



Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine

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March 23, 2016

Ms. Carol Clothier

Vice President, State Health Policy and Public Affairs
American Board of Medical Specialties
353 North Clark Street
Suite 1400
Chicago, IL 60654

Dear Ms. Clothier:

On behalf of the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM), thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Special Committee on Physician Scientists regarding the Report of the Special Committee on Physician Scientists and Continuing Certification. AAIM includes the Association of Professors of Medicine (APM), the Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine (APDIM), the Association of Specialty Professors (ASP), the Clerkship Directors in Internal Medicine (CDIM), and the Administrators of Internal Medicine (AIM).

APM has been a leader in promoting the interests of physician scientists, who are vital components of the current research infrastructure in academic medical centers. Reflecting this interest, APM, as a member of AAIM, has sponsored three consensus conferences (held in 2007, 2009, and 2015) which convened relevant thought leaders with the goal of developing specific action plans and best practices to support the recruitment of new physician trainees into the biomedical research pipeline and to reduce attrition from the workforce. One of the specific recommendations from the AAIM Third Consensus Conference (November 12-13, 2015, in Washington, DC) was to encourage the ABMS to provide greater flexibility in promoting physician scientist careers (as exemplified by the American Board of Internal Medicine-sanctioned "Research Track Pathway") and in achieving recertification.

AAIM was pleased to review the Special Committee's report which acknowledges the current challenges faced by physician scientists in launching and maintaining their careers, and recommends specific avenues by which physician scientists can better achieve certification and recertification. **In particular, AAIM strongly agrees with your recommendations to the ABMS member boards to further implement alternative training pathways across all medical disciplines, and to tailor parts II, III, and IV of the recertification Maintenance of Certification requirements to the careers of physician scientists, including:**

- Creating Continuing Medical Education materials attuned to the life-long learning and self-assessment needs of physician scientists;
- Developing modular exams and practice profiles that are specific to the generally narrower clinical foci of physician scientists and more appropriately assess their clinical competence;
- Recognizing (with part IV credits for improvement in medical practice) the contributions of physician scientists whose scholarship has a meaningful impact on the quality of patient care.

AAIM appreciates the efforts of the committee to suggest these compelling recommendations.

Again, thanks. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (703) 341-4540 or AAIM@im.org at your convenience.

Sincerely,

D. Craig Brater, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer