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Title: Board Certification Changes Impact Access to Addiction Medicine Specialists  
Introduced by: Lee P. Begrow, DO, for the Kent County Delegation  
Original Author: Jayne Courts, MD  
Referred to: Reference Committee B  
House Action: **APPROVED**

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Whereas, opioid use has been declared a national epidemic by the Centers for Disease Control, and

Whereas, the State of Michigan Public Act 250 of 2017 requires providing patients with post-overdose education regarding substance use disorder prevention or treatment services, and

Whereas, the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) provided Addiction Medicine board certification from 2009 to 2015, and

Whereas, when Addiction Medicine (ADM) was officially recognized as a new subspecialty by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) on March 14, 2016, ADM board certification moved to ABMS oversight, and

Whereas, ABMS is mandating current ABMS certification in any ABMS-recognized Member Board specialty as a requirement to enroll in a transitional maintenance of certification program and to qualify for the ABMS Addiction Medicine board certification examination, and

Whereas, many ABAM-board certified Addiction Medicine specialists have not maintained board certification in an ABMS-recognized Member Board specialty, and

Whereas, these duly certified ADM specialists may be unable to obtain hospital privileges and/or third-party patient panel privileges as they are not considered to be board certified by the ABMS, thus potentially limiting access to this crucial resource; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS work with the Michigan Society of Addiction Medicine to lobby for acceptance of American Board of Addiction Medicine board certification as equivalent to American Board of Medical Specialties board certification for Addiction Medicine with hospitals and third-party payers in the state of Michigan; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the American Medical Association (AMA) ask our AMA to work with the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) and American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to accept ABAM board certification as equivalent to any other ABMS-recognized Member Board specialty as a requirement to enroll in the transitional maintenance of certification program and to qualify for the ABMS Addiction Medicine board certification examination.

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: None

**Relevant MSMS Policy:**

**Review Board Recertification and Maintenance of Certification Process**

MSMS supports Maintenance of Certification (MOC) only under all of the following circumstances:

1. MOC must be voluntary
2. MOC must not be a condition of licensure, hospital privileges, health plan participation, or any other function unrelated to the specialty board requiring MOC
3. MOC should not be the monopoly of any single entity. Physicians should be able to access a range of alternatives from different entities.
4. The status of MOC should be revisited by MSMS if it is identified that the continuous review of physician competency is objectively determined to be a benefit for patients. If that benefit is determined to be present by objective data regarding value and efficacy, then MSMS should support the adoption of an evidence based process that serves only to improve patient care.

(Res73-15)

### **Relevant AMA Policy:**

#### **Recognition of Those Who Practice Addiction Medicine H-300.962**

1. It is the policy of the AMA to: (a) encourage all physicians, particularly those in primary care fields, to undertake education in treatment of substance abuse; (b) direct its representatives to appropriate Residency Review Committees (RRCs) to ask the committees on which they serve to consider requiring instruction in the recognition and management of substance abuse. Those RRCs that already require such instruction should consider greater emphasis for this subject. (c) encourage treatment of substance abuse as a subject for continuing medical education; and (d) affirm that many physicians in fields other than psychiatry have graduate education and experience appropriate for the treatment of substance abuse, and for utilization review, and for other evaluation of such treatment, and should be entitled to compensation.
2. Our AMA commends the American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM) for its successful application to the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to establish the new ABMS-approved multispecialty subspecialty of addiction medicine, which will be able to offer certification to qualified physicians who are diplomates of any of the 24 ABMS member boards.
3. Our AMA encourages the ABPM to offer the first ABMS-approved certification examination in addiction medicine expeditiously in order to improve access to care to treat addiction.

#### **Medical Specialty Board Certification Standards H-275.926**

Our AMA:

1. Opposes any action, regardless of intent, that appears likely to confuse the public about the unique credentials of American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or American Osteopathic Association Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists (AOA-BOS) board certified physicians in any medical specialty, or take advantage of the prestige of any medical specialty for purposes contrary to the public good and safety.
2. Continues to work with other medical organizations to educate the profession and the public about the ABMS and AOA-BOS board certification process. It is AMA policy that when the equivalency of board certification must be determined, accepted standards, such as those adopted by state medical boards or the Essentials for Approval of Examining Boards in Medical Specialties, be utilized for that determination.
3. Opposes discrimination against physicians based solely on lack of ABMS or equivalent AOA-BOS board certification, or where board certification is one of the criteria considered for purposes of measuring quality of care, determining eligibility to contract with managed care entities, eligibility to receive hospital staff or other clinical privileges, ascertaining competence to practice medicine, or for other purposes. Our AMA also opposes discrimination that may occur against physicians involved in the board certification process, including those who are in a clinical practice period for the specified minimum period of time that must be completed prior to taking the board certifying examination.
4. Advocates for nomenclature to better distinguish those physicians who are in the board certification pathway from those who are not.
5. Encourages member boards of the ABMS to adopt measures aimed at mitigating the financial burden on residents related to specialty board fees and fee procedures, including shorter preregistration periods, lower fees and easier payment terms.