart A. Swinyard Award from The University of Utah School on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies (2000); and the Lifetime Achievement Award from The Christopher D. Smithers Foundation (2003).

**Gary A. Jaeger, M.D.** Dr. Jaeger practices with the Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG) and is Chief of Addiction Medicine at the Kaiser Permanente Harbor City/South Bay Medical Center. He also serves SCPMG as Regional Chair of the Transitional Residential Recovery Service Committee (1995-present); Regional Chair of the Behavioral Health Management Information Systems Committee (1996-present); and a member of the Automated Medical Record Addiction Medicine Expert Group (2003).

Dr. Jaeger is a Past President of the California Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM) and a member of CSAM's Committee on Public Policy (2000-present, Chair 2000-2006). He also is a past chair of the California Healthcare Association's Behavioral Health Advisory Board and as a member of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission for the State of California. His other activities include service on the Humboldt County Alcohol & Drug Advisory Board (1992-1993, Chair 1993); the Humboldt-Del Norte Blood Bank Board of Directors (1976-1982, Board President 1980-1981); the Humboldt-Del Norte Foundation for Medical Care Board of Directors (1976-1982); and the Humboldt County CHDP Program Board of Directors.

## MILESTONES on the Path Toward Recognition

**1954:** The New York City Medical Society on Alcoholism (NYCMSA) — the first incarnation of ASAM — held its inaugural scientific meeting September 16, 1954, at the New York Academy of Medicine. The group's goals were to gain recognition of alcoholism as a treatable disease and to persuade hospitals to admit patients with a diagnosis of alcoholism, which at that time many refused to do so.

**1969:** The directors of the New York City Medical Society on Alcoholism voted to change the organization's name to the American Medical Society on Alcoholism (AMSA) to signify its increasingly national scope.

**1971:** The National Institutes of Health created the Career Teacher Program in the addictions, supported by faculty development grants to 63 medical schools.

The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) developed the first examination modules on addiction, as well as questions for medical specialty board examinations.

**1972:** The California Society for the Treatment of Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies was incorporated (with support from the California Medical Association), to focus on medical education and certifying physician competency in the addictions.

**1975:** The American Academy of Addictionology was organized by G. Douglas Talbot, M.D., FASAM, and other leaders in Georgia and in the Southeastern U.S. to certify physicians in Addiction Medicine.

**1976:** Development of curriculum guides for medical schools was supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

The Association for Medical Education in Substance Abuse (AMERSA) was founded.

**1977:** AMSA began to publish *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research* (the "Blue Journal") in partnership with the National Council on Alcoholism and the Research Society on Alcoholism.

**1977:** AMSA was accredited by the Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to offer continuing medical education programs.

**1978:** The AMSA Board appointed a committee to consider options for credentialing physicians in Addiction Medicine.

**1982:** The California Society for the Treatment of Alcohol and Other Drug Dependencies launched a certification program, spurred in part by state legislation requiring that physicians who direct addiction treatment programs must be able to demonstrate expertise in that subject.

The American Medical Association endorsed the concept that a single organization should provide an umbrella for the multiple existing societies (in California, New York, and Georgia) to become a single national medical specialty society for Addiction Medicine.

**1983:** At the first Kroc Ranch unity meeting, addiction field leaders agreed that a single national medical specialty society should represent the field. At a second Kroc Ranch meeting (convened by the AMA), the conferees accepted AMSA's

offer "to be the national society of physicians concerned with problems of psychoactive drug use." They also agreed to study various models for credentialing, including the possible formation of an independent certifying body, and to create a committee on credentialing to develop a nationwide certification program.

**1986:** AMSA's leaders decided to adopt the California Society's certification model and to offer it nationally. The California Society formally gave AMSA its certification examination.

**1986:** AMSA changed its name to the American Medical Society on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies (AMSAODD) and published a policy statement (developed by the California Society) on "How to Identify a Physician Recognized for Expertness in Diagnosis and Treatment of Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies."



**Emanuel M. Steindler**

**1987:** Emanuel M. Steindler, M.A., retired from the American Medical Association, where he was Director of the Department of Mental Health, to become the first Executive Director of AMSAODD. The new Society established its national office in Chicago.

**1988:** AMSAODD changed its name to the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM).

The American Medical Association accepted ASAM into membership in its policymaking body, the House of Delegates, as the national specialty society representing Addiction Medicine.

**1989:** On Mr. Steindler's retirement, the Society hired James F. Callahan, D.P.A., as its Executive Vice President and moved ASAM's national headquarters to Washington, D.C.

ASAM's Board of Directors established a Specialty Status Task Force, chaired by Anne Geller, M.D., to evaluate various avenues for the eventual establishment of ABMS-recognized specialty or subspecialty certification in Addiction Medicine.



**Dr. James F. Callahan**

**1990:** The American Medical Association's House of Delegates assigned Addiction Medicine a code (ADM) as a self-designated practice specialty, to be used to identify Addiction Medicine practitioners in the AMA Physician Masterfile.

ASAM's Board of Directors approved the *ASAM Guidelines for Fellowship Training Programs in Addiction Medicine*, developed by the ASAM Fellowship Committee.

The ASAM Board also voted to adopt a series of recommendations from the Specialty Status Task Force: in the short term (1990-1994), ASAM should continue to offer

## of Addiction Medicine as a Medical Specialty

certification while considering methods of making ASAM certification available to physicians who are not members of the Society, and should act to stimulate interest in the establishment of Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQs) and/or Certificates of Special Qualifications (CSQs) in as many specialties as possible. Over the intermediate term (1995-1998), ASAM should continue to offer certification and seek establishment of CAQs and/or CSQs in as many specialties as possible, and work toward mutually acceptable training standards and a common examination. For the long term (1998 and beyond), ASAM should seek ABMS recognition of a Conjoint Board of Addiction Medicine.

**1991:** ASAM President Jasper Chen See, M.D., established the Ruth Fox Memorial Endowment Fund to support ASAM's mission and goals.

The *Journal of Addictive Diseases*, edited by Barry Stimmel, M.D., FASAM, became ASAM's official journal.

ASAM published the first edition of its *Patient Placement Criteria for the Treatment of Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders (PPC)*, which quickly became the standard for the field.



Dr. Ruth Fox

**1993:** The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) awarded Addiction Medicine a representative on its Hospital Accreditation Professional and Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC), as well as on its Behavioral Health Care Accreditation PTAC.

**1994:** The first edition of ASAM's textbook, *Principles of Addiction Medicine* (edited by Dr. Norman Miller), was published as a comprehensive reference on Addiction Medicine.

**1996:** ASAM developed *The Content of Addiction Medicine* to outline the multidisciplinary nature of the specialty of Addiction Medicine.

ASAM published the second edition of its *Patient Placement Criteria for the Treatment of Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders (PPC-2)*, with a new emphasis on unbundling services from levels of care.

The ASAM Board signaled the Society's continued commitment to training by adopting a resolution that "ASAM will make the development of fellowships a priority near-term goal."

**1997:** The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) adopted a requirement that NCQA-accredited managed behavioral health care organizations must have standards for credentialing "psychiatrists and/or physicians certified in Addiction Medicine."

**1998:** The second edition of ASAM's textbook, *Principles of Addiction Medicine* (edited by Drs. Allan Graham and Terry Schultz, and Mrs. Bonnie Wilford) was published. Through a donation from the John P. McGovern, M.D., Foundation, gift copies were presented to medical schools across the country.

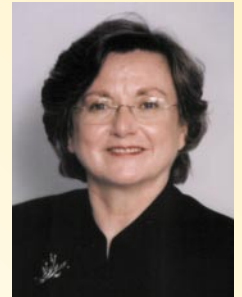
**2000:** President Clinton signed into law the Drug Addiction Treatment Act (Title XXXV, Section 3502 of the Children's Health Act of 2000, commonly known as DATA 2000). Among its many provisions, DATA 2000 specifically recognized the special qualifications of physicians certified in Addiction Medicine by ASAM.

**2001:** ASAM published the current edition of its *Patient Placement Criteria for the Treatment of Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders (PPC-2R)*, featuring a new emphasis on assessing patient risk for relapse or continued use.

**2002:** ASAM Executive Vice President James Callahan retired and was replaced by Eileen McGrath, J.D.

**2003:** The third edition of ASAM's textbook, *Principles of Addiction Medicine* (edited by Drs. Allan Graham, Terry Schultz, Michael Mayo-Smith, and Richard Ries, and Mrs. Bonnie Wilford) was published.

In response to a survey, ASAM members assigned highest priority to "advancing the specialty by gaining 'board certified' status in Addiction Medicine."



Eileen McGrath, J.D.

**2006:** The ASAM Board approved a Strategic Plan calling for ASAM to establish Addiction Medicine as an ABMS-recognized medical specialty and to develop standards for the Addiction Medicine content of residency training programs.

ASAM President Elizabeth F. Howell, M.D., created the Medical Specialty Action Group (MSAG) and charged it with "developing a knowledge base and recommending actions to the ASAM Board regarding the recognition of Addiction Medicine as a physician specialty by the American Board of Medical Specialties." The MSAG Steering Committee held its first meeting in August.

ASAM completed another examination cycle. From inception of the Certification Examination through the present, ASAM has certified 4,200 physicians in Addiction Medicine.

ASAM announced publication of its new *Journal of Addiction Medicine* and the appointments of George Koob, Ph.D., as Senior Editor, and of Shannon C. Miller, M.D., FASAM, and Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM, as Co-Editors.

**2007:** The MSAG report was accepted by ASAM's Board of Directors, which also approved the recommended steps toward establishment of an American Board of Addiction Medicine and agreed to provide the necessary funds. ABAM and The ABAM Foundation were incorporated and received IRS approval as not-for-profit organizations. Seven Honorary Directors and then eight Specialty Directors were appointed to ABAM and The ABAM Foundation.

**2008:** The ABAM and The ABAM Foundation scheduled their Inaugural meeting for April 15th, at which time the Honorary Directors will install the Specialty Directors, and ABAM and The ABAM Foundation will begin their work to achieve ABMS recognition of Addiction Medicine.

## ABAM Board Members Selected

In accordance with the bylaws of the American Board of Addiction Medicine, the following Specialty Directors have been named to the ABAM Board. The selection process was facilitated by the following ASAM members, who as Liaisons and Alternate Liaisons to the eight medical specialties identified in the ABAM bylaws assisted with outreach to other medical specialties: David C. Lewis, M.D., FACP, and Gavin B. Bart, M.D. (Internal Medicine); Steven J. Kassels, M.D., and Michel A. Sucher, M.D., FASAM (Emergency Medicine); Gary D. Helmbrecht, M.D. (Obstetrics and Gynecology); Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM (Preventive Medicine); Daniel McCullough, M.D., Norman Wetterau, M.D., FASAM, FAAFP, and Bernd Wollschlaeger, M.D., FAAFP (Family Medicine); John A. Renner, Jr., M.D., DLFAPA, and Penelope P. Ziegler, M.D., FASAM (Psychiatry); and Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM (Pediatrics).



### **HOOVER ADGER, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.**

*(Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine)*

Dr. Adger is Professor of Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Director of Adolescent Medicine at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, which he joined in 1984. Since that time, he has served as Director of the Substance Abuse

Assessment/Intervention Team at The Johns Hopkins Hospital Adolescent Program and as Director of The Johns Hopkins Substance Abuse Faculty Development Programs.

In February 1997, Dr. Adger was selected to fill the position of Deputy Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. In July 1998, he returned to Johns Hopkins to resume his duties as a full-time faculty member. From 1999-2005, he served as Co-Director of the Strategic Planning Initiative funded by HRSA and SAMHSA/CSAT to advise the federal government and others on improving and expanding interdisciplinary education and training of health professionals in substance use disorders. He currently serves as principal investigator and project director of the HRSA-funded Leadership & Education in Adolescent Health project at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and as the faculty leader of the Florence Sabin College in the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Dr. Adger also is a past president of the Association for Medical Education and Research in Substance Abuse and a past president of the National Association for Children of Alcoholics.



### **RICHARD D. BLONDELL, M.D.**

*(Family Medicine)*

Dr. Blondell received his medical degree from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry in 1978, completed a Family Practice residency at the University of Louisville in 1981 and successfully fulfilled the certification requirements of the American Board of Family Medicine in 1981 (he was re-certified in 1987, 1993, 1999 and 2005).

