

neuroscienceCME is provided as an educational service to the professional neuroscience community by CME Outfitters, LLC.

New Years' Resolution Item #3: "Make Headway on MOC Requirements"

by Monique Johnson, MD, CCMEP

Whether it's in a brown, stitched-leather Franklin Covey planner with a nice Mont Blanc fountain pen or stored on a newfangled iPhone, it still exists—that trusty list of resolutions for the new year. Call it what you'd like, each year the reflective beings among us give some thought to the accomplishments of years past and set goals for the challenges ahead. This year, after your #1 and #2 resolution (generally reserved for health and pursuit of happiness concerns), the editorial team at neuroscienceCME encourages you to consider work on your Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirements a high priority. Tips in the article will help.

Tip 1: Embrace the "spirit" of MOC.

A decade ago, the 24 specialty boards that comprised the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) agreed to evolve their recertification programs to one of continuous professional development—and MOC was born. The goal of MOC is "to assure that the physician is committed to lifelong learning and competency in a specialty and/or subspecialty by requiring ongoing measurement of 6 core competencies."¹

Visit http://www.abms.org/Maintenance_of_Certification/MOC_competencies.aspx for more information.

ABMS 6 Core Competencies
Patient Care
Medical Knowledge
Interpersonal and Communication Skills
Professionalism
Systems-Based Practice
Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

The important operant in the description above is *lifelong*.² To quote Winston Churchill, "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning." All in all, this process of ongoing learning has numerous benefits.¹

Benefits of MOC
<p>To physicians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused learning Increased efficiency Reduced malpractice premiums
<p>To patients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer medical errors Quality outcomes Better communication Public accountability and transparency

neuroscienceCME is provided as an educational service to the professional neuroscience community by CME Outfitters, LLC.

Tip 2: Be clear on your Board’s specific requirements.

The ABMS provides general information about MOC. However, because each specialty Board has its own MOC program plan that received ABMS approval in 2006,¹ make sure you consult your Board’s specific website for detailed information and updates. Visit http://www.abms.org/About_ABMS/member_boards.aspx to be directed to the URL or your Board’s website.

Tip 3: Review your progress and set goals.

Using your Board’s requirements as a compass, take inventory of the formal and informal learning activities you completed in 2009. In addition to traditional CME activities, remember to include things like test item writing, manuscript review for journals, and committee work, all of which may have been designated for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit.³

Setting goals for MOC paves the road to success and should be guided by the 4-Part process (see table below).¹ To begin establishing goals, you may need to contact your state of licensure, download the exam blueprint, and review the menu of practice improvement activities or design your own. You may also want to find tools that can help you meet your goals. One such tool that is becoming increasingly popular is the learning portfolio. With a typical learning portfolio, the clinician documents the details and context of a clinical question, how the question was answered, and whether having answered it resulted in a change in practice.^{2,4}

4-Part MOC Program			
Part I Licensure and Professional Standing	Part II Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment	Part III Cognitive Expertise	Part IV Practice Performance Assessment
Holding a valid, unrestricted medical license in at least one U.S. state, territory, or in Canada	Participating in continual educational and self-assessment programs that meet specialty specific standards set by the Member Boards	Proving medical and practice-related knowledge through regular, formal examination	Being continually evaluated to assess care compared to peers and national standards and then improve care based on findings and recommendations

Tip 4: Look to neuroscienceCME to help you satisfy Part II requirements.

MOC Part II includes participation in CME programs sponsored by an education provider who is certified by the ACCME to provide education to physicians and permitted by the AMA to award AMA PRA Category 1 Credit. At neuroscienceCME.com you can find numerous learning opportunities on clinically relevant topics that fit within your scope of practice.

Tip 5: Stay motivated.

So the new year is approaching and motivation is high to dig right in, right? But when your enthusiasm falters, you’ll need a plan. We suggest that you look to your colleagues (real and virtual) for support. Sharing your MOC goals with a fellow clinical coworker can help. Also, the ABMS website features inspiring quotes from diplomats and offers certification statistics from past years.

neuroscienceCME is provided as an educational service to the professional neuroscience community by CME Outfitters, LLC.

References

1. American Board of Medical Specialties. About ABMS Maintenance of Certification. http://www.abms.org/Maintenance_of_Certification. Accessed December 23, 2009.
2. Davis D, Barnes BE, Fox R, eds. *The Continuous Professional Development of Physicians: From Research to Practice*. AMA Press. Chicago. 2003.
3. American Medical Association. AMA Physician's Recognition Award Booklet-2006 Revision. <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/455/pr2006.pdf>. Accessed December 23, 2009.
4. Zeiger RF. Toward Continuous Medical Education. *J Gen Int Med* 2005;20:91-94.