

Board News

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Certificates of Added Qualifications

At its interim meeting in October 1991, the Board of Directors addressed several important issues. It is the intent of this article to highlight some of the actions taken. One of those related to Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQs). The Board of Directors adopted the following position statement regarding CAQs:

Member Boards of the ABMS are authorized to issue three types of certificates. All member Boards may issue general certificates to qualified specialists in the field represented by that Board. By special request, member Boards may also issue Certificates of Special Qualifications (CSQs) and/or Certificates of Added Qualifications (CAQs).

Certificates of Special Qualifications are normally given to Diplomates who have had fellowships generally considered as wholly included in the general certificate. These are traditional "subspecialties" and the Diplomates may be practitioners, academicians, researchers, or combinations. The American Board of Family Practice does not at this time intend to issue Certificates of Special Qualifications.

Certificates of Added Qualifications are intended to recognize Diplomates who, through training, education and experience, develop special knowledge and skills in an area of interest, but not exclusively within the special area. There is no limitation regarding the professional activity of the Diplomate as to academic, research, or practice. The standards for Certificates of Added Qualifications are beyond those for primary certificates. The intent of ABFP's Certificate of Added Qualifications is to meet the needs of those family physicians who have a special interest in practice and academic pursuits such as teaching and research in the area of the CAQ, but the examination is not designed specifically to favor academicians, practitioners, researchers, or other subgroups. Since it is "added" to the general certificate, the Diplomate must maintain qualifications for recertification in the primary specialty.

It is the position of the ABFP that whether or not a Board Certified physician holds a CAQ should not be considered in determining the hospital privileges or the scope of practice.

Although not all member Boards of the ABMS will agree with this statement for their own Board, this statement is intended to express the current view of the American Board of Family Practice.

Accelerated Residency Program

The Board of Directors reviewed the status of the Accelerated Residency Program through which selected medical students may be given the opportunity to complete the curriculum for the first year of residency during their fourth year of medical school. The Board reaffirmed its position to limit the number of programs. At the time of this writing, the quota of programs is filled. Programs approved for 1991 include: University of South Alabama, Mobile; University of Kentucky, Lexington; Creighton University, Omaha; East Carolina University, Greenville; and East Tennessee State University, Johnson City. Several others have been given permission to initiate the program in 1992.

Revalidate Examinations

There was initial consideration given to a proposal by staff to revalidate the certification and recertification examinations. A specific proposal for possible modifications of the content and format of the certification/recertification process will be given to the Board of Directors at its annual meeting in April.

Media Presentation

The staff of the ABFP was given the authority to investigate the development of a media presentation for use by residency programs, which would orient the new residents about certification and recertification by the Board. It is the intent of the Board to try to avoid confusion about certification requirements and possibly prevent misunderstandings about the process and meaning of board certification.

Editor's Note

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