After two years of full-time clinical practice in Rochester, Dr. Blondell began a career in academic medicine at Marshall University, in Huntington, WV. He returned to the University of Louisville in 1985, where he served as the Program Director of the Family Practice Residency from 1989 to 1997. After a sabbatical in 1998, when he successfully fulfilled the certification requirements for the American Society of Addiction Medicine, he established and directed an Addiction Medicine consult service at the University of Louisville Hospital from 1998 until he moved to Buffalo in 2003 to assume the post of Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the State University of New York at Buffalo, School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, where he also maintains an active research portfolio.



### **KATHLEEN T. BRADY, M.D., PH.D.**

*(Psychiatry)*

Dr. Brady is a Professor of Psychiatry at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), where she also is Director of the Clinical Neuroscience Division. In 2005, she was appointed Assistant Dean for Clinical Research and

Director of the MUSC General Clinical Research Center. She also is the Principal Investigator and Director of the Southern Consortium of the NIDA Clinical Trials Network and the Principal Investigator and Center Director for one of eleven Specialized Centers for Research on Sex and Gender Factors Affecting Women's Health.

Reflecting Dr. Brady's special interest in co-occurring psychiatric and substance use disorders and the pharmacotherapy of substance use disorders, her research has had a special focus on victimization and post-traumatic stress disorder, particularly the co-occurrence of anxiety and affective disorders in substance-using women. She also studies the interface between basic and clinical science and the translation of empirically-based treatments from academic medical centers to front-line treatment settings.

Dr. Brady is a past President of the Association for Medical Education and Research in Substance Abuse (1994-1996), and of the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry (2003-2005). She directed the MUSC Addiction Psychiatry Fellowship Program from 1994-2004 and has served as a mentor for a number of post-doctoral Fellows, residents and junior faculty.



**GAIL D'ONOFRIO, M.D., M.S.,  
FACEM**  
*(Emergency Medicine)*

Dr. D'Onofrio is a Professor in the Department of Surgery, Section of Emergency Medicine, at the Yale University School of Medicine. In that post, she maintains an active clinical practice in addition to her teaching and research responsibilities. In fact, Dr. D'Onofrio is one of only a handful

of Emergency Medicine specialists funded as a principal investigator for multiple R01 grants by the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. D'Onofrio's efforts as an educator include the development of a structured curriculum to teach Emergency Medicine specialists about screening and brief intervention (SBI) for alcohol problems. The curriculum, which employs a teaching video and skill-based practice scenarios, has been accepted by the Society of Academic Medicine and incorporated into a toolkit distributed to all emergency practitioners by the American College of Emergency Physicians. Dr. D'Onofrio also is a co-investigator on an NIH multicenter trial entitled "National Alcohol Screening Day and Academic Emergency Medicine Department Collaborative Study."

Dr. D'Onofrio also has helped develop the national strategic plan for training all health professionals in SBI, funded by HRSA, AMERSA, and SAMHSA. She is a member of the NIAAA advisory board for National Alcohol Screening Day, has received a NIDA grant for training chief residents in all disciplines, and her educational curriculum and teaching tools have been utilized throughout the United States and Canada.



**LARRY GENTILELLO, M.D., FACS**  
*(Surgery)*

Dr. Gentilello is the Chair of the Division of Burns, Trauma and Critical Care at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, where he holds the C. James Carrico, M.D., Distinguished Chair in Surgery for Trauma and Critical Care. He also holds an appointment as Professor of Management, Policy and Community Health at the UT at

Houston School of Public Health, and as Professor of Surgery at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

Dr. Gentilello's research focuses on injury prevention and public health and has been supported by grants from the NIH, NHTSA, HRSA, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He also has served on multiple federal advisory panels, including those advising the CDC, NIH, NHTSA, CSAT and others. In addition, he has published more than 200 peer-reviewed articles, textbook chapters, abstracts, and monographs.

Dr. Gentilello's research into alcohol use as a risk factor for traumatic injury has been recognized with the Innovators Combating Substance Abuse Award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and an ASAM Award for Expanding the Frontiers of the Field of Addiction Medicine and Broadening our Understanding of the Addiction Process through Research and Innovation. He continues to lecture widely on alcohol use as a major factor in traumatic injury.



