

# American Board of Addiction Medicine

4300 MONTGOMERY AVE., SUITE 206 • BETHESDA, MD 20814

## OFFICERS

### President

Robert J. Sokol, M.D.

### Immediate Past President

Patrick G. O'Connor, M.D., M.P.H.

### Secretary

Gail D'Onofrio, M.D., M.S.

### Treasurer

Lon R. Hays, M.D., M.B.A.

## SPECIALTY DIRECTORS

### Emergency Medicine

Gail D'Onofrio, M.D., M.S.

### Family Medicine

Randall Brown, M.D., Ph.D.

### Internal Medicine

Patrick G. O'Connor, M.D., M.P.H.

### Obstetrics and Gynecology

Robert J. Sokol, M.D.

### Pediatrics

Hoover Adger, Jr., M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.

### Psychiatry

Lon R. Hays, M.D., M.B.A.

### Preventive Medicine

James M. Vanderploeg, MD, M.P.H.

## AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Louis E. Baxter, Sr., M.D.

### Addiction Medicine

Michael M. Miller, M.D.

### Psychiatry

Jeffrey H. Samet, M.D., M.A., M.P.H.

### Internal Medicine

Martha J. Wunsch, M.D.

### Pediatrics

## EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H.

March 7, 2017

Dear ABAM Diplomate,

**Diplomates of the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) who hold current certification from a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) may be eligible to acquire the newly available ABMS subspecialty certification in addiction medicine (ADM) through an examination to be offered beginning this year by the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM). If you do not hold current ABMS certification, or do not wish to pursue ABMS certification in ADM, there is no action step for you outlined here and your current ABAM certification is not affected. It is valid as long as you maintain enrollment in the ABAM MOC program.**

Many of you have expressed disappointment that ABAM diplomates do not gain automatic ABMS ADM certification status. From the time of ABAM's formation in 2008, diligent, repeated and substantial efforts have been made to influence ABMS and its member boards to accept all ABAM diplomates into ABMS ADM specialty or subspecialty certification, when it became available, without the necessity of ABAM diplomates re-taking a certification exam. Although initially promising, the ultimate decisions made by these organizations (which are independent and external to ABAM) have excluded, with the exception noted below, automatic transition to ABMS ADM certification without examination. All decisions on certification in ADM are now in the hands of the ABPM and the ABMS.

ABAM has always existed as an independent medical board, and is not a member board of the ABMS. Had ADM become a primary specialty of ABMS, ABAM could likely have transitioned to becoming an ABMS member board. However, ABMS has not added a new primary board in 25 years, and we were informed that ADM would not be accepted as a primary board. The only path for ADM within ABMS was subspecialty status. In this scenario, an existing ABMS member board sponsors the new field and the formative board (ABAM) is not transitioned into ABMS. The ABPM is the sponsoring board for ADM. Updated information on the ABPM ADM certification exam can be found at the ABPM website: [www.theabpm.org](http://www.theabpm.org) and [https://www.theabpm.org/ADM\\_FAQs.pdf](https://www.theabpm.org/ADM_FAQs.pdf).

Regardless of whether or not you move into ABMS ADM subspecialty certification, your ABAM certification remains a hard-earned and valuable credential. It represents your expertise in the field and as well your dedication to advancing the care of patients and the support of your colleagues as they seek better care for their patients. ABAM will continue to verify for third parties your certification and good standing, and will continue the ABAM MOC program through the next five years

Phone: (301) 656-3378 • Facsimile: (240) 762-5422  
[www.abam.net](http://www.abam.net) • E-mail: [email@abam.net](mailto:email@abam.net)

(the period of the Practice Pathway). At that time, the ABAM MOC program will cease, and current diplomates who are not ABMS eligible, or at retirement age, will be offered a time-unlimited certificate.

**ABAM Diplomates with current ABMS certification who wish to acquire ADM certification at the ABMS level have four paths to do so:**

**1. ABAM Exam Class of 2015.**

**New ABMS certification in ADM without additional examination.**

ABAM diplomates who took the 2015 certification or re-certification exam will have a pathway through the ABPM that will not require sitting for the new ABMS exam. The process for these diplomates to apply for the new certification will soon be posted on the ABPM website ([www.theabpm.org](http://www.theabpm.org)).

ABAM made every effort to secure for all ABAM diplomates the availability of ABMS level certification without additional examination. Ultimately, decisions at the ABMS and ABMS member board level did not support this request. The 2015 diplomate class was an exception made to ABMS policy because the 2015 ABAM exam was administered nearly simultaneously with the formal internal ABMS decision to recognize the subspecialty of ADM.

**2. Current ABAM diplomates who wish to apply for the 2017 ADM exam.**

**Expedited ABMS, ABPM certification exam application in 2017 for current ABAM diplomates.**

ABPM will offer current ABAM diplomates an expedited certification examination application: the section on practice time in the field (appx. 2,000 hours over 5 years), and external confirmation of this will be waived. The exam application will contain a check off for ABAM status.

This pathway for ABMS level ADM certification – as with the other paths noted here - will be available for the 5 year ABPM Practice Pathway (the period when no fellowship is required), which ends with the 2021 exam.

**Important Note: an ABAM diplomate will qualify for this expedited path ONLY IF he or she is a current ABAM diplomate, i.e. they are registered for the 2017 ABAM MOC program.** Without registration, ABAM cannot confirm present licensure status, current ABAM certification or progress in ongoing 2017 ABAM MOC requirements. ABAM diplomates will have until December 15, 2017 to complete ABAM MOC requirements, yet must register before submitting an exam application if they wish to use the expedited certification exam application option.

The registration process for 2017 can be done quickly and easily by following the steps below:

1. Login to the Diplomate Web Portal, <https://portal.abam.net>
2. Submit payment for the 2017 MOC Fee

3. Enter your current Medical License information
4. Begin completing the 2017 MOC requirements, which include 9 Self-Assessment Modules and 17 additional CME requirements.
5. If you have questions or need assistance, contact Lia Bennett at 240-762-5392 or lbennett@abam.net

**3. Physician graduates of ADM fellowships accredited by The Addiction Medicine Foundation (TAMF).**

Physicians who have successfully completed a 12 or more month fellowship accredited by TAMF are eligible for the certification exam without demonstrating practice time in the field. The exam application will have a check off section for this category of applicants.

**4. Physicians with any current ABMS certificate, with or without ABAM certification, may apply to take the 2017 ABMS, ABPM ADM subspecialty certification exam.**

Applicants are eligible if they hold a current certification from any of the 24 ABMS member boards, and meet Practice Pathway and other criteria. The application is expected to be available the first week of April, 2017 on the ABPM website, and application details will be available there.

Our field of addiction medicine has long pursued formal recognition and physician certification through ABMS. The present opportunity for ABMS level certification has been made possible by your work and dedication, and the leadership of the ABMS sponsoring board, ABPM. I urge you to consider obtaining ADM certification at this newly available ABMS level. A growing workforce of certified physicians at this level will contribute additional and significant impact on medicine and health care, and ultimately on the prevention and treatment of unhealthy substance use and addiction for our patients, their families and communities.

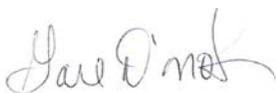
Sincerely,



Dr. Robert Sokol  
President



Dr. Patrick O'Connor  
Immediate Past President



Dr. Gail D'Onofrio  
Secretary



Dr. Lon Hays  
Treasurer



Dr. Kevin Kunz  
Executive Vice President