**KEVIN KUNZ, M.D., M.P.H.,  
FASAM**  
*(Preventive Medicine and Public Health)*

Dr. Kunz has practiced clinical medicine in Kona, Hawaii, for 27 years, and has specialized in Addiction Medicine for the past 13 years. At present, he serves on the staff of Kona Community Hospital, maintains a full-time clinical practice at

Kona Addiction Services, is the Medical Director of the Hawaii Physicians Health Program, and is a Clinical Instructor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Hawaii School of Medicine.

Dr. Kunz has been an active leader in Hawaii's Addiction Medicine community, serving as President of the Hawaii Society of Addiction Medicine and currently as chair of that Society's Education Committee. He was an organizing member of Hawaii's first Methamphetamine Summit, a Director of the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawaii, and is active in drug courts in Maui and Kona. For this work, Dr. Kunz has received local, state and national recognition.

Dr. Kunz is a Fellow of ASAM, which he has served as Chair of the Chapters Council and as a member of the Board of Directors. Since May 2006, he has co-chaired ASAM's Medical Specialty Action Group (MSAG) as part of his commitment to enhancing the interface of Preventive Medicine and Public Health with Addiction Medicine, toward the goal of improving the health of patients, families and communities.



**ROBERT J. SOKOL, M.D.,  
FACOG**  
*(Obstetrics and Gynecology)*

Dr. Sokol is Professor and Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Wayne State University School of Medicine/Detroit Medical Center, which he also served as Dean and Senior Vice President for Medical Affairs. Since stepping down as Dean in

1999, Dr. Sokol has served as a Distinguished Professor and as Director of the C. S. Mott Center for Human Growth and Development in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Among other honors, he was elected President of the Central Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and as President of the Detroit Academy of Medicine.

Dr. Sokol has published extensively on the prevention of perinatal brain damage, particularly as it relates to prenatal exposure to alcohol and cocaine. His honors include many national research awards, a lifetime achievement award from the Society of Maternal-Fetal Medicine and awards from the Wayne State University School of Medicine student body, alumni and school. Dr. Sokol has authored more than 1300 publications, including nearly 300 refereed papers. He serves on four boards of directors of professional theaters, two of which he chairs, and is a vice chair of the board of a medical school, the American University of the Caribbean.

*continued on page 10*

## ABAM Board Members Selected *continued from page 9*



**JEFFREY SAMET, M.D.,  
M.A., M.P.H.**  
*(Internal Medicine)*

Dr. Samet is a graduate of Brandeis University and Baylor College of Medicine. He trained in Internal Medicine at Boston City Hospital, Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM), and in a research fellowship at the Massachusetts

General Hospital. He has been a primary care physician in Boston since 1983.

Dr. Samet is a Professor of Medicine at Boston University School of Medicine and Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Boston University School of Public Health. In 2002, he became the Chief of General Internal Medicine at BUSM/Boston Medical Center and Vice Chair for Public Health in the Department of Medicine.

Dr. Samet has a longstanding commitment to educating physicians about substance use disorders. Since 1995, he has served as Medical Director of Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Services for the Boston Public Health Commission. He also has been President of the Association of Medical Education and Research in Substance Abuse (1999-2001), co-chair of the Substance Abuse Task Force of the Society of General Internal Medicine (1992-2002), and a member of the Institute of Medicine Committee on "Addressing the Quality Chasm in Mental Health and Addictive Disorders." He also has chaired the ASAM Medical-Scientific Annual Conference Program Committee for the past four years.

## SELECTING THE AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

At the April 15th meeting, the Specialty Directors will discuss the criteria and process for selecting seven At-Large Directors, who will be elected by a vote of the Specialty Directors, the two MSAG Co-Chairs, and the Executive Vice President of ABAM or his/her designee. (This method of selection is stipulated in the bylaws of ABAM and The ABAM Foundation.)

The MSAG has suggested the following criteria for use in selecting the At-Large Directors, which are the same as those used in selecting the Specialty Directors. They require that candidates are:

- Certified in an ABMS-recognized specialty;
- Unencumbered by potential conflict of roles;
- Willing and able to serve a full term (that is, through December 31, 2011);
- Willing and able to commit to the tasks that will be required of the ABAM and ABAM Foundation;
- Willing to consider either a conjoint board or subspecialty certification as paths toward recognition of Addiction Medicine by the ABMS;
- Experienced in areas that complement the Specialty Directors in carrying out the work of ABAM, The ABAM Foundation, and their committees (e.g., areas of medicine not specifically represented by the eight Specialty Directors, such as pain medicine, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, sleep medicine, sports medicine, and hospital medicine).
- Experienced in issues such as fundraising and the business of Medicine.

The ABAM bylaws also stipulate that the Specialty Directors are to consult with officials of the ABMS member boards and their affiliated medical specialty societies, as well as other medical organizations, to solicit the names of outstanding candidates for the At-Large Director positions.

## Steps Toward ABMS Recognition of Addiction Medicine

**T**he ASAM Board's April 2007 approval of the MSAG report and recommendations launched Phase III of the comprehensive plan for specialty recognition: Establishment of the American Board of Addiction Medicine. The plan envisions the development of accredited training in Addiction Medicine and, ultimately, ABMS recognition of Addiction Medicine. Interim steps outlined in the plan include (but are not limited to) the following:

- STEP 1.** ASAM will encourage and assist in the development of an American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM). *Completed*
- STEP 2.** The ASAM President and Executive Vice President will communicate and engage in dialogue with officials of ABMS member specialty Boards and medical specialty societies regarding the ASAM initiative toward specialty recognition of Addiction Medicine. *Ongoing*
- STEP 3.** The Medical Specialty Action Group will be reconstituted to include ASAM members who are Board-certified in the specialties whose Boards and medical societies are prospective sponsors of ABAM's application for recognition by the ABMS. *Completed*
- STEP 4.** To submit a credible application to the ABMS, ABAM will work to identify and/or develop a sufficient number of ACGME-accredited training programs in Addiction Medicine. *Under way*
- STEP 5.** When ABAM's certification of individual physicians is established and the ACGME has begun to accredit its training programs in Addiction Medicine, ABAM will submit an application for recognition by the ABMS, either as a conjoint Board of the ABMS, or for subspecialty certification of Addiction Medicine by multiple ABMS medical specialty Boards, whichever path best serves the interests of patients and the profession of Addiction Medicine.

## THE FUTURE OF ASAM CERTIFICATION

Thomas L. Haynes, M.D., FASAM  
Region VI Director and ASAM Board Member

A large number of ASAM members may never be eligible for a credential recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), even with the efforts ASAM has taken to secure ABMS recognition for Addiction Medicine specialists and to establish the new American Board of Addiction Medicine.

If ABAM determines that the best path is to establish a Conjoint Board of Addiction Medicine, which would involve the participation of several existing ABMS Specialty Boards, there would be a significant training requirement, most likely including completion of an ACGME-accredited residency in a primary specialty that is a member of the Conjoint Board. If ABAM determines that the best path is to pursue a subspecialty certification process involving many primary specialties (such as Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and Pediatrics), the basic requirement would be that a candidate would already be a Diplomate of an ABMS member Board. In either case, it will be difficult for many physician who have been in practice for some time to meet the training requirements.

However, regardless of the path ABAM selects, it will take a number of years to implement the new training and certification processes. Thus, any new ABMS-recognized credential in Addiction Medicine is years away, allowing individual physicians and ASAM's



Dr. Thomas L. Haynes

leadership time to consider how best to address the conundrum described here.

Based on discussions at recent meetings, it is my impression that the ASAM Board of Directors is strongly committed to the notion that physicians who are not eligible for recognition by ABAM should not be disenfranchised. Various means to achieve this are under consideration, and members of the ASAM Board are open to suggestions as to how to ensure that ASAM's current certification process will continue to be respected and recognized as a significant validation of a physician's knowledge and expertise in the practice of Addiction Medicine.

Board members also agree that, for the foreseeable future, the current ASAM Certification Examination should continue to be offered and validated by the National Board of Medical Examiners, as it has been for many years. As evidence of this commitment, the Certification Examination and accompanying Review Course in Addiction Medicine will be offered by ASAM in 2008.

Above all, the members of ASAM's Board of Directors want to assure the members of ASAM that the formation of ABAM will be a positive step for the field of Addiction Medicine, and that ASAM and its Board will do everything possible to assure that the ASAM Certification Program will continue to be a valid and respected credential.

## How You Can Help Win Specialty Recognition for Addiction Medicine

*To help fund the initiative to achieve specialty status for Addiction Medicine, the ASAM Board of Directors voted at its April 2007 meeting to create a voluntary membership group, Supporters of Addiction Medicine.*

The Supporters group is committed to ASAM's two key initiatives: specialty recognition of Addiction Medicine and parity for addiction treatment. The Board found that both initiatives are consistent with the Society's Mission "to improve the care and treatment of persons with the disease of addiction and to advance the practice of Addiction Medicine."

All contributions are tax-deductible. While contributions of any size are welcome, those who give \$100 or more will be recognized as members of the "Supporters" group.

Checks should be made payable to ASAM (please notate the check: "Supporters of ADM").

### SEND CHECKS TO:

Supporters of Addiction Medicine  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
4601 No. Park Ave., Suite 101 Upper Arcade  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

# PROGRESS TOWARD SPECIALTY RECOGNITION

## THE PATH FORWARD

*Michael M. Miller, M.D., FASAM, FAPA, ASAM President*

In weekly conference calls and in daily email exchanges over the past two years, the members of the MSAG Steering Committee have contemplated the future of Addiction Medicine. Through these deliberations, the members of MSAG have concluded that ABMS recognition of Addiction Medicine as a primary specialty is not attainable in the coming decades, because it is not feasible to



**Dr. Michael M. Miller**

develop primary residencies in Addiction Medicine in sufficient numbers to produce a critical mass of Diplomates for a primary Board. Without such training programs and trainees, a certification process could not be established.

The Steering Committee also determined that either a conjoint Board or subspecialty certification in Addiction Medicine *do* appear to be viable options. Choosing between the two clearly requires additional research and extensive consultation with the leaders of ABMS, ACGME, and other specialty Boards, many of whom have been extraordinarily helpful as the MSAG committees pursued their preliminary research.

Because the ABMS and ACGME requirements are similar (albeit not identical) for recognition of a conjoint specialty Board or subspecialty certification, it is both possible and desirable to create an American Board of Addiction Medicine, which would take the next steps in building the required infrastructure and preparing an application to the ABMS and ACGME. This can be done while deferring the actual decision as to whether to pursue recognition of Addiction Medicine as a conjoint specialty or as a subspecialty. Creation of ABAM thus allows the process to move forward, even as it affords time for essential dialogue and consultations with the leaders of potential sponsoring Boards and other medical organizations.

The leaders of ABAM will assume responsibility for creating a process to certify training programs and for continuing the dialogue about specialty versus subspecialty recognition with a variety of stakeholders. ABAM also will be responsible for vetting the core content, core competencies, and scope of practice of Addiction Medicine, both with ASAM and with other Boards and specialty organizations. It also will develop guidelines for accreditation of fellowship training programs that are aligned with ACGME's accreditation guidelines, in preparation for full ACGME recognition of training in Addiction Medicine.

As we move forward, ASAM's Board of Directors must balance multiple priorities. One is the future of Addiction Medicine; another is the future of ASAM. The mission of ASAM, as articulated in the Society's 2006 Strategic Plan, is "To improve the care and treatment of people with the disease of addiction and advance the practice of Addiction Medicine." The members of the MSAG are convinced that, once Addiction Medicine has achieved recognition by the ABMS, patients and their families will benefit greatly and the health status of all Americans will be improved.

The path forward will not be easy. The obstacles are political and attitudinal as well as structural and procedural. Specifically, success in attaining recognition as a conjoint Board or subspecialty will require a full understanding of the requirements of the ACGME and ABMS, as well as extensive consultations with existing specialty Boards and other medical specialty societies.

That said, it is worth noting that Addiction Medicine has reached the next phase in its quest for ABMS recognition. The Inaugural meeting of ABAM and The ABAM Foundation is a moment for all of us in Addiction Medicine to celebrate and enjoy.

*ASAM's Board of Directors is committed to keeping the Society's members and other interested parties fully informed of progress toward specialty recognition of Addiction Medicine. This special issue of ASAM News is a step in that process. There is also a page of information, with links to dozens of resource documents, under the "Certification" tab on ASAM's website ([www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org)). Watch the website and future issues of ASAM News to follow ongoing developments.*



### American Society of Addiction Medicine

4601 North Park Ave., Suite 101  
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ASAM is a specialty society of physicians concerned about alcoholism and other addictions and who care for persons affected by those illnesses.